



## **WTO ACCESSIONS**

### **2023 ANNUAL REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL\***

*This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.*

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\* Unless otherwise specified, this Annual Report takes account of confirmed accession-related developments from 1 January 2023 to 29 February 2024.

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## **I. OVERVIEW OF 2023 AND OUTLOOK FOR 2024**

### **- Overview of activities in 2023 (until the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference<sup>1</sup>)**

1. The accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste were gavelled at the 13<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13) in Abu Dhabi. As soon as Comoros and Timor-Leste accept their accession Protocols, the WTO Membership will expand to 166. This is a significant moment for the multilateral trading system as it marks the first expansion of the membership since 2016, the longest gap in WTO history. These accessions demonstrate that, despite the challenging global environment, governments are still drawn to the rules-based multilateral order. This is also a remarkable achievement for two small island least-developed countries (LDCs). WTO accession will set Comoros and Timor-Leste on a track of economic modernisation and transformation, complementing their regional integration efforts within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Association of Southeastern Asian Nations (ASEAN). It is an encouragement to other governments whose accessions are under discussion or to be initiated. In addition, it is a testament to the strong engagement of WTO Members and international partners, and to the enabling role that technical assistance can play in promoting trade integration.

2. In the period under review, interest in the WTO was also manifested in the overall high level of accession-related activity. As always, LDC accessions received priority attention. While the Working Parties on the Accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste each held three formal meetings, work was carried out on a continuous basis throughout the year until the adoption of the respective draft Accession Packages in January 2024. This involved in-depth work on market access, rules and legislation, as well as focused political engagement, domestically and with Members. One key lesson drawn from both accessions was the critical importance of strong political leadership. President Azali Assoumani of Comoros and President José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste were directly involved, especially in the timely finalization of domestic work. I should also recognize the special role played by the Working Party Chairpersons - Ambassador Omar Zniber of Morocco for Comoros and Ambassador Rui Macieira of Portugal for Timor-Leste, who facilitated and championed the deliverables for MC13. Progress was also registered in other LDC accessions. Bhutan and Ethiopia successfully re-launched their processes after years of relative dormancy. Bhutan circulated documentary inputs prior to its graduation from LDC status in December 2023, after a 15-year gap. Ethiopia is also in the process of circulating inputs after a shorter break of four years. I am also pleased to note that Somalia cleared its financial arrears to the WTO in February 2024, which will allow the Working Party to begin the examination of the foreign trade regime in the near future.

3. From a regional perspective, Central Asia and its immediate neighbourhood have been most active in 2023. Uzbekistan held two meetings of the Working Party, accelerating the pace of negotiations after restructuring the negotiating team. Azerbaijan resumed its Working Party engagement in July after a six-year break. Turkmenistan, which began its accession process just two years ago, significantly advanced the preparation of its Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR), the key document required for launching discussions with Members. In Africa, in addition to the progress reported on the accessions of Ethiopia and Somalia, Equatorial Guinea - currently the only country to conduct its negotiations in Spanish - circulated its MFTR, 15 years after the establishment of its accession Working Party. In the Arab region, Iraq was the most active accession dossier. The circulation of all required negotiating inputs was expected to be completed by March 2024, setting the stage for renewed engagement with Members after 15 years of inactivity. The Arab region, which is one of the most under-represented in the Organization, was also the special focus of the 12<sup>th</sup> China Round Table on WTO Accessions, held on the margins of MC13, at which discussions led to the development of a work programme to support Arab accessions. In the Caribbean, work has advanced on Curaçao - the only accession of a separate customs territory among all on-going accessions.

4. The increased level of activity has coincided with the appointment of new Chairpersons who have injected fresh energy in various accession processes. In the year under review, 11 chairpersons were appointed for the Accession Working Parties of Azerbaijan, The Bahamas, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Curaçao, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Serbia, Somalia and Uzbekistan. Currently, of the 14 filled Working Party Chairperson positions, six are occupied by women, which is the highest proportion historically. Overall, the Chairpersons reflect the diversity of the WTO membership. Following their appointments, the new Chairpersons have proactively reached out to acceding

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<sup>1</sup> The 13<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference was held from 26 February to 2 March 2024.

governments, including through visits to the capitals, and to Members, aiming to facilitate and mobilize necessary support to advance the negotiations.

5. The year 2023 was also marked by a heightened level of activity on the accession-related technical assistance front as the Secretariat could engage directly with many accession negotiating teams in capitals and in Geneva.<sup>2</sup> The Accessions Division conducted 14 missions to eight acceding countries to conduct accession-specific workshops and technical sessions, while maintaining the virtual mode of delivery, aided by issue-specific experts in other Divisions, to complement in-person activities. One such example was Turkmenistan where the preparation of the MFTR was divided into 5 clusters over 12 months, with each cluster consisting of a week-long virtual training delivered by WTO experts and a week-long mission in Ashgabat to complete specific sections of the Memorandum. In addition, a week-long training course on WTO rules relevant to accession negotiations was conducted in Geneva, with the participation of negotiators from 11 governments active in the accession negotiations. Experience-sharing dialogues were held for the Asia-Pacific region and the Arab region, supported by the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> China Round Tables on WTO Accessions held in Lao PDR and the UAE, respectively. Overall, over 1000 participants took part in these TA and outreach activities.

6. On the Trade for Peace (T4P) front, the finalization of the accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste represents an important achievement for the initiative born out of the vision of the g7+ WTO Accessions Group, an association of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCS) to use the accession process to promote peace, security and stability. At MC13, the Group met in an expanded format of the g7+ at the ministerial level for the first time. These outputs are the fruit of collaboration and partnerships built through the Secretariat's T4P Programme to bring together the trade, peace and development communities. At the programme level, work has advanced on the first publication on Trade for Peace, the partnerships with the University of St. Gallen and the Geneva Graduate Institute's TradeLab International Economic Law Clinic on research projects (under Pillar 3: research), and the second-year delivery of the Interdisciplinary Master's Course on Trade for Peace with the Geneva Graduate Institute (under Pillar 4: training and capacity building).

## - Outlook 2024

7. Following MC13, our work on accessions is focused on two fronts: (i) providing post-accession support to Comoros and Timor-Leste; and (ii) advancing the remaining 22 accessions, in line with the guidance given by Ministers. Regarding post-accession, the Secretariat's support will focus on the timely ratification of the respective Protocols of Accession<sup>3</sup> and the preparation for effective membership, based on the best practices on post-accession emerging from past experiences<sup>4</sup>. I hope that WTO Members will support the implementation of the Post-Accession Implementation Strategies developed by Comoros and Timor-Leste.<sup>5</sup> From the Secretariat's side, the Accessions Division will continue to serve as the focal point for the two LDCs during the post-accession transition phase, building on the country-specific knowledge, expertise and networks which the Division has developed over the years.

8. Regarding the work programme for 2024, I expect to see a significant surge of interest and activity, in part prompted by the successful conclusion of the two accessions. Increased interest was already evident at MC13 where acceding governments were represented in unprecedented numbers, many at the ministerial level. The technical preparatory work undertaken by acceding governments in 2023 will translate into direct engagement with Members at the Working Party level, in many cases for the first time or after a long period of inactivity. In terms of technical maturity, the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the most advanced files, especially following the recent adoption of outstanding legislation which had been requested by the Working Party. Taking into account this and other developments which have taken place since the Working Party last met in February 2018,

<sup>2</sup> This was also made possible by the clearance of arrears of observer fees by six acceding governments during the period under review.

<sup>3</sup> According to paragraph 7 of the respective Protocols, the timeline for acceptance is set for 31 August 2024 for Comoros and 30 August 2024 for Timor-Leste, unless the General Council may decide on later date.

<sup>4</sup> See "Accession to the WTO: Best Practices on WTO Post-Accession: Note by the Secretariat" in document [WT/ACC/27](#).

<sup>5</sup> Draft strategies were presented during MC13. The final versions of the strategies will be issued in the coming weeks.

I would like to encourage Members to assess the feasibility of advancing this long-standing accession process towards a possible conclusion in the near future.

9. In 2024, the Secretariat will continue to accord special attention to the accession of LDCs, including graduating ones, especially with regard to the provision of technical assistance and capacity building. In particular, I would like to urge Members to support the efforts of Bhutan, Ethiopia and Somalia, which are at various stages of the accession process. Bhutan (the last remaining accession in the Asia-Pacific region after the completion of Timor-Leste's process) and Ethiopia are about to resume activity in their Working Parties, while Somalia is preparing for its first Working Party meeting. I should also note that the Secretariat stands ready to assist the three other remaining LDC accessions - São Tomé and Príncipe, which is scheduled to graduate from the LDC status in December 2024, as well as South Sudan and Sudan, which are both classified FCS – when they are ready for accession engagement.

10. From a regional lens, I expect the Central Asian accession dossiers to remain most active in the coming period, with Uzbekistan accelerating the negotiations at a faster pace. The accession of Azerbaijan is also expected to pick up pace, building on the solid technical groundwork laid over the years. Turkmenistan is expected to table its MFTR by mid-year to start its engagement with Members. In the Arab region, the Working Party on the Accession of Iraq will formally resume its work for the first time since 2008. In Africa and the Caribbean, the stage is also set for the accessions of Equatorial Guinea and Curaçao to hold their first Working Party meetings. Furthermore, at MC13, the Ministers of Lebanon, Libya and Serbia indicated their readiness to re-engage in their respective accession processes, once domestic preparation is concluded.

11. I am pleased to see this renewed level of interest from acceding governments, which are using WTO accession as a vehicle for necessary economic reforms to improve the livelihoods of their people. As I said at MC13, accessions have always been a barometer of confidence in the WTO and the rules-based multilateral trading system. What is different at present is that large economies, such as Ethiopia, Iraq and Uzbekistan, have returned to the accession negotiating table. This presents Members with an opportunity to seek enhanced market access and to explore issues of systemic interest. I would like to encourage Members to engage constructively and dedicate the necessary level of resources to match the efforts of acceding governments who link their own growth and future prosperity to the WTO's core values of openness, transparency, good governance, and the rule of law. I hope that we will not need to wait quite as long before we welcome the next new member of the WTO family. For my part, I shall do the best I can with the budget constraint to direct requisite resources to provide support to accessions. More concretely, the Secretariat will step up its coordination efforts with Members and partner institutions within the framework of the Coordination Group of Accession-related Technical Assistance, to respond to the greater and constantly evolving needs of acceding governments for deeper engagement in the accession negotiations.

12. On the Trade for Peace front, the focus will be the finalization of the first publication in this field, provisionally entitled "Trade for Peace: An Integrated Perspective on the Role of Trade to Support Peace and Economic Development". The new publication plans to showcase the linkages between trade and peace by revisiting economic evidence and case studies, and more specifically, highlight the socio-political, governance and macro-economic determinants that may support trade and trade policy in making a positive contribution to peace. The publication of the book is planned as part of a high-level Trade for Peace Conference to be organised in the last quarter of the year.

