



WTO STRUCTURED DISCUSSIONS ON INVESTMENT FACILITATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS¹

September – December 2020

Revision

1. At the meeting of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) held in December 2019, participating Members had agreed to move into negotiating mode as of March 2020,² with a view to achieving a concrete outcome on investment facilitation for development at the Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12). At the open-ended organizational meeting held in February 2020, participating Members re-iterated their decision to start negotiations in March, and endorsed the schedule of meetings and working methodology proposed by the Coordinator to that effect.³ However, the COVID-19 pandemic and related nationwide lockdowns caused the cancellation of the four in-person substantive meetings scheduled for March, April and May 2020.

2. As soon as a secure information technology platform became available for the WTO to conduct discussions remotely, four open-ended informal virtual meetings of the Structured Discussions on IFD were organized.⁴ These four meetings were not used to conduct any negotiations and did not lead to any decision-taking or drafting suggestions by the Coordinator.⁵ These meetings were very successful in allowing participating Members to present new text proposals and engage in detailed and substantive thematic discussions based on the successive revisions of the informal consolidated text circulated to all WTO Members.⁶

3. Following these informal meetings held up to the summer break, negotiations will finally commence in the second half of 2020. The Coordinator has already started having, and will conduct further, informal bilateral consultations at the request of interested delegations to garner their views on the process and way ahead. The proposed schedule of meetings for the second half of 2020 (see table below) is without prejudice to the position of any Member on the issues under discussion.

24-25 September 2020	Negotiating meeting (2 days)
8-9 October 2020	Negotiating meeting (2 days)
9-10 November 2020	Negotiating meeting (2 days)
7-8 December 2020	Negotiating meeting and looking ahead at 2021 (2 days)

4. The proposed meetings during the second semester of 2020 are planned as 2-day in-person meetings with virtual add-on.

¹ Schedule of meetings endorsed by participating Members at the open-ended informal virtual meeting held on 24 July 2020.

² See summary of the meeting of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development held on 12 December 2019, contained in document INF/IFD/R/10 (notably paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10).

³ "Proposed Schedule of meetings January – May 2020" contained in document INF/IFD/W/15/Rev.1, and "Proposed Working Methodology March - May 2020" annexed to document INF/IFD/W/16.

⁴ Three such open-ended informal virtual meetings already took place – namely on 5 June, 24 June and 10 July. The fourth one will be held on 24 July 2020.

⁵ See notably document INF/IFD/W/18 and /Rev.1, paragraph 2, which proposed a schedule of open-ended informal virtual meetings for June and July 2020.

⁶ At the time of writing, the latest version of the consolidated text (INF/IFD/RD/50/Rev.2) includes the written proposals and contributions submitted by Argentina (INF/IFD/RD/42); Brazil (INF/IFD/RD/53); China (INF/IFD/RD/48); the European Union (INF/IFD/RD/46); Japan (INF/IFD/RD/47); the Republic of Korea (INF/IFD/RD/52); and Turkey (INF/IFD/RD/49).