

**Eighth China Round Table on WTO Accession**  
**Accessions and WTO reform: On the Road to MC12**

**Opening remarks by H.E. Mr Maxim Oreshkin, Minister of Economic Development,  
Russian Federation**

**4 December 2019, Moscow.**

- **Distinguished Colleagues,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**
- **It is my pleasure to see you here in Moscow.**
- **I will be brief, given the tight agenda for the discussions for the next couple of days.**
- On behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the WTO Secretariat and the Government of the People's Republic of China for their efforts in organizing this event. This is the first time a WTO event is held in Russia.
- I hope that this Round Table will prove to be productive and useful for all the participants, especially in light of the prevailing situation in the multilateral trading system.
- Indeed, this was a difficult year for the WTO as well as for the world trade. We have witnessed an escalation of various challenges posed to the global trade rules and their enforcement system.
- A stable multilateral trading system with an effectively functioning WTO at its center is needed more than ever. It is a system all of us - both Members and acceding governments - have extensively invested in. It should be maintained and further developed, both in terms of its' geographical coverage and substance.

- This Round Table provides a unique platform for the WTO Members and Observers to share their experiences gained through WTO accession negotiations and respective domestic reforms, as well as to assess the contributions made by the acceded Members into the modernization of the multilateral trading system. It is also a good opportunity to share views on the current trends and challenges that should be taken into account in the context of the WTO accessions. One of such examples would be the rapid development of regional integration entities, as, for instance, the emergence of the Eurasian Economic Union.
- All of us - and especially those awaiting to join the WTO - need to have a clear picture of the prevailing global environment, as well as of its' prospective transformations.
- This focus is particularly relevant in light of the upcoming 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial conference and the ongoing WTO reform process.
- Moreover, we hope that when all the currently acceding governments finally become part of our WTO family, they will be able to have a fresh look at the prevailing obstacles and identify unconventional approaches to tackle them. In this way, together we will be able to improve and enhance the WTO, making it more resilient and effective.
- For Russia, it is of utmost importance to promote and reinforce fruitful cooperation with all our partners in the Organization. The fundamental aim is to jointly make the multilateral trading system as embodied in the WTO more responsive to the evolving needs and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Global Economy.
- I am very grateful to all of you for taking part in this important event and sharing your ideas on the matters subject to the Round Tables' agenda.
- I am confident that all of us will profit from these discussions.
- I wish you all a successful and fruitful meeting.
- Thank you very much for your attention.