13. In conclusion, I look forward to working closely with acceding governments, Members, Working Party Chairpersons and development partners to advance WTO accessions in 2024.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala  
WTO Director-General

## II. DEVELOPMENTS IN 2023 (UNTIL MC13)

### 1. ACCESSION WORKING PARTIES: AN OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

14. At the start of 2023, 24 governments were in the process of WTO accession.<sup>6</sup> The number decreased to 22, with the completion of the mandate of the Working Parties on the Accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste in January 2024, followed by the decisions on the two accessions at MC13 on 26 February 2024<sup>7</sup>.

15. In the period under review, nine formal Working Party meetings were held for four accessions. These were on the accessions of Azerbaijan (15<sup>th</sup> meeting on 6 July 2023), Comoros (8<sup>th</sup> meeting on 19 January 2023, 9<sup>th</sup> meeting on 5 October 2023 and 10<sup>th</sup> meeting on 9 January 2024), Timor-Leste (5<sup>th</sup> meeting on 20 April 2023, 6<sup>th</sup> meeting on 11 October 2023 and 7<sup>th</sup> meeting on 11 January 2024), and Uzbekistan (6<sup>th</sup> meeting on 14 March 2023 and 7<sup>th</sup> meeting on 16 November 2023). In addition, two Technical Verification meetings on the Consolidated Draft Schedules on Goods and Services were held for the accessions of Comoros (on 4 May 2023) and Timor-Leste (on 17 November 2023).

16. Progress in the accession Working Parties was documented as follows:

- The Factual Summary of Points Raised was revised by the Secretariat for the Working Party on the Accession of Uzbekistan.<sup>8</sup>
- The draft Reports of the Working Party were revised by the Secretariat for the accessions of Azerbaijan<sup>9</sup>, Bhutan<sup>10</sup>, Comoros (two revisions)<sup>11</sup> and Timor-Leste (three revisions)<sup>12</sup>.
- Two draft Accession Packages were prepared by the Secretariat for Comoros<sup>13</sup> and Timor-Leste<sup>14</sup>. Following the adoption of the Accession Packages, *ad referendum*, by the Working Parties at their final meetings, they were circulated to all Members.<sup>15</sup>
- Progress reports to the General Council were issued by the respective Chairpersons for the accessions of Comoros<sup>16</sup> and Timor-Leste<sup>17</sup>.

Annex 3 contains the status of the latest documents for all on-going accessions.

17. In total, 135 accession documents were issued under document symbols [WT/ACC](#), [WT/ACC/SPEC](#) and [JOB/ACC](#) series, for eight Working Parties (Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Comoros, Curaçao, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Timor-Leste and Uzbekistan).

<sup>6</sup> See the basic economic profiles of acceding governments in Annex 2-1.

<sup>7</sup> [WT/MIN\(24\)/31](#) and [WT/MIN\(24\)/32](#).

<sup>8</sup> [JOB/ACC/UZB/3/Rev.2](#).

<sup>9</sup> [WT/ACC/SPEC/AZE/4/Rev.5](#).

<sup>10</sup> [WT/ACC/SPEC/BTN/4/Rev.1](#).

<sup>11</sup> [WT/ACC/SPEC/COM/5/Rev.5](#) and [WT/ACC/SPEC/COM/5/Rev.6](#)

<sup>12</sup> [WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/5/Rev.1](#), [WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/5/Rev.2](#) and [WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/5/Rev.3](#)

<sup>13</sup> The draft Accession Package contained in (i) the Draft Report of the Working Party ([WT/ACC/SPEC/COM/5/Rev.6](#)); (ii) the Draft Schedule of Concessions and Commitments on Goods ([WT/ACC/SPEC/COM/6/Rev.2](#)); and (iii) the Draft Schedule of Specific Commitments on Services ([WT/ACC/SPEC/COM/7/Rev.1](#)).

<sup>14</sup> The draft Accession Package contained in (i) the Draft Report of the Working Party ([WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/5/Rev.3](#)); (ii) the Draft Schedule of Concessions and Commitments on Goods ([WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/6/Rev.1](#)); and (iii) the Draft Schedule of Specific Commitments on Services ([WT/ACC/SPEC/TLS/7/Rev.1](#)).

<sup>15</sup> [WT/ACC/COM/51](#), [WT/ACC/COM/51/Add.1](#) and Add.2 for Comoros; and, [WT/ACC/TLS/34](#), [WT/ACC/TLS/34/Add.1](#) and Add.2 for Timor-Leste.

<sup>16</sup> [JOB/ACC/COM/15](#).

<sup>17</sup> [JOB/ACC/TLS/10](#).

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## 2. WORKING PARTY CHAIRPERSONS

18. Out of the 24 Accession Working Parties (including on the Accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste until January 2024), 16 had Chairpersons (see Annex 4). Of these, all were Geneva-based and six were women.<sup>18</sup>

19. New Chairpersons were appointed by the General Council to 11 Accession Working Parties in 2023:

- Ambassador Alparslan Acarsoy (Türkiye) for the Working Party on the Accession of Azerbaijan on 7 March;
- Ambassador Anita Pipan (Slovenia) for the Working Party on the Accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 7 March;
- Ambassador Matthew Wilson (Barbados) for the Working Party on the Accession of Curaçao on 7 March;
- Ambassador Dr. José R. Sánchez-Fung (Dominican Republic) for the Working Party on the Accession of Equatorial Guinea on 7 March;
- Ms. Rebecca Fisher Lamb (United Kingdom) for the Working Party on the Accession of Ethiopia on 7 March;
- Ambassador Margit Szűcs (Hungary) for the Working Party on the Accession of Serbia on 7 March;
- Ambassador Seong deok Yun (Republic of Korea) for the Working Party on the Accession of Uzbekistan on 7 March;
- Ambassador Désirée Schweitzer (Austria) for the Working Party on the Accession of Bhutan on 9 May;
- Ambassador Saqer Abdullah Almoqbel (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) for the Working Party on the Accession of Iraq on 29 June;
- Ambassador Nadia Theodore (Canada) for the Working Party on the Accession of The Bahamas on 15 December; and,
- Ambassador Nina Tornberg (Sweden) for the Working Party on the Accession of Somalia on 15 December.

20. The position of Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Algeria became vacant following the departure of Ambassador Jose Luis Cancela (Uruguay). Consultations are ongoing with Members on the appointment of a new Chairperson.

21. A briefing session was organised by the Secretariat in April 2023 for the seven Working Party Chairpersons appointed in March. Individual briefings were organised for other Chairpersons following their appointments.

22. During the period under review, Working Party Chairpersons remained actively engaged and played a significant role in advancing the accession processes. They consulted with Members and acceding governments in various formats and configurations, and participated in outreach activities to improve technical and policy understanding on WTO accessions.

- The Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Azerbaijan, Ambassador Alparslan Acarsoy (Türkiye), visited Baku on 27-28 April 2023, accompanied by the

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<sup>18</sup> More information on the selection process of accession Working Party Chairpersons can be found in Section 2.4 "Chairperson of Accession Working Party" of document [WT/ACC/33/Rev.1](#).

Secretariat.<sup>19</sup> During the visit, the Chair met with high-ranking officials in the government, including the: (i) Deputy Prime Minister, (ii) Minister of Economy, (iii) State Customs Committee Head, (iv) Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection, (v) Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, and (vi) Deputy Chair of the Food Safety Agency.

- The Chairperson of the Working Party on the Accession of Iraq, Ambassador Sager Abdullah AlMoqbel (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), visited Baghdad on 15-16 January 2024.<sup>20</sup> During the visit, the Chair met with high-ranking officials in the government, including the: (i) President of the Republic, (ii) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning, (iii) Minister of Trade and Chair of Iraq's National Committee on WTO Accession, (iv) Head of the Parliamentary Economic Industry and Trade Committee, and (v) Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Chair also attended the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Iraq's National Committee on WTO Accession, chaired by the Minister of Trade.

### **3. TRANSPARENCY IN THE ACCESSION PROCESS**

23. Ensuring transparency in the accession process remains a key priority for the Secretariat and Members. Various transparency measures continued to be implemented during the period under review.

#### **i. Briefing on WTO Accessions to Members**

24. While the Secretariat did not hold meetings of the Informal Group on Accessions (IGA) in 2023, it organised a briefing session on WTO Accessions for Members on 27 September. The briefing focused on: (i) the concluding phase of the WTO accession process; and (ii) the state of play in ongoing accession negotiations.

#### **ii. WTO Accessions Newsletter, press release and social media**

25. The Newsletter ensures transparency on accession matters, including recent developments, the calendar of activities, and issues of interests to the accession community. It aims to enhance communication with acceding governments, Chairpersons, Members, partners and the broader trade policy community. The Secretariat issued three WTO Accessions Newsletters covering developments in the period under review, in June and September 2023 and in January 2024.

26. Accession activities are regularly published through WTO press releases and accession-dedicated social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn. During the period under review, 23 press releases were issued and 256 tweets were issued to keep the public informed on accession-related activities on a regular basis.

#### **iii. Accessions Transparency Toolbox**

##### **- WTO Accessions Intelligence Portal (AIP)**

27. The Accessions Intelligence Portal (<https://www.wto.org/accessions>) aims at enhancing transparency on WTO accession negotiations. The AIP provides access to documentation and data on the WTO accession processes, including completed and ongoing accessions. The Portal is regularly updated based on documentation submitted by acceding governments and produced by the Secretariat with respect to ongoing accessions.<sup>21</sup> A new, more user-friendly layout of the AIP is under development and is scheduled to be launched in 2024.

##### **- Accession Commitments Database (ACDB)**

28. The Accession Commitments Database (<http://acdb.wto.org>) provides access to all accession-specific commitments and related information contained in Accession Working Party Reports and Protocols of the 36 Article XII Members. The accession commitments of Comoros and Timor-Leste

<sup>19</sup> The report on the Chair's visit was circulated in document [JOB/ACC/AZE/4](#). Also see [WTO | 2023 News items - Chair discusses resumption of Azerbaijan's Working Party activity during visit to Baku](#)

<sup>20</sup> The report on the Chair's visit was circulated in document [JOB/ACC/IRO/3](#). Also see "[Working Party Chair visits Baghdad to hold high-level consultations on Iraq's accession](#)".

<sup>21</sup> While the AIP is open to the public, some parts of the website, including access to documents of ongoing accession negotiations, remain password-protected and are only accessible to Members and acceding governments.



will be added to the Database once both become formal Members. The ACDB is available to the general public in the three WTO official languages.

#### - Register of Bilateral Market Access Agreements

29. The Register of Bilateral Market Access Agreements contains basic information regarding signed bilateral market access agreements on goods and services that have been deposited with the Secretariat. The Register lists the type of the agreement (goods; services; or both), and the dates of signature and deposit. The content of bilateral market access agreements remains confidential to the signatories and the Secretariat, which acts as the depository of the Agreements. Reports generated by the Register are available to WTO Members via a password-protected access: [https://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/acc\\_e/xacc\\_e/register\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/xacc_e/register_e.htm).

