



WTO OMC

WTO Accessions Newsletter

2013-04-EN

26-04-2013

IGA-AGENDA:

The 4th meeting of the Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) in 2013 took place today, 26 April. It was chaired by Mr Chiedu Osakwe, Director of the Accessions Division. The IGA was briefed on: (i) LDCs Accessions and MC9; (ii) 2013 accession WP focus; (iii) accession WP maintenance work; (iv) technical assistance and outreach; and (v) acceding governments in arrears under administrative measures. The WTO Secretariat consulted Members on the Evolving Calendar of Accessions Meetings for 2013 (annexed).

LDCs ACCESSIONS AND MC9

The Secretariat informed Members of the LDCs' 2012 Montreux Retreat Outcomes on Accessions. The priority attached by the WTO to LDCs' accessions was reaffirmed. LDCs' accessions would continue to receive support and technical assistance. To facilitate these accessions, the General Council had enhanced LDCs' Accessions Guidelines and the Secretariat had developed a toolbox. The Secretariat confirmed its continued support for the work of Members. It was underlined that concluded and deposited Accession Packages must continue to safeguard and strengthen the WTO, as a rules-based system, where individual terms and conditions of Membership are structured on a balance of rights and obligations. The IGA welcomed the Secretariat report that Yemen and Afghanistan were on track for a 2013 completion.

2013 ACCESSION WP FOCUS

Afghanistan: Kabul remained dedicated to completing its accession this year. A negotiating team will be in Geneva on 28 April to meet with interested Members in the view of concluding bilateral market negotiations. Kabul finalised the ITA Schedule in HS2012, which should be ready for review shortly. Afghanistan was updating its Legislative Action Plan (LAP), adapted to the new format. The Accessions Division has initiated weekly technical meetings with the Afghan team to develop the components of its accession documentation. The 4th Working Party Meeting was envisaged for the end of June 2013. The WP Chairman's visit to Kabul, accompanied by the Secretariat team, was currently being discussed.

Yemen: The accession of Yemen was on the threshold of completion. Ukraine and Yemen had engaged constructively with an understanding *ad referendum*, subject to domestic legislation-based approval process. The date of the final Working Party should be announced shortly.

ACCESSIONS - TOOLBOX

- > Click here for a list of current [Accession Working Parties](#) and [Accession Working Party Chairpersons](#)
- > Evolving Calendar of Accession Meetings (ECAM)
- > [WTO Director-General Annual Reports on Accessions](#)
- > Find all Article XII Members' specific accession commitments and related information provided in the Working Party Reports and Accession Protocols - in the [Accession Commitments Database \(ACDB\)](#)
- > [Handbook on Accessions to the WTO](#)
- > WTO Accessions Internship - "[China Programme](#)"
- > For all official (de-restricted) documents relating to the accession processes of Article XII Members, click [here](#)
- > Accession Portal on the WTO Website ([En](#), [Fr](#), [Es](#))
- > All earlier [WTO Accessions Newsletters](#) are available on the Accession Portal of the WTO website, in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).
- > For enquiries related to the contents of the WTO Accessions Newsletter, send an e-mail to: Acceding-Government-Newsletter@wto.org

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Sarajevo had shifted its speed gear into "overdrive". It was committed to concluding its accession this year and was working intensively and closely with Members on agriculture policies, accompanied with "legal scrubbing" of text. The conclusion of a few bilateral market access negotiations was pending. The Secretariat requested Members to move rapidly to engage and conclude with BIH. Members in the IGA welcomed the information of contributions by the US to Sarajevo on legislative developments, including translation of documentation.



11th Meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Geneva, 27 March 2013

Kazakhstan: The IGA was informed that Kazakhstan had received questions from Members following the last cycle of meetings. Kazakhstan was undertaking adjustment consultations with Members on Goods. As mandated by the WP Chairman, the Secretariat had completed the consolidation of the draft Services Schedule. This was being reviewed by Astana. Depending on timely submission of inputs by Astana, the next cycle of meetings was scheduled for 4-5 June.

Serbia: Belgrade was updating the Legislative Action Plan based on the new format. Other relevant inputs are still pending.

Seychelles: The IGA was informed that this was another accession where the acceding government had shifted its speed gear into "overdrive". The Secretariat team was currently in Victoria working with the negotiating team. The Draft Working Party Report was being developed. Key pieces of legislation were being enacted and the Secretariat had issued notices of legislation. Victoria was updating the Legislative Action Plan, the TBT checklist and the TRIPS Action Plan. The next cycle of meetings was envisaged for Wednesday, 19 June. Victoria had defined a tight calendar to conclude its bilateral market access negotiations.

