

ACCESSIONS-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS:

(i) Working Party on the Accession of Yemen - Eleventh and Final WP meeting; (ii) Global Seminar on WTO Accessions; (iii) Second China Roundtable, Luang Prabang; (iv) the Director-General's 2013 Annual Report on Accessions and, (v) updated ECAM: Evolving Calendar of Accessions Meetings for 2013/2014 (annexed).

FINAL WORKING PARTY MEETING ON THE ACCESSION OF YEMEN

The Eleventh and Final meeting of the Working Party on the Accession of Yemen took place on Thursday, 26 September 2013. Members of the WP adopted and recommended the Draft Accession Package of Yemen, *ad referendum*, to MC9 for formal action. Director-General Roberto Azevêdo welcomed the decision by the Working Party. In a meeting with Yemeni Trade Minister H.E. Dr Saadalddeen Talib, the Director-General confirmed WTO support for Yemen, including post-accession, as an LDC. Prior to the Final Working Party meeting, the Director-General met with the Delegation of Yemeni Parliamentarians. The adoption *ad referendum* of the draft Accession Package, on 26 September, was historic for Yemen as it was also a National Day.



11th and Final Working Party Meeting on the Accession of Yemen,
Geneva, 26 September 2013

Meeting with Yemeni Parliamentarians

The Director of the Accessions Division, Mr Chiedu Osakwe, chaired a working session with Yemeni Parliamentarians on 25 September 2013. At the session, the contents of the Draft Accession Package of Yemen were explained. The Secretariat responded to questions from the Parliamentarians. The Director of Accessions confirmed the benefits of the Draft Accession Package for Yemen, with regard to creating: (i) conditions for enhanced competitiveness and attraction of investments; (ii) faster growth; (iii) a platform for continuing domestic reforms; (iv) improved governance; (v) trade integration with GCC and globally; and, (vi) the right to WTO Dispute Settlement and other benefits to pursue its development priorities.

The purpose of the Newsletter is to provide Acceding Governments with a summary report of the meetings of the Informal Group on Accessions and operationally relevant information to assist them with preparations for meetings and negotiations associated with their accession. It is one of several practical steps by the WTO Secretariat to ensure transparency on accessions matters. This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of Members and to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

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](#)"
- > [Accession-Related Technical Assistance Activities](#)
- > 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



Meeting between Yemeni Parliamentarians and the Accessions Division, Geneva, 25 September 2013

FIRST GLOBAL SEMINAR ON WTO ACCESSIONS

The first Global Seminar on WTO Accessions took place from 23 to 27 September 2013. It was opened by Director-General Roberto Azevêdo.



Global Seminar on WTO Accessions, Geneva, 23 September 2013

In his opening remarks, Director-General Azevêdo underlined that the Global Seminar marked an important moment for the WTO, not only for accessions but also in the negotiations pillar for Bali. He stressed that Accessions remained a priority for WTO. He highlighted that since 1995, 31 countries have acceded, 6 of which were in the past 2 years.



WTO Director-General, Roberto Azevêdo and Mr Chiedu Osakwe, Director of Accessions Division, Geneva, 23 September 2013

He underlined that the accession process did not end in accession itself, and that the work continues for several years as acceding Governments continue their post-accession adjustments.

The Global Seminar was jointly organized by the Accessions Division and the Institute of Training and Technical Cooperation. Participants included 17 officials from Acceding Governments, Accessions Working Party Chairpersons, a range of WTO Members and Representatives of several International Organizations. The purpose of the Global Seminar was to (i) take stock of the *acquis* from 31 accessions concluded since 1995; (ii) review lessons learned from concluded accessions; (iii) reflect on the directions in which the results of the ratified and deposited protocols were pointing the Trading System; and, (iv) initiate an assessment of how well Accession results were serving the Trading System and the Global economy.

"This sort of Global Seminar should have been the priority agenda of the WTO for Acceding countries. This will give the participants a brighter picture of the organization and build their capacity to go back home to educate and convince the main stakeholders involved in the accession process."

Mr Muhammad Rahim Momand,
Afghanistan



Global Seminar on WTO Accessions, Geneva, 23 September 2013

"It was good to see many participants. As a speaker, it was a challenge to explain the negotiation process because not one size fits all. The Seminar is an opportunity for dialogue between Members and Acceding Governments."

Mr Carlos Gimeno,
European Commission

"The Seminar was a remarkable effort. We need more. A suggestion for the future could be tighter coordination of presentations and translation into participants' languages, which would be helpful. Participants should make use of this opportunity and be active. Overall, the Seminar did a great job of purveying the WTO philosophy to Acceding Members."