### 4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND OUTREACH<sup>22</sup>

#### i. Technical assistance

30. Technical assistance (TA) is critical to support the progress of accession negotiations, in particular for LDCs. The importance of TA has been emphasized, including at MC12 and MC13. In addition, one of the four key results of the Secretariat's Biennial Technical Assistance and Training Plan<sup>23</sup> (TA Plan) focuses on the participation of acceding governments in accession negotiations and prioritizes the needs of LDCs.

31. The Secretariat works closely with Members and development partners to support acceding governments, placing special importance on coordination. In July 2022, it launched the Coordination Group on Accessions-related Technical Assistance, providing a forum for development partners and acceding governments to exchange information on WTO accession-specific needs and assistance on a periodic basis. On 20 April 2023, the Group held its meeting to discuss the support needed for Comoros and Timor-Leste to complete their accession negotiations, and on their post-accession technical assistance needs.<sup>24</sup>

32. Ahead of the conclusion of the accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste, the Secretariat assisted both governments in the preparation for their respective WTO membership, including in the development of their comprehensive post-accession implementation strategies. (See Section IV: Post-Accession)

33. For the period under review, which followed several years of travel limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of TA activities were delivered in person, complemented by hybrid and virtual delivery. The activities included, *inter alia*, (i) tailored national training sessions and seminars; (ii) missions; and (iii) roundtables/dialogues. In total, approximately 1000 participants took part in these activities.

#### - National activities

34. The Accessions Division, in collaboration with other Secretariat Divisions and/or other partner institutions, delivered technical assistance and advice to the following acceding governments: Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan:

- i. **Azerbaijan:** During the visit of the Chairperson of the Working Party, Ambassador Alparslan Acarsoy (Türkiye), to Baku on 26-27 April, the Secretariat held consultations with experts from the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss outstanding issues identified in the Working Party Report. Additionally, at the request of the Government, the Secretariat organised technical sessions in Geneva for visiting experts from Baku, covering fisheries subsidies, investment facilitation, services domestic regulation, State Trading Enterprises (STEs) and subsidies, on 18-21 December.

<sup>22</sup> This section reflects TA activities delivered between 1 January 2023 and 29 February 2024.

<sup>23</sup> The plans for 2022-23 and 2024-25 are contained in documents [WT/COMTD/W/260/Rev.1](#) and [WT/COMTD/W/273](#), respectively.

<sup>24</sup> [WTO | 2023 News items - Technical Assistance Coordination Group reviews Comoros, Timor-Leste post-accession needs](#)

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- ii. Bhutan: At the request of the Government, the Secretariat provided virtual training sessions on: (i) trade in services and market access negotiations on services (31 May, 1, 5, 8, 9, 13 and 23 June), (ii) market access negotiations on goods (2 June), and (iii) agriculture (14 June). These sessions were followed by a Secretariat's mission to Thimphu on 10-14 July to hold meetings with the Government in view of the relaunch of the accession process. A package of updated negotiating inputs required for the resumption of the Working Party process was also finalised. An additional mission took place on 24-28 July to help the preparation of an updated offer on trade in services.
  - iii. Comoros: Assistance on the preparation of accession documentation was provided throughout the year. Additionally, the Secretariat undertook a technical assistance mission to Moroni on 20-23 November to hold meetings with the Government in view of the finalization of the accession process by MC13. Comoros' post-accession technical assistance needs were first presented and discussed in the meeting of the Coordination-Group on Accession-related Technical Assistance on 20 April. Comoros presented its Post-Accession Implementation Strategy to Members and development partners at a Round Table on Post-Accession on 25 February 2024, on the margins of MC13.<sup>25</sup>
  - iv. Equatorial Guinea: At the request of the Government, the Secretariat undertook a mission to Malabo on 15-17 August, to (i) introduce participants to the WTO, WTO agreements, and the accession process, including the documentary requirements; (ii) assist in the preparation of technical documents required to hold the first meeting of the WP; and (iii) discuss the Accession Roadmap, which outlined the steps leading up to the first WP meeting.
  - v. Timor-Leste: Assistance on the preparation of the accession documentation was provided throughout the year. Additionally, the Secretariat undertook a technical assistance mission to Dili on 4-10 September to hold meetings with the new Government in view of the finalization of the accession process by MC13. Timor-Leste' post-accession technical assistance needs were first presented and discussed in the meeting of the Coordination-Group on Accession-related Technical Assistance on 20 April. A dedicated Round Table on Post-Accession was held on 11 January 2024. The Secretariat undertook a mission to Dili on 22-25 January 2024 to assist in the preparation of Timor-Leste's Post-Accession Implementation Strategy. The Strategy was later presented to Members and development partners at a Round Table on Post-Accession on 25 February 2024, on the margins of MC13.<sup>26</sup>
  - vi. Turkmenistan: At the request of the Government, the Secretariat undertook four missions to Ashgabat, to deliver technical assistance on the WTO accession process (29-31 May) and the MFTR (three clusters of trainings on 3-14 July, 23-27 October<sup>27</sup> and 18-22 December) Virtual trainings with WTO experts on the MFTR were held on 2-6 October 2023, 20-24 November 2023, and 29 January to 2 February 2024, in preparation for the second, third and fourth clusters of in-person trainings, respectively. Some sessions were conducted in partnership with the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Technical assistance round tables with development partners were also organized during the missions in May and October.
  - vii. Uzbekistan: At the request of the Government, the Secretariat undertook three missions to Tashkent, to deliver technical assistance on (i) agriculture (5-8 September), (ii) trade in services (19-21 September), and (iii) accession documentation (14-20 October). The Secretariat organised technical sessions in Geneva for visiting experts from Tashkent, covering trade remedies, STEs, subsidies, trade in services, SPS and TBT issues on 14-17 November.

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<sup>25</sup> [WTO | 2024 News items - Comoros round table discusses technical assistance needs to maximize WTO membership benefits](#)

<sup>26</sup> [WTO | 2024 News items - Round table on Timor-Leste's post-accession strategy to maximize WTO membership benefits](#)

<sup>27</sup> [WTO | 2023 News items - Turkmenistan advances work aimed at starting WTO accession negotiations in 2024](#)

## - Global activities

35. The 11th China Round Table on WTO Accessions took place in Vientiane, Lao PDR, on 1-3 February, entitled: "WTO Accessions and Trade Integration: Stories from the Asia-Pacific". Held on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lao PDR's WTO accession, the event discussed: (i) the contributions of the Asia-Pacific to the rules-based multilateral trading system; (ii) the state of play in the multilateral and plurilateral discussions in the WTO and the latest developments in preparation for MC13; (iii) Lao PDR's 10 years of WTO membership, based on the study "Lao PDR: a Retrospective on 10 Years of WTO Membership"<sup>28</sup>; and (iv) the latest best practices in LDC accessions and post-accession.<sup>29</sup> The Round Table was attended by over 100 participants, including representatives of LDC acceding governments, Members, WP Chairpersons, international organizations and development partners, as well as a variety of stakeholders from the host government.

36. The 12<sup>th</sup> China Round Table on WTO Accessions took place in Abu Dhabi, UAE, on 24-25 February 2024, on the margins of MC13.<sup>30</sup> As the first Round Table in the Arab region, which is one of the most under-represented in the WTO, the event was organized around the theme "Arab Perspectives on WTO Accessions and the Multilateral Trading System" and discussed: (i) the draft study on "Best Practices in WTO Accessions for Arab Countries: Lessons from Past and On-going Accessions in the Region", prepared in collaboration with the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)<sup>31</sup>; (ii) translating next steps in the accession process into policy action and technical assistance/capacity building support, with development partners; (iii) the pre-launch of the first Trade for Peace publication, provisionally entitled "Trade for Peace: An Integrated Perspective on the Role of Trade to Support Peace and Economic Development". The High-Level session on 25 February with the participation of the WTO Director-General and 12 Ministers.

37. A week-long course on WTO rules in accession negotiations took place on 4-8 December 2023 in the WTO in Geneva.<sup>32</sup> A total of 29 government officials from 11 governments<sup>33</sup> which are actively engaged in their respective accession negotiations took part in this training activity on WTO accession procedures and rules. Sessions with WTO experts covered the accession process and the WTO legal disciplines at stake in accession negotiations in areas such as: frameworks for making and enforcing policies, transparency, trading rights, import and export regulations (tariff and non-tariff barriers), customs procedures, trade remedies, subsidies, free zones, trade-related investment measures, state-trading enterprises, TBT, SPS and TRIPS. A roundtable discussion with former accession negotiators also presented an opportunity for experience- and knowledge-sharing.

## ii. Outreach

### - Informal Group of Acceding Governments (IGAG)

38. The Informal Group of Acceding Governments (IGAG), comprising 24 acceding governments and coordinated by Uzbekistan, held four meetings during the period under review,<sup>34</sup> including its first Ministerial meeting on the margins of MC13.<sup>35</sup> In 2023, the Group discussed, among other topics: (i) the 2022 DG Annual Report on WTO Accessions, including an overview of 2022 and the outlook for 2023, and (ii) accessions state of play and upcoming activities, including MC13. At the first IGAG Ministerial meeting chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, on

<sup>28</sup> The study is available here: [Lao People's Democratic Republic: A Retrospective on 10 Years of WTO Membership](#).

<sup>29</sup> [WTO | 2023 News items - 11th China Round Table looks at integration of Asia-Pacific in world trade, LDC accessions](#)

<sup>30</sup> See "[China Round Table looks at Arab perspectives on WTO accession](#)"

<sup>31</sup> The presentation of the study was initially planned during the 3rd Regional Dialogue on WTO Accessions for the Arab Region scheduled from 31 October-2 November 2023 in Abu Dhabi, UAE, but the joint activity was postponed.

<sup>32</sup> [WTO | 2023 News items - Training course on WTO rules in accession negotiations opens in Geneva](#)

<sup>33</sup> Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Curaçao, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Serbia, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

<sup>34</sup> The IGAG met on 2 March 2023 (hybrid), 18 December 2023 (hybrid), 7 February 2024 (hybrid) and 26 February 2024 (in-person in Abu Dhabi, at the level of Ministers and Heads of Delegation).

<sup>35</sup> [WTO 2024 | News items - Informal Group of Acceding Governments holds first ministerial meeting at MC13](#)

26 February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, acceding governments adopted the first IGAG Ministerial statement.<sup>36</sup>

#### - **g7+ WTO Accessions Group (g7+ Group)**

39. The g7+ WTO Accessions Group held four meetings,<sup>37</sup> including a meeting at the ministerial level held on the margins of MC13.<sup>38</sup> The Group focused on preparing for the Ministerial meeting, where the expansion of membership to accommodate all members of the g7+ was announced.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, discussions continued on developing a Work Programme on Trade for Peace, based on the Third Ministerial Declaration.<sup>40</sup> Preparation for consultations with Members on this Programme in the WTO Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) was also a priority, aiming for a decision on the Group's proposal at the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14). More information on the Trade for Peace Programme can be found in Section VI.

