

WTO ACCESSIONS NEWSLETTER

...safeguarding and strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system

SPECIAL EDITION: WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF KAZAKHSTAN ADOPTS ACCESSION PACKAGE *AD REFERENDUM*

In its 20th year, the Working Party on the Accession of Kazakhstan adopted the Accession Package of Kazakhstan, *ad referendum*, at its resumed 20th Session, today, 22 June 2015. The Working Party concluded its mandate and agreed to transmit the Package to the General Council for formal action.

The Working Party on the Accession of Kazakhstan, under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Vesa Himanen (Finland), adopted the Draft Accession Package of Kazakhstan, *ad referendum*, today, 22 June, at its resumed 20th Session. Today's meeting was a continuation of the meeting on 10 June. In accordance with standing practice, the adopted documents were: (i) Draft Report of the Working Party; (ii) Draft Schedule of Concessions and Commitments on Goods; (iii) Draft Schedule of Specific Commitments on Trade in Services; (iv) Draft Decision on the Accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the WTO; and, (v) Draft Protocol of Accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Working Party Members agreed to transmit the Package to the General Council for formal action, thus concluding the mandate of the Working Party, in its 20th year after its establishment in 1996.

H.E. Mrs. Zhanar Aitzhanova, Minister of Economic Integration and Chief Negotiator for WTO Accession of Kazakhstan, thanked the Working Party. She stated that WTO membership would send a strong signal that Kazakhstan has established a favourable investment climate and is pursuing WTO-consistent trade policy in the rules-based global economy.

25 Members and 1 Acceding Government intervened to congratulate Kazakhstan on this historic milestone, finalising the 20-year negotiation process. All delegations praised the high quality of the Accession Package. While noting the unprecedented challenges faced by Kazakhstan in this accession, Members underlined the systemic importance of Kazakhstan's WTO accession both for Kazakhstan and the rules-based Multilateral Trading System.



Statements at the 20th Meeting were made *inter alia* by: the EU, the US, China, Brazil, India, the Russian Federation, and, the Acceding Government of Kazakhstan. (WTO Secretariat Photos / Souda Tandara-Stenier)

ACCESSION OF KAZAKHSTAN: SELECTED NEWS ITEMS

President Nazarbayev: WTO membership opens new horizons for Kazakhstan's economy: <http://m.inform.kz/en/article/2789269-wto-membership-opens-new-horizons-for-kazakhstan-s-economy-president-nazarbayev>

European Commission welcomes conclusion of negotiations on Kazakhstan's accession to the WTO: Statement by the EU Ambassador to the WTO: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1331>

Accession Terms of Kazakhstan on Rules and Market Access for Goods and Services

The terms and conditions for the WTO accession of Kazakhstan are wide-ranging, negotiated and designed to support its process of domestic reforms for diversification, modernization, faster growth and competitive integration into the global economy. Its accepted obligations will rationalize domestic rules and will apply on an MFN basis to all WTO Members. Members in their statements congratulated Kazakhstan for the ambitious reforms and vision of its leadership in Astana.

Kazakhstan's final bound tariff rates (FBR) average approximately 6% for all products, 7.6% for agricultural products and, 6% for non-agricultural products. Tariff binding coverage is at 100%, providing predictability and certainty for business. Further improving the business environment, there is a specific commitment to accede to the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) upon accession and to initiate negotiations for accession to the Government Procurement Agreement within a defined time-frame.

In services, there are market opening commitments of interest to business in telecommunications, insurance, banking, transport, tourism, distribution. These sectors will be significantly liberalised. Overall, commitments were accepted in 10 sectors and 116 sub-sectors.

Several Members acknowledged the expanded opportunities to the market of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), while others acknowledged the dynamic effects for the region of Central Asia.

At the Working Party Meeting, all Members considered the Accession Package of Kazakhstan of high quality which would contribute to strengthening the rules-based Multilateral Trading System, providing agenda for sustained domestic reforms in Kazakhstan and with positive effects for the region and the global economy.

Formal action shall be taken by the General Council on the Package adopted *ad referendum* today by the Working Party.



20th and final meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Kazakhstan, 22 June 2015: Statements were made, *inter alia*, by the Delegations of Norway, Ukraine, Mexico, Japan, Australia, Korea, Chinese Taipei, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic. (WTO Secretariat Photo / Souda Tandara-Stenier)

Accession of Kazakhstan: Summary Data

Application	29 January 1996
WP Establishment	6 February 1996
WP Chairman	H.E. Mr. Vesa Himanen (Finland)
WP Members	52 Members
WP Meetings:	20 Meetings
Multilateral:	118 accession specific commitments
Bilateral:	29 agreements on goods 15 agreements on services

Next Steps / Action:

- Adoption of the Accession Package by the General Council: date to be confirmed
- Parliamentary ratification of the Accession Package envisaged for the fall 2015. Ratification deadline agreed: 31 October 2015.