ACCESSION WP MAINTENANCE WORK

The IGA was briefed on the progress in 3 other active accessions (Algeria; Belarus; and The Bahamas). On Algeria, the 11th WP Meeting took place on 5 April. On Belarus, the IGA was

informed that the Chairman's Informal Consultation of the Working Party would take place on 16 May to restart the accession. On The Bahamas, Agriculture Supporting Tables submitted by Nassau would be circulated to Members.



11th Meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Algeria, Geneva, 5 April 2013

OUTREACH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The IGA was informed that the Accessions Division met with journalists from African and Asian countries on 23 April. The journalists asked questions on transparency; probability of success of the accessions in focus for 2013; how S and DT provisions were reflected in Accession Packages; and, the benefits of WTO membership for landlocked countries.

The IGA was notified that the 2nd Roundtable of the China and LDCs' Accession Programme would be held in Lao PDR in the week of 14 October. The Delegation of China expressed its continued support to the Accessions Division of the WTO Secretariat for the preparatory process that it had initiated. The Draft Roundtable Programme would be circulated by 15 May. The global seminar on WTO accession will take place in Geneva in September/October.



Seminar for African and Asian Journalists, Geneva, 23 April 2013

ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES FOR OBSERVERS IN ARREARS

The IGA was informed that several acceding governments in arrears were subject to Administrative Measures.

EVOLVING CALENDAR OF WTO ACCESSIONS WORKING PARTIES

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation	
					EN-FR-ES	Own
[29 April - 3 May]	26 th WTO GENEVA WEEK					
9 May - 10 May	WTO Official Holiday - ASCENSION DAY + EID HOLIDAY					
Thursday, 16 May	Belarus	Chairman's Informal Consultations of the Working Party (AM)	Convening Fax dated 4 April refers	CR II	NO	TBC
[May]	Yemen	11 th and final Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
20 May	WTO Official Holiday - WHIT MONDAY					
28-30 May	OECD Week (Ministerial Meeting)					
[Friday, 31 May]	IGA	5 th 2013 Informal Group on Accessions	Convening Notice pending	S2	NO	NO
[3-4 June]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
[Tuesday, 4 June]	Kazakhstan	Plurilateral Meeting on SPS (AM)	Convening Notice pending	D	NO	TBC
		Plurilateral Meeting on Agriculture (PM)	Convening Notice pending	D	NO	TBC
[Wednesday, 5 June]	Kazakhstan	16 th Working Party Meeting (AM/PM)	Convening Notice pending	D	YES	TBC
[Thursday, 6 June]	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Plurilateral meeting on Agriculture (AM)	Convening Notice pending	D	NO	NO
		12 th Working Party meeting (PM)	Convening Notice pending	D	YES	NO
[Thursday, 13 June]	Serbia	13 th Working Party meeting (AM)	Convening Notice pending	D	YES	NO
[Wednesday, 19 June]	Seychelles	Plurilateral meeting on Agriculture (AM)	Convening Notice pending	D	NO	NO
		4 th Working Party meeting (PM)	Convening Notice pending	D	YES	NO
[25/26 June]	Afghanistan	4 th Working Party meeting (AM)	Convening Notice pending	S1	YES	NO
[Friday, 28 June]	IGA	6 th 2013 Informal Group on Accessions	Convening Notice pending	S2	NO	NO
[Tuesday, 23 July]	IGA	7 th 2013 Informal Group on Accessions	Convening Notice pending	S3	NO	NO
[24 - 25 July]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
[2 nd Quarter 2013]	The Bahamas	3 rd Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation	
					EN-FR-ES	Own
[2 nd half of 2013]	Ethiopia	4 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[2 nd half of 2013]	Liberia	2 nd Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
5 - 6 September	WTO Official Holiday - JEÛNE GENEVOIS					
[September/October]	GLOBAL SEMINAR ON ACCESSIONS					
[8 - 9 October]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
[Week of 14 October 2013]	2013 ROUNDTABLE FOR LDCs					
[3 rd Quarter 2013]	Azerbaijan	11 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[3 rd Quarter 2013]	Iraq	3 rd Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[5 - 6 November]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
[3 - 6 December]	NINTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC9) - BALI					

Dates are suggested to assist planning by Members, Acceding Governments and the Secretariat. However, listed meetings are not automatic and will only go ahead on the basis of inputs from Acceding Governments, received with sufficient time for review by Members, normally a period of 4 weeks.

Enquiries related to this calendar should be addressed to:

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