#### iii. **China's LDCs and Accessions Programme (The China Programme)**

40. The "China's LDCs and Accessions Programme" (the China Programme) was extended on 23 October 2023. A signing ceremony for the renewal of the China-WTO Memorandum of Understanding on "China's LDCs and Accessions Programme" took place on the margins of the 12th China Round Table on 25 February 2024 in Abu Dhabi, UAE.<sup>41</sup> The China Programme, initiated in July 2011 under the WTO's Aid for Trade initiative, aims at strengthening LDCs' participation in the WTO and assisting acceding governments in joining the WTO. Out of the six pillars, the Accessions Division is responsible for the implementation of Pillar I "WTO Accessions Internship Programme"; and Pillar II "Annual China Round Tables on WTO Accessions".<sup>42</sup>

41. Under the WTO Accessions Internship Programme (Pillar I), seven interns worked in the Accessions Division in the year under review.<sup>43</sup> Of the 48 interns that have participated in the Programme since its launch in 2011, 19 have been from LDCs and 29 from non-LDCs.<sup>44</sup> 18 men and 30 women have participated in the Programme. The breakdown of interns per region is presented in Figure 1.

<sup>36</sup> See WTO document [WT/MIN\(24\)/22/Rev.1](#).

<sup>37</sup> Held on 12, 16 and 21 February 2024; as well as 26 February 2024 (Minister-level).

<sup>38</sup> "g7+ Group steps up efforts to promote Trade for Peace agenda in the WTO" [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news24\\_e/acc\\_12mar24\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/acc_12mar24_e.htm)

<sup>39</sup> Membership of the Group included nine members associated with WTO accessions: three WTO Article XII Members: Afghanistan, Liberia and Yemen, and six WTO acceding governments: Comoros, Sao Tomé and Principe, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Timor-Leste. At the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi, the Group's membership was expanded to accommodate all members of the g7+ association, including 12 original WTO Members: Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands and Togo. The expanded Group was accordingly renamed as the g7+ Group.

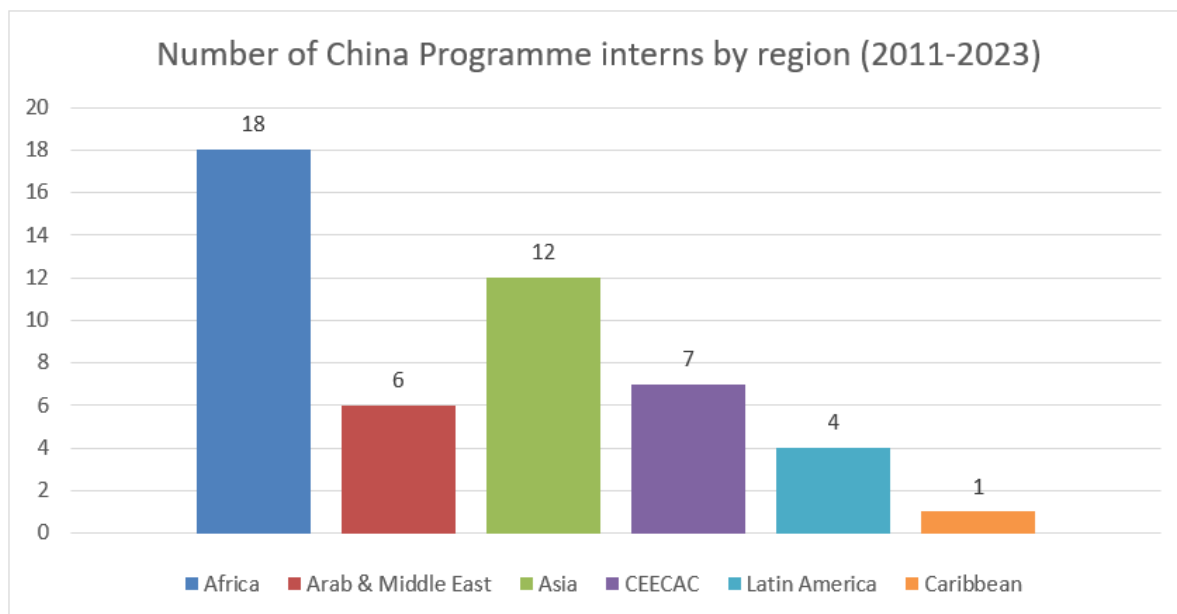
<sup>40</sup> See WTO document [WT/MIN\(24\)/25](#).

<sup>41</sup> "China commits USD 490,000 to support WTO accessions and least-developed countries" [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/tech\\_23oct23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tech_23oct23_e.htm)

<sup>42</sup> More background and information on the six pillars can be found here: [WTO | WTO accessions - China's LDCs and Accessions Programme](#).

<sup>43</sup> The 2023 China WTO Accessions Internship Programme participants were from Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Grenada, Lebanese Republic (2), Lao PDR, Malawi, Oman, and Sudan.

<sup>44</sup> An overview of former and current participants, including alumni stories, can be found here: [WTO | WTO accessions - The China WTO accession internship programme](#).

**Figure 1: China Programme interns by region (2011-2023)**

#### iv. Partnerships

42. The Secretariat works closely with international partners to assist the efforts of acceding Governments. These partners include the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), ASEAN Secretariat, Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Trade Centre (ITC), Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Islamic UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and World Bank. In the period under review, these partners took part in various national, regional or global activities.

### III. State of play in Accession Working Parties

43. Table 1 provides an overview of 24 accessions, including Comoros and Timor-Leste which will officially become WTO Members after the deposit of the instruments of acceptance. The table is organized by the status of accession negotiations. A range of challenging factors remained in play in accession negotiations. Domestic political dynamics, election cycles, reorganized government priorities, regional integration efforts, geopolitics and/or fragility and conflict had an impact on progress in many accessions. This section provides the state of play on the ongoing accessions, as of February 2024. More details of the state of play are provided and regularly updated in the [WTO accession website](#) and Accessions Newsletter.

**Table 1: Current accessions by general status**

General Status	Accession
<b>1. Strategic focus (2)</b>	Comoros*, Timor-Leste*
<b>2. Work in progress (2)</b>	Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan
<b>3. Reactivation (4)</b>	Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia*, Iraq
<b>4. Activation (4)</b>	Curaçao, Equatorial Guinea, Somalia*, Turkmenistan
<b>5. Inactive (12)</b>	Algeria, Andorra, The Bahamas, Belarus, Iran, Lebanese Republic, Libya, Sao Tomé and Príncipe*, Serbia, South Sudan*, Sudan*, Syrian Arab Republic

\* Least-Developed Countries (LDCs)

"Strategic focus" indicates accessions which could be concluded in 2023-2024, based on the level of technical advancement of the dossiers.

"Work in progress" indicates technical advancement and regular exchange of information with WTO Members and the Secretariat.

"Reactivation" indicates exchange of information with the Secretariat and/or WTO Members with the objective of early resumption of activities at the level of the Working Party after a period of dormancy/inactivity.

"Activation" indicates exchange of information with the Secretariat with the objective to begin the Working Party process.

"Inactive" indicates no activities at the level of the Working Party for at least three years.

## 1. STRATEGIC FOCUS

44. [Comoros](#): Comoros applied for WTO accession in March 2007. The Working Party was established in October 2007 and held its first meeting in December 2016. The eighth<sup>45</sup> and ninth<sup>46</sup> Working Party meetings were held respectively on 19 January and 5 October 2023. The draft Goods and Services Schedules were verified by signatories at a technical verification meeting on 4 May 2023. At its final (tenth) meeting<sup>47</sup> on 9 January 2024, the Working Party adopted, *ad referendum*, the draft accession package and concluded its mandate by forwarding it for action by Ministers at the 13<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13). Following the formal decision by Ministers, Comoros signed its Protocol of Accession to the WTO on 26 February 2024.<sup>48</sup> The signed Protocol is subject to ratification and is open for acceptance by Comoros until 31 August 2024.

45. [Timor-Leste](#): Timor-Leste applied for WTO accession in November 2016. The Working Party was established in December 2016 and held its first meeting in October 2020. The fifth<sup>49</sup> and sixth<sup>50</sup> meetings of the Working Party took place on 20 April and 11 October 2023, respectively. The draft Goods and Services Schedules were verified by signatories at a technical verification meeting on 17 November 2023. At its final (seventh) meeting<sup>51</sup> on 11 January 2024, the Working Party adopted, *ad referendum*, the draft accession package and concluded its mandate by forwarding it for action by Ministers at MC13. Following the formal decision by Ministers, Timor-Leste signed its Protocol of Accession to the WTO on 26 February 2024.<sup>52</sup> The signed Protocol is subject to ratification and is open for acceptance by Timor-Leste until 30 August 2024.

## 2. WORK IN PROGRESS

46. [Azerbaijan](#): Azerbaijan applied for WTO accession in June 1997. The Working Party was established in July 1997 and held its first meeting in June 2002. The 15<sup>th</sup> meeting<sup>53</sup> of the Working Party was held on 6 July 2023 after a six-year hiatus. Multilateral negotiations are underway on the basis of the fifth revision of the Working Party Report. Bilateral negotiations are ongoing with several interested Members. To date, four bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat. The 16<sup>th</sup> Working Party meeting will be convened following the submission of required negotiating inputs.

47. [Uzbekistan](#): Uzbekistan applied for WTO accession in December 1994. The Working Party was established in December 1994 and held its first meeting in July 2002. After years of dormancy, the Working Party resumed its work at the fourth meeting in July 2020. On 14 March and

<sup>45</sup> "Members commend Comoros' efforts to clear final hurdles on path to WTO accession by MC13"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_19jan23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_19jan23_e.htm)

<sup>46</sup> "Members welcome progress by Comoros towards concluding accession negotiations ahead of MC13"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_05oct23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_05oct23_e.htm)

<sup>47</sup> "Comoros WTO accession package ready for formal adoption at MC13"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news24\\_e/acc\\_09jan24\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/acc_09jan24_e.htm)

<sup>48</sup> "Ministers approve WTO membership of Comoros and Timor-Leste at MC13"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news24\\_e/acc\\_26feb24\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/acc_26feb24_e.htm)

<sup>49</sup> "Timor-Leste drives WTO membership bid into final stages"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_20apr23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_20apr23_e.htm)

<sup>50</sup> "Timor-Leste moves within a few steps of concluding WTO accession negotiations"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_11oct23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_11oct23_e.htm)

<sup>51</sup> "Members endorse Timor-Leste's WTO accession package, ready for formal adoption in Abu Dhabi"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news24\\_e/acc\\_11jan24\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/acc_11jan24_e.htm)

<sup>52</sup> "Ministers approve WTO membership of Comoros and Timor-Leste at MC13"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news24\\_e/acc\\_26feb24\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news24_e/acc_26feb24_e.htm)

<sup>53</sup> "Working Party injects fresh momentum into Azerbaijan's WTO accession process"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_06jul23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_06jul23_e.htm)



16 November 2023, the Working Party held its sixth<sup>54</sup> and seventh<sup>55</sup> meetings respectively. Multilateral negotiations are underway on the basis of the second revision of the Factual Summary of Points Raised. To date, eight bilateral market access agreements were signed, and bilateral negotiations are ongoing with several interested Members. The eighth Working Party meeting will be convened following the submission of required negotiating inputs.