Ms Cecilia Klein,
United States of America



Mr Muhammad Rahim Momand, Ms Cecilia Klein, Mr Buavanh Vilavong and Mr Carlos Gimeno, Global Seminar on WTO Accessions, Geneva, 25 September 2013

"It was a useful workshop, with a mixture of experiences. It was a fair method of listening and dealing with issues that occur during the accession, which other Acceding countries, such as Yemen, could benefit from."

Mr Buavanh Vilavong,
Lao PDR

Sessions of the Global Seminar

The different sessions of the Global Seminar were covered by representatives of Member States and the Secretariat and revolved around: (i) the mandate, policy framework and best practices of concluded accessions and the challenges for the future; (ii) rule-making in the WTO, fine-tuning and evolution through accessions and jurisprudence; (iii) description of the multilateral and bilateral track of any accession process by the WTO Secretariat; (iv) technical analysis of the components of the multilateral track of an accession process by representatives of Member States; (v) experience sharing of the bilateral track of an accession process by representative of Members States; (vi) Agriculture; (vii) Accession-related Capacity Building and Outreach; (viii) Roundtable on the role of the WP Chairperson and on the experiences of Chief Negotiators.

The Sessions offered an opportunity for Members and officials from Acceding Governments to exchange views and experiences on Accessions and a broad range of WTO-related issues.

Second China Roundtable, Luang Prabang

At the end of the Global Seminar, the WTO Secretariat reconfirmed that the Second China Roundtable will be held in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, from 15 to 18 October 2013.

The Director-General's Annual Report

The Secretariat has reconfirmed to Members in the Informal Group on Accessions that the Director-General's Report on Accessions will be circulated mid-November. The theme of this year's Annual Report is "WTO Accessions - Transparency and Notification Obligations".

Evolving Calendar of Accessions Meetings (ECAM)¹

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation	
					EN-FR-ES	Own
Monday, 23 – Friday, 27 September	2013 Accessions TA Activity Theme: "The Present and the Future of the Rules-Based Trading System: Contributions of WTO Accessions" – Part I: GLOBAL SEMINAR ON WTO ACCESSIONS (GENEVA) <i>"...safeguarding and strengthening the rules-based multilateral trading system..."</i>					
Thursday, 26 September	Yemen	11 th and final Working Party meeting (PM)	WTO/AIR/4174 dated 3 September 2013 refers	CRI	YES	NO
[Tuesday, 1 – Thursday, 3 October]	WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2013					
[Tuesday, 8 – Wednesday, 9 October]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
Thursday, 10 October	Kazakhstan	Plurilateral Meeting on SPS (AM)	Convening Fax dated 26 September 2013 refers	D	NO	TBC
		Plurilateral Meeting on Agriculture (PM)	Convening Fax dated 26 September 2013 refers	D	NO	TBC
Friday, 11 October	Kazakhstan	18 th Working Party Meeting (AM/PM)	WTO/AIR/4194 dated 26 September 2013 refers	CRII	YES	TBC
[Tuesday, 15 – Friday, 18 October 2013]	2013 Accessions TA Activity Theme: "The Present and the Future of the Rules-Based Trading System: Contributions of WTO Accessions" – Part II: SECOND CHINA PROGRAMME ROUNDTABLE FOR LDCs (LUANG PRABANG, LAO PDR) <i>"The Future of the Multilateral Trading System: Perspectives of LDCs and Article XII Members"</i>					
[Tuesday, 5 – Wednesday, 6 November]	GENERAL COUNCIL					
[Thursday, 7 November]	Afghanistan	5 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	D	YES	NO
[Monday, 11 November]	Bosnia and Herzegovina	13 th Working Party meeting (AM)	Convening Notice pending	W	YES	NO
[November]	Seychelles	5 th Working Party meeting (AM)	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[Tuesday, 3 – Friday, 6 December]	NINTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC9) - BALI					
1st Quarter 2014						
[1 st Quarter 2014]	Algeria	12 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[1 st Quarter 2014]	The Bahamas	3 rd Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO

¹ 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 at least four weeks.

Scheduling and confirmation of meetings also take account of the distribution of meetings in any particular period, and hence, the capacity of Members and the Secretariat alike to cope.

Date	Working Party	Meeting	Status	Room	Interpretation	
					EN-FR-ES	Own
[1 st Quarter 2014]	Azerbaijan	11 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[1 st Quarter 2014]	Ethiopia	4 th Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO
[1 st Quarter 2014]	Liberia	2 nd Working Party meeting	Convening Notice pending	TBC	YES	NO

Note:

Enquiries related to this calendar should be addressed to:

- Ms. Souda Tandara-Stenier (Tel: 022 739 6321; e-mail: Souda.Tandara-Stenier@wto.org);
- Ms. Nadia Ferdi Demierre (Tel: 022 739 6560; e-mail: Nadia.Ferdi@wto.org); or
- accessions@wto.org