### 3. REACTIVATION

48. [Bhutan](#): Bhutan applied for WTO accession in September 1999. The Working Party was established in October 1999 and held its first meeting in November 2004. The fourth meeting of the Working Party was held in January 2008. In April 2023, the government resumed the accession process. The first revision of the draft Working Party Report was circulated in August 2023. Revised market access offers on goods and services were circulated in August and November 2023, respectively. Bilateral negotiations were stalled since 2008, but Bhutan expressed readiness to restart engagement with Members. On 13 December 2023, Bhutan officially graduated from LDC status.<sup>56</sup> The fifth Working Party meeting will be convened in 2024.

49. [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#): Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for WTO accession in May 1999. The Working Party was established in July 1999 and held its first meeting in November 2003. The 13th meeting of the Working Party was held on 7 February 2018. To date, 16 bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat, while bilateral negotiation is outstanding with one Member. Multilateral negotiations are underway on the basis of the eighth revision of the draft Working Party Report. The 14th Working Party meeting will be convened after the conclusion of the remaining bilateral market access negotiation.

50. [Ethiopia](#): Ethiopia applied for WTO accession in January 2003. The Working Party was established in February 2003 and held its first meeting in May 2008. At its fourth meeting held in January 2020, the Working Party agreed to transform the Factual Summary of Points Raised into an Elements of the draft Working Party Report. Bilateral negotiations are ongoing with several interested Members. Ethiopia is in the process of submitting the required negotiating inputs to hold the fifth Working Party meeting in 2024. Ethiopia is subject to Category I administrative measures.

51. [Iraq](#): Iraq applied for WTO accession in September 2004. The Working Party was established in December 2004 and held its first meeting in May 2007. The second meeting of the Working Party was held in April 2008 and an informal meeting of the Working Party was held in November 2017. In preparation for the third meeting of the Working Party, Iraq circulated an updated Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime and seven other documents in June-July 2022, and its initial market access offers on goods and services in March 2024. The third Working Party meeting will be convened in 2024.

### 4. ACTIVATION

52. [Curaçao](#): Curaçao applied for WTO accession in October 2019. The Working Party was established in March 2020. The Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in September 2021, followed by Replies to Questions on the Memorandum in September 2023. The first meeting of the Working Party will be convened in 2024.

53. [Equatorial Guinea](#): Equatorial Guinea applied for WTO accession in March 2007. The Working Party was established in February 2008. The Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in December 2022. The first meeting of the Working Party will be convened subject to the submission of replies to questions raised by Members on the Memorandum, together with an update of the Memorandum. Equatorial Guinea is subject to Category I administrative measures.

54. [Somalia](#): Somalia applied for WTO accession in November 2016. The Working Party was established in December 2016. In May 2020, the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime was

<sup>54</sup> "Uzbekistan brings fresh impetus to WTO membership negotiations"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_14mar23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_14mar23_e.htm)

<sup>55</sup> "Uzbekistan injects renewed momentum into WTO accession process"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_16nov23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_16nov23_e.htm)

<sup>56</sup> "WTO members congratulate Bhutan on graduating from LDC status"  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/ldevc\\_13dec23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/ldevc_13dec23_e.htm)

circulated. The first meeting of the Working Party will be convened subject to the submission of replies to questions raised by Members on the Memorandum, as well as its Legislative Action Plan.

55. [Turkmenistan](#): Turkmenistan applied for WTO accession in November 2021. The Working Party was established in February 2022. No Working Party meeting has been held to date. The Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime is currently under preparation.

## 5. INACTIVE

56. [Algeria](#): Algeria applied for WTO accession in June 1987. The Working Party was established in June 1987 and held its first meeting in April 1998. The 12th meeting of the Working Party was held in March 2014. To date, six bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat while several bilateral negotiations remain outstanding. The draft Working Party Report is in its third revision that was circulated in February 2014. The 13th meeting of the Working Party will be convened subject to the submission of required negotiating inputs.

57. [Andorra](#): Andorra applied for WTO accession in July 1997. The Working Party was established in October 1997. The Working Party held its first and only meeting in October 1999. This accession process is inactive, and there are no indications of any intention to re-start the process.

58. [The Bahamas](#): The Bahamas applied for WTO accession in May 2001. The Working Party was established in July 2001 and held its first meeting in September 2010. The fourth meeting of the Working Party was held in April 2019. To date, one bilateral market access agreement has been concluded in principle, while bilateral negotiations are ongoing with several interested Members. On the multilateral level, the Working Party agreed to transform the Factual Summary of Points Raised into an Elements of a draft Working Party Report. The fifth meeting will be convened subject to the submission of required negotiating inputs.

59. [Belarus](#): Belarus applied for WTO accession in September 1993. The Working Party was established in October 1993 and held its first meeting in June 1997. Following a period of inactivity, during which no formal Working Party meetings were held between 2005 and 2016, the Working Party resumed its work in January 2017. The 12th meeting took place in July 2019. The draft Working Party Report is in its fourth revision. To date, 17 bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat.

60. [Islamic Republic of Iran](#): The Islamic Republic of Iran applied for WTO accession in July 1996. The Working Party was established in May 2005. Following the circulation of the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime in November 2009, Iran submitted technical inputs, including replies to Members' questions on the Memorandum, in November 2011. The first meeting of the Working Party will be convened, following consultations of the Chairperson of the General Council with Members on the designation of a Chairperson of the Working Party.

61. [Lebanese Republic](#): The Lebanese Republic applied for WTO accession in January 1999. The Working Party was established in April 1999 and held its first meeting in October 2002. The seventh meeting of the Working Party was held in October 2009. In preparation for the eighth meeting of the Working Party, negotiating inputs as well as the second revision of the Draft Working Party Report were circulated in April-June 2017. The eighth meeting will be convened subject to the submission of updated negotiating inputs to reflect changes introduced since 2017 and revised market access offers on goods and services. The Lebanese Republic is subject to Category III administrative measures.

62. [Libya](#): Libya applied for WTO accession in June 2004. The Working Party was established in September 2004. No Working Party meeting has been held to date as Libya has not submitted any negotiating inputs to initiate the process.

63. [Sao Tomé and Príncipe](#): Sao Tomé and Príncipe applied for WTO accession in February 2005. The Working Party was established in June 2005. No Working Party meeting has been held to date as Sao Tomé and Príncipe has not submitted any negotiating inputs to initiate the process. Sao Tomé and Príncipe is subject to Category III administrative measures.



64. [Serbia](#): Serbia applied for WTO accession in December 2004. The Working Party was established in February 2005 and held its first meeting in October 2005. The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Party was held in June 2013. To date, 13 bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat, while bilateral market access negotiations remain with a limited number of Members. Multilateral negotiations are based on the seventh revision of the Draft Working Party Report circulated in October 2012. The 14<sup>th</sup> meeting will be convened subject to outstanding domestic legislative action and the submission of required negotiating inputs.

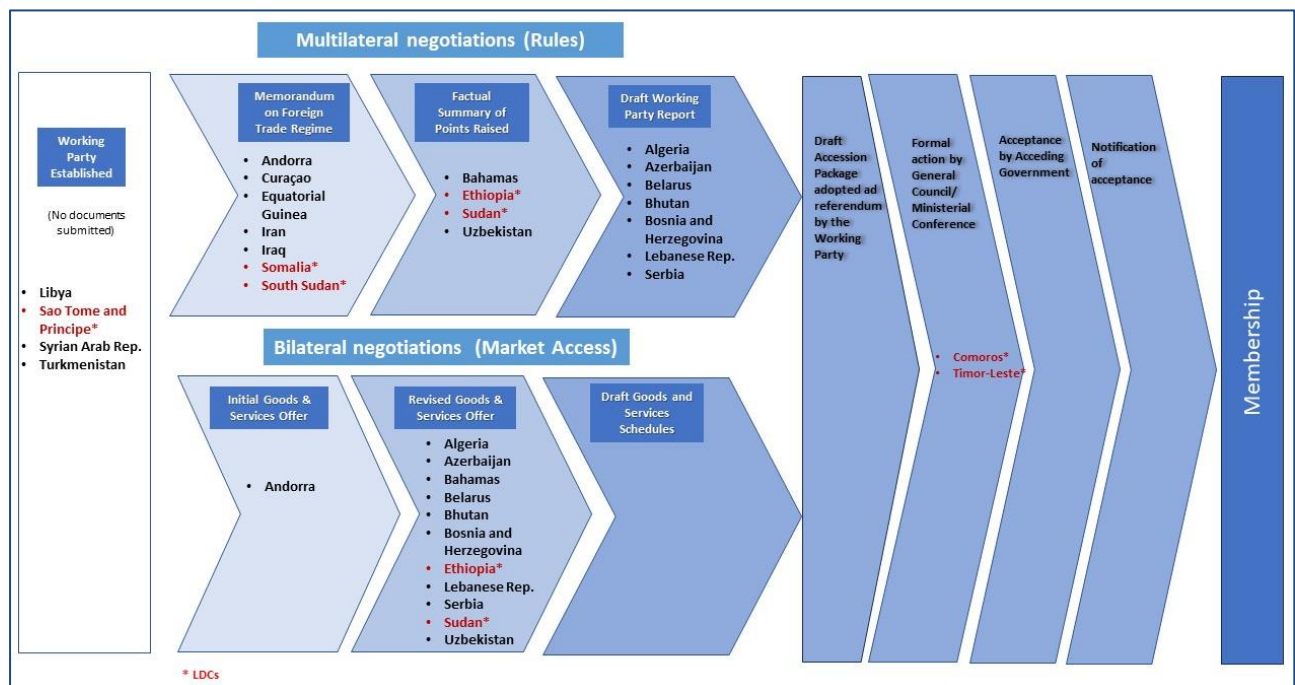
65. [South Sudan](#): South Sudan applied for WTO accession in December 2017. The Working Party was established in December 2017 and held its first meeting in March 2019. The second meeting of the Working Party will be convened subject to the submission of required inputs. South Sudan is subject to Category III administrative measures.

66. [Sudan](#): Sudan applied for WTO accession in October 1994. The Working Party was established in October 1994 and held its first meeting in July 2003. After years of dormancy, the Working Party resumed its work in January 2017 and held the fourth meeting in July 2017. At its fifth meeting held in July 2021, the Working Party agreed to transform the Factual Summary of Points Raised to an Elements of a draft Working Party Report. To date, three bilateral market access agreements have been signed and deposited with the Secretariat. The sixth meeting will take place, following the submission of required negotiating inputs.

67. [Syrian Arab Republic](#): The Syrian Arab Republic applied for WTO accession in October 2001. The Working Party was established in May 2010. No Working Party meeting has been held to date as the Syrian Arab Republic has not submitted any negotiating inputs to initiate the process. The Syrian Arab Republic is subject to Category III administrative measures.

68. Figure 2 provides a snapshot of the state of play in accession negotiations, as of February 2024.

**Figure 2: State of play in ongoing accession negotiations**



#### IV. POST-ACCESSION<sup>57</sup>

69. The post-accession implementation support framework consists of five pillars:

- i. Country-Specific Post-Accession Implementation Strategy;
- ii. Specialized training and outreach on WTO post-accession;
- iii. Secretariat Note on "Best Practices on WTO Post-Accession";<sup>58</sup>
- iv. Dedicated webpage on "Post-accession — what next?" on the WTO website;<sup>59</sup>
- v. Internal Secretariat Note on Post-Accession Implementation and Monitoring.

70. In 2023, the Secretariat continued monitoring the participation of Article XII Members in the work of the WTO and organized technical assistance and outreach sessions on post-accession (pillars ii and v). The 11th China Round Table on WTO Accessions, organized on 1-3 February 2023, reflected on the results of the first 10 years of Lao PDR's WTO membership, based on the study "Lao PDR: a Retrospective on 10 Years of WTO Membership"<sup>60</sup>, and reviewed the latest best practices in the WTO post-accession of LDCs. Representatives of Article XII Members also continued taking part in discussions in various accession-related TA and outreach activities, to share their post-accession experiences and give advice to current acceding governments.

71. In parallel, in preparation for the conclusion of the accessions of Comoros and Timor-Leste, preparatory work has started to assist these governments on the development of their respective comprehensive post-accession implementation strategies (pillar i). The Coordination Group on Accessions-related Technical Assistance reviewed their indicative post-accession technical assistance needs in its meeting on 20 April.<sup>61</sup> In the case of Timor-Leste, a dedicated Round Table on Post-Accession was organized on 11 January 2024 to further review Timor-Leste's needs. Both governments were assisted in the preparation of their implementation strategies based on their respective adopted Accessions Packages. This included a technical assistance mission to Dili on 22-25 January 2024 to assist in the preparation of Timor-Leste's strategy, and a series of technical working sessions in Geneva in the case of Comoros. The resulting strategies were presented to Members and development partners at the Round Tables on Post-Accession for Comoros<sup>62</sup> and Timor-Leste<sup>63</sup>, held on 25 February 2024, on the margins of MC13.

#### V. TRADE AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OF ARTICLE XII MEMBERS<sup>64</sup>

72. This section explores the evolution of trade openness of Article XII Members, using trade as a percentage of GDP. This indicator measures the importance of international trade (measured by the value of merchandise and services imports and exports) relative to a country's economy (measured by GDP). This section illustrates that while the average GDP and average total trade of Article XII Members have increased over time, as shown in the 2020 Annual Report by the Director-General on WTO Accessions<sup>65</sup>, the importance of international trade relative to a country's economy has also grown, regardless of the type of trade that is being analysed (exports, imports, merchandise trade, and services trade).

73. According to Chapter B<sup>66</sup> of the World Trade Report 2023, "one of the key pieces of evidence supporting the de-globalization (or "slowbalization") narrative is the trend in global trade as a share of GDP, and specifically its evolution following the global financial crisis of 2008-09." While growth was observed in global trade openness prior to 2008, global trade openness declined immediately

<sup>57</sup> See the details of the accessions negotiated pursuant to Article XII in Annexes 5 and 6, as well as the basic economic profiles for Article XII members in Annex 2-2.

<sup>58</sup> [WT/ACC/27](#)

<sup>59</sup> Available at [WTO | WTO accessions - Post-accession – what next?](#)

<sup>60</sup> The study is available here: [laos\\_study.pdf \(wto.org\)](#).

<sup>61</sup> "Technical Assistance Coordination Group reviews Comoros, Timor-Leste post-accession needs" [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/acc\\_26apr23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/acc_26apr23_e.htm)

<sup>62</sup> [WTO | Roundtable on Post-Accession of Comoros](#)

<sup>63</sup> [WTO | Roundtable on Post-Accession of Timor-Leste](#)

<sup>64</sup> See also Annex 7.

<sup>65</sup> [WT/ACC/38/Rev.1](#)

<sup>66</sup> Available at [World Trade Report 2023: Re-globalization for a secure, inclusive and sustainable future \(wto.org\)](#)

after to 52% in 2009 and has stagnated since, never reaching its 2007 peak of 61%<sup>67</sup>. However, while the 2008-2009 global financial crisis did have an impact on trade, it was not the only cause of this ensuing stagnation or decline.<sup>68</sup>

74. Discussions around this stagnation or decline in global trade openness focused on "the rise in new industrial strategies, limits to global supply chains expansion as well as rising geopolitical tensions" which would result in production being re-shored, brought closer to large markets (near-shoring) or strengthened with like-minded countries (friend-shoring)<sup>69</sup>. Multiple factors led to this stagnation, including "the shift towards services as the main source of income, the limits to the expansion of global value chains (GVCs), the development of a domestic supplier base in China, a slowdown in trade liberalization, the diminishing impact of cost reductions from technology breakthroughs, the tightening of financial conditions with implications for foreign direct investment and trade credit, and government support for domestic industries."<sup>70</sup>

75. Despite these explanations for de-globalization, Article XII Members on average have shown the opposite trend – a stark increase in trade openness, peaking in 2022 at 146.14%, as shown in Figure 3. While a decrease in trade openness can be seen in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, dropping to 98.12%, Article XII Members on average recovered quickly past pre-pandemic levels in 2021 (121.33%) and further registered a 25-percentage point increase in 2022. This trend can be seen across all types of trade, whether looking at exports (Figure 4), imports (Figure 5), merchandise trade (Figure 6) or services trade (Figure 7).

76. The benefits of trade openness are directly related to the benefits of WTO Membership: accession to the WTO, and by extension trade openness, allows businesses to access a larger consumer base for the goods they produce and cheaper inputs for their production. Additionally, increased international competition resulting from trade openness leads to greater efficiency and innovation. It also promotes the efficient allocation of resources as a result of specialization due to comparative advantage. Figure 8 illustrates the evolution in trade openness of Article XII Members 5 years before and after acceding to the WTO, highlighting a 54 percentage-point increase: from 87.39% 5 years before accession to 141.33% 5 years after accession.

77. Furthermore, open trade can help tackle environmental sustainability challenges by "providing access to environmental technologies embedded in goods and boosting energy efficiency through access to intermediate inputs." It also facilitates trade in environmental goods which reduce pollution and promote conservation and promotes the sharing of environmental technologies, elements which are all key in addressing the climate crisis.<sup>71</sup>

78. Finally, trade openness can play a role in increasing resilience. Trade helps to secure access to essential goods, such as vaccines and medical equipment, while facilitating the adaptation of food importing economies which promotes food security, two elements which are particularly useful in the face of the poly-crisis described in the World Trade Report. Trade openness has also helped to reduce macroeconomic volatility in the last 50 years in certain economies.<sup>72</sup> Global trade openness also reduces the likelihood of interstate military conflict, although this effect is stronger for countries that are far apart relative to countries that share a border.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Note that the trade openness data used in the World Trade Report 2023 are from the [World Bank](#), calculated using World Bank national accounts data and OECD national accounts data. The trade openness data in this section are calculated using import and export data from the [WTO](#) and [GDP data](#) from the World Bank, and is weighted by GDP. The exact levels of trade openness are therefore not directly comparable, even though the trends can be compared.

<sup>68</sup> See Baldwin, R. (2022), "The peak globalisation myth: Part 1", vox.eu.org. Available at: <https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/peak-globalisation-myth-part-1>.

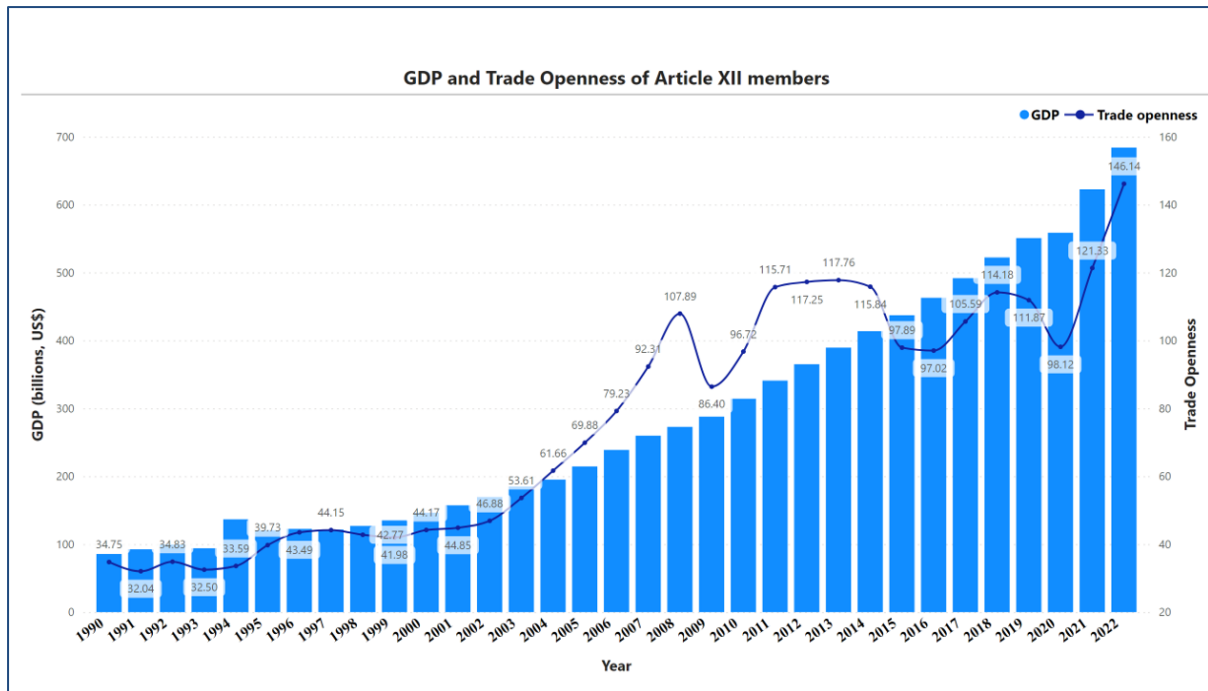
<sup>69</sup> [World Trade Report 2023, Chapter B](#).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

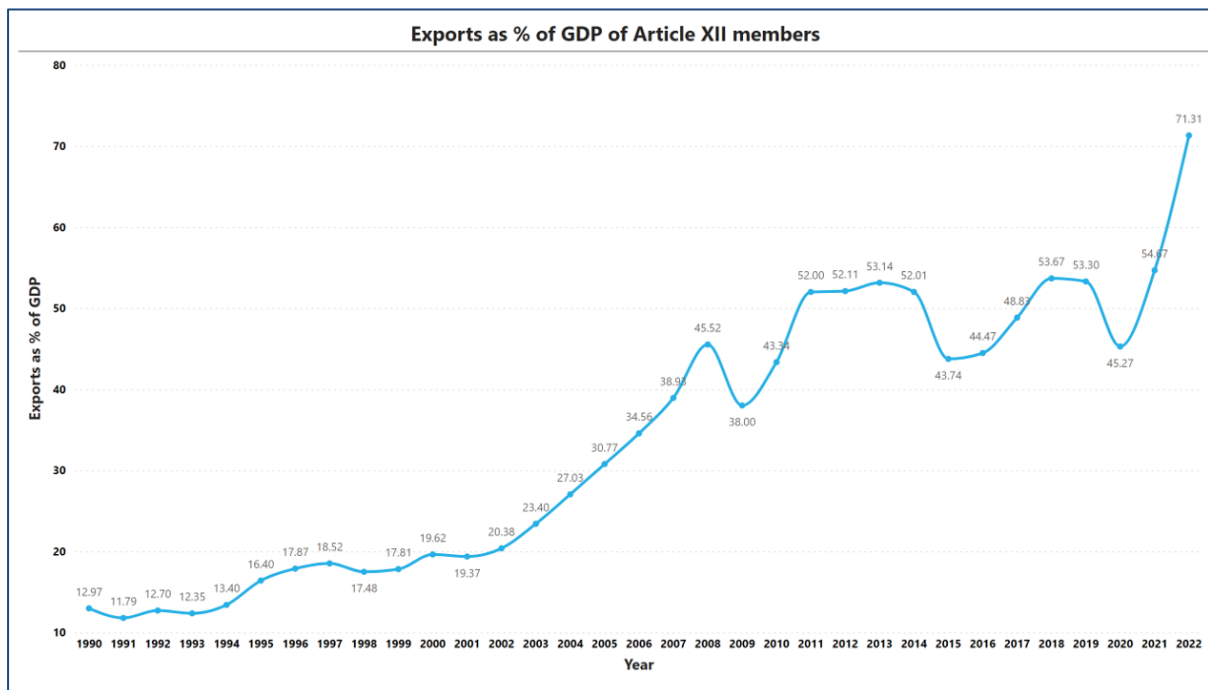
<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> See Caselli, F., Koren, M., Lisicky, M. and Tenreyro, S. (2020), "Diversification Through Trade", The Quarterly Journal of Economics 135(1):449-502.

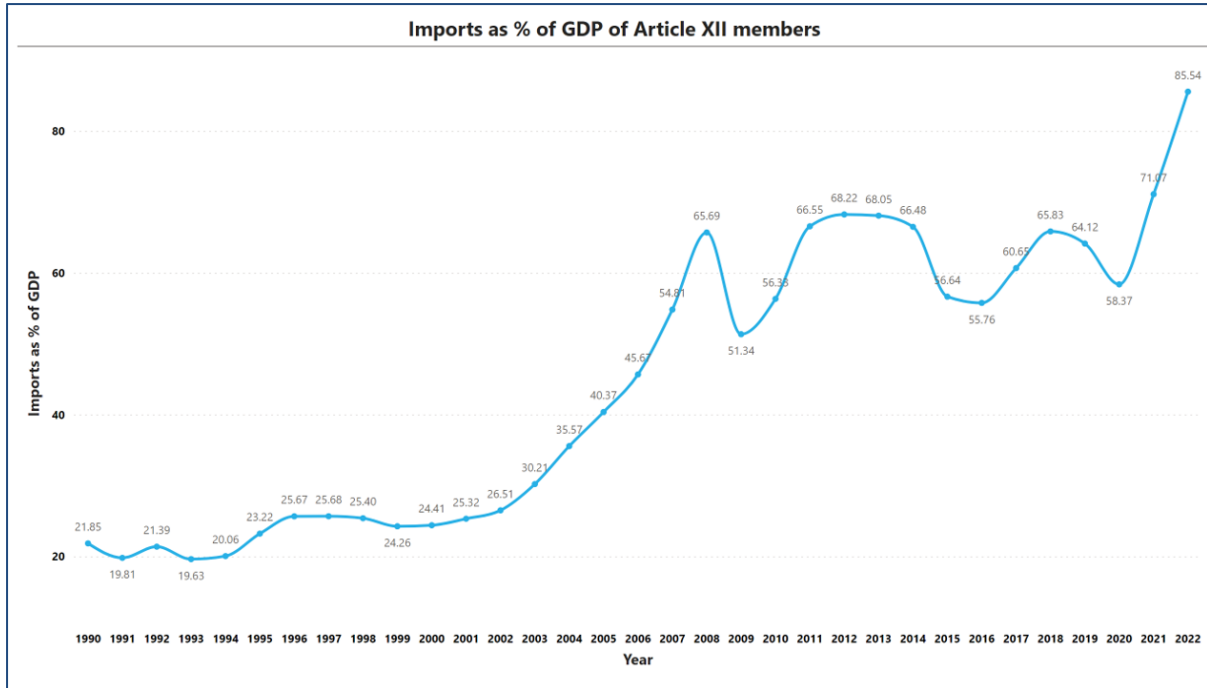
<sup>73</sup> See Lee, J.-W. and Pyun, J. H. (2016), "Does Trade Integration Contribute to Peace?", Review of Development Economics 20(1):327-344.

**Figure 3: Trade Openness of Article XII Members Over Time**

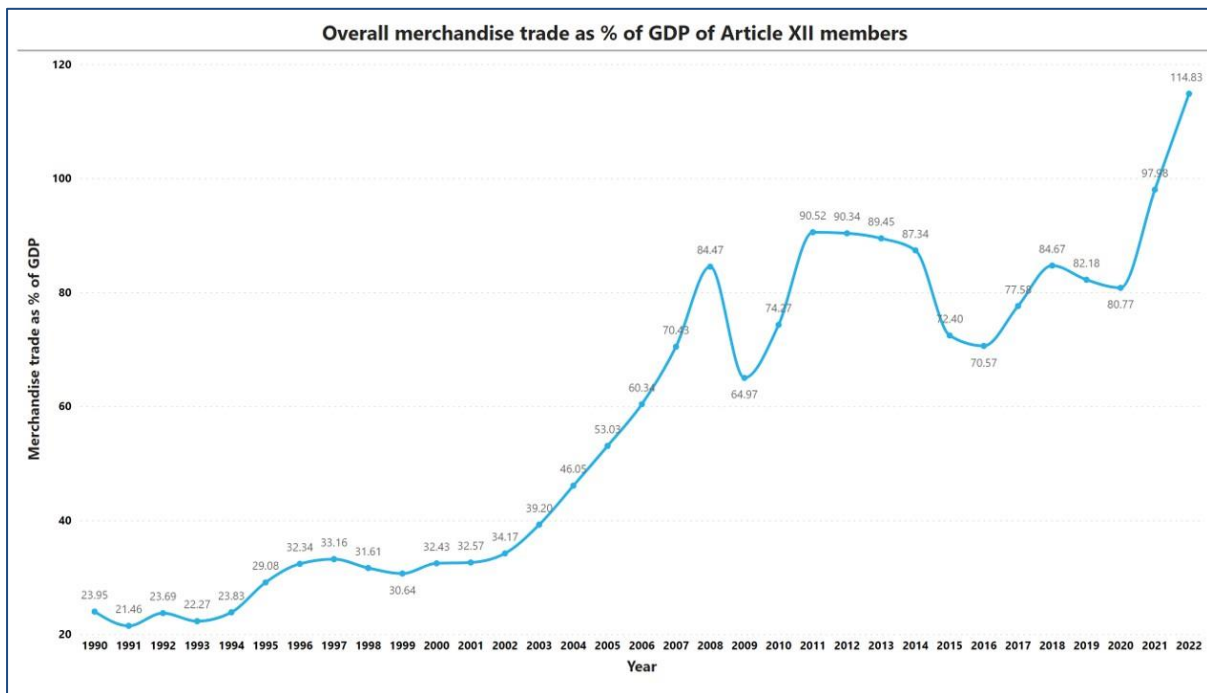
Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).

**Figure 4: Exports as Percent of GDP of Article XII Members**

Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).

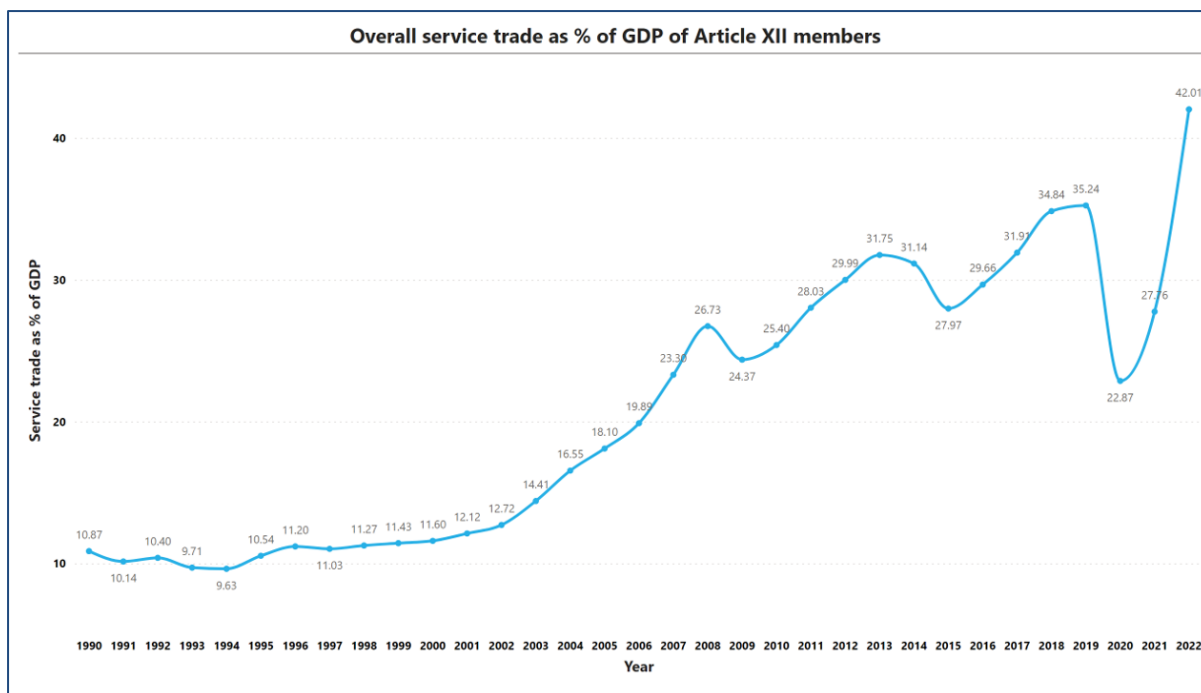
**Figure 5: Imports as Percent of GDP of Article XII Members**

Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).

**Figure 6: Merchandise Trade as Percent of GDP of Article XII Members<sup>74</sup>**

Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).

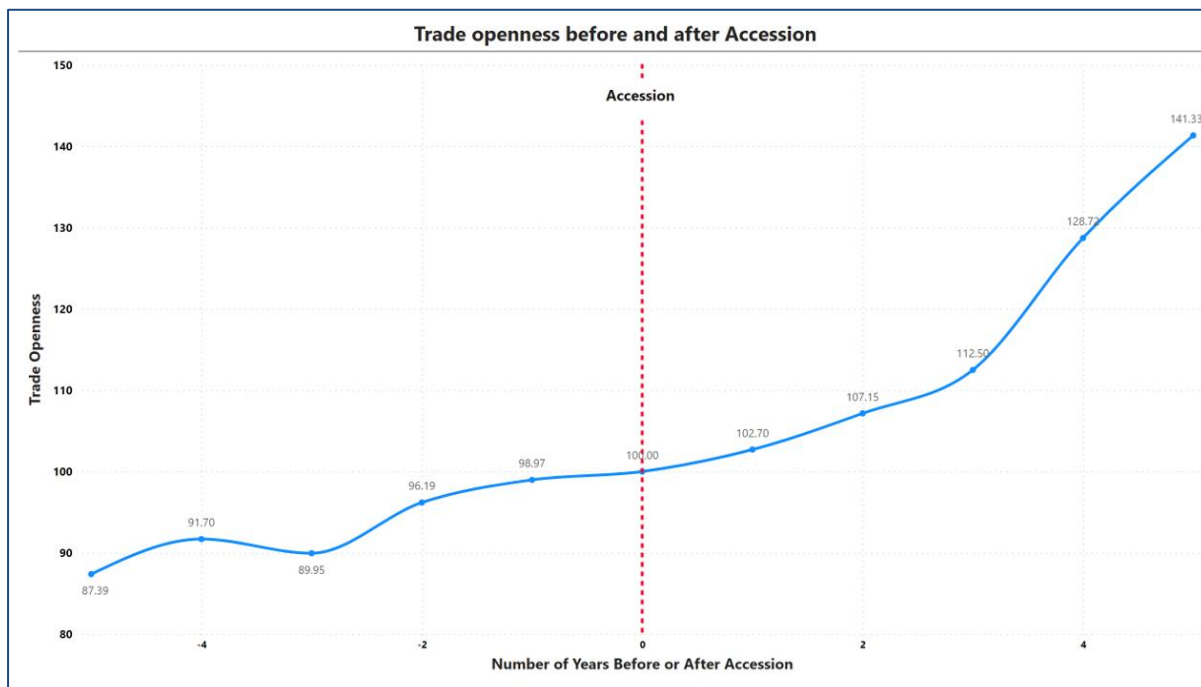
<sup>74</sup> This document was re-issued on 27 March 2024 to correct the graph Figure 6.

**Figure 7: Services Trade as Percent of GDP of Article XII Members**

Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).

**Figure 8: Trade Openness of Article XII Members before and after accession**

(Indices, WTO accession year = 100)



Source: WTO (Imports and Exports) and World Bank (GDP).



## VI. TRADE FOR PEACE PROGRAMME

79. The Trade for Peace (T4P) Programme has been implemented through its four pillars: (1) Political Engagement and Partnerships; (2) Public Dialogue and Outreach; (3) Research; and (4) Training and Capacity Building. Activities undertaken these pillars are regularly published through WTO press releases and social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn. During the period under review, 6 press releases were issued and 43 tweets were issued to keep the public informed on T4P activities on a regular basis.

### 1. PILLAR 1: POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

80. As part of the "Trade for Peace: Future Leaders" youth initiative, activities in 2023 included the T4P Speed-meeting: When Trade and Peace Future Leader Meet<sup>75</sup> (27 February) and two podcast episodes, featuring youth from the trade and peace communities. These activities sought to: (i) raise awareness on the realities of youth involvement in conflict and on the role they can play in building peace through trade; (ii) provide a platform for youth voices undertaking peacebuilding efforts through trade; and (iii) foster creative-thinking and innovative solutions for trade and peace.

### 2. PILLAR 2: PUBLIC DIALOGUE AND OUTREACH

81. In 2023, the Secretariat organized five outreach activities which aimed at deepening the understanding of the trade-peace nexus. These activities included: (i) A T4P Perspective on Women's Empowerment in Fragile and Conflict-affected States<sup>76</sup> (31 March); (ii) Summer Program of International Organizations 2023, LEDECO Centre Swiss & Central University of Finance and Economics of China – Presentation on the WTO, Trade for Peace and the Role of China (23 June); (iii) 2023 Global Peace Index: Measuring Peace in an Interconnected and Unstable World<sup>77</sup> (20 July); (iv) 2023 WTO Public Forum – T4P Talk: A Conversation with Peace and Trade Negotiators (13 September); and (v) Presentation on the WTO, Trade for Peace and the Role of China to the University of International Business and Economics (UIBE) (26 September).

82. In 2023, the T4P Podcast<sup>78</sup> featured two episodes with three guests under the Youth Series (Pillar 1). As of 29 November 2023, episodes were downloaded 5554 times from listeners from 100 countries.

### 3. PILLAR 3: RESEARCH

83. In 2023, the following research projects have been in development, including: (i) the T4P Publication, (ii) the T4P Report, (iii) a research project on interlinkages between trade and peace agreements and negotiations, and (iv) a consultancy project with the University of St. Gallen on T4P case studies.

84. The first publication on Trade for Peace was further developed and refined in 2023, through a review process conducted by the Selection Committee. The book will feature approximately 15 pieces that explore the trade-peace nexus through intersecting topics, including its relation to gender, SMEs, macroeconomic stability and development. It will include contributions from several institutional partners, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and independent experts and academics. The publication is scheduled for release in 2024, following a primer event held during the 12<sup>th</sup> China Round Table on WTO Accessions held on the margins of MC13.

85. The T4P Report, developed in collaboration with the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), aims to analyse the relationship between various trade-related and peace-related indicators to assess the contribution of trade to peace. In 2023, the work conducted focused on adjusting the methodology and selecting the indicators for the analysis. More specially, this preliminary phase

<sup>75</sup> "Future leaders look at ways to increase youth engagement in trade for peace worldwide": [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/tfp\\_27feb23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tfp_27feb23_e.htm)

<sup>76</sup> "DDG Zhang: Women's perspectives are crucial to achieve sustainable peace through trade": [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/ddgxz\\_31mar23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/ddgxz_31mar23_e.htm)

<sup>77</sup> "Panel explores role of trade in addressing global fragility and conflict": [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/tfp\\_20jul23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tfp_20jul23_e.htm)

<sup>78</sup> The podcast is available here: [Trade for Peace | a podcast by Trade for Peace \(podbean.com\)](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tfp_20jul23_e.htm)

concentrated on Country Profiles, showcasing the stories of how trade fosters peace in specific fragile and conflict-affected states (FCS). This step serves as the foundation before the scope of the analysis is expanded.

86. In partnership with the [TradeLab International Economic Law Clinic at the Geneva Graduate Institute](#), a research project analysing interlinkages between trade and peace agreements and negotiations was developed. Conducted between September 2023 to February 2024, the research provided an overview of more than 168 peace agreements and 122 trade agreements, identifying and categorizing 1414 trade and peace-related provisions therein. The analysis revealed a trend of increasing integration of both types of provisions into the respective agreements since the 1990s. Enhanced by interviews with experts on peace and trade negotiations, the report offers practical guidance for trade negotiators and peace mediators who aim to use trade for peace in practice.

87. In collaboration with the [University of St. Gallen](#) and Prof. Simon Evenett, the WTO-HSG Consultancy Project<sup>79</sup> was launched in the Autumn 2023 semester. 15 students each prepared a 2000 – 3000-word case study on a specific instance in history where trade and peace interacted. These case studies were presented in the WTO<sup>80</sup> and contributed to the development of a foundational knowledge base on the trade-peace nexus upon which policy-making could be better informed.

88. Other research projects are ongoing, including research on the use of trade policy measures during and after conflict, which, in 2023, was focused on data selection and monitoring.

#### **4. PILLAR 4: TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

89. In September, the second edition of the master's level course on Trade for Peace<sup>81</sup> took place as part of the Master in International Development Studies (MINT) at the Geneva Graduate Institute. Following positive feedback on the first edition of the course in 2022, the T4P MINT Course was delivered again for the fall semester for the 2023-24 academic year. The course consisted of 14 lectures delivered by 19 leading academics and practitioners working on trade, peace, development and humanitarian affairs, including a final Concluding Roundtable event which took place at the WTO where students could exchange and discuss directly with experts and policymakers.<sup>82</sup> Nineteen students from various disciplines from the Graduate Institute were enrolled in the course.

<sup>79</sup> "WTO, St. Gallen University launch trade for peace research project":  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/tfp\\_28sep23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tfp_28sep23_e.htm)

<sup>80</sup> "WTO hosts closing workshop of St. Gallen University's Trade for Peace research project":  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news23\\_e/tfp\\_05dec23\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news23_e/tfp_05dec23_e.htm)

<sup>81</sup> Full syllabus available at: [T4P MINT Course Syllabus \(wto.org\)](#)

<sup>82</sup> "Second Interdisciplinary Master's Course on Trade for Peace successfully concludes":  
[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/archive\\_e/tfp\\_arc\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/archive_e/tfp_arc_e.htm)



## ANNEX 1 – ACCESSIONS DIVISION WORK INDICATORS (2019-2023)

	2019	2020		2021		2022		2023**	
	Membership & Accessions								
New WTO member	0	0		0		0		0	
Acceding Government	22	23		23		24		24	
	Accession-related Meetings & Missions								
WP meetings	4	4		3		4		9	
IGA	8	6		4		0		0	
IGAG	7	5		5		6		4	
g7 plus WTO Accessions Group	-	-		16		5		3	
Technical assistance & outreach	20	27		45		59*		40	
Missions	17	3		1		5		15	
Trade for Peace Programme	-	-		30		48		12	
Media coverage		Accessions	T4P	Accessions	T4P	Accessions	T4P	Accessions	T4P
Press Releases	12	15	5	11	10	16	5	23	6
Tweets	100	243	-	169	158	192	134	256	43
	Document Outputs							Accessions	T4P
Newsletter	7	6		4		3	3	3	0

\* Counting methodology: all activities in 2022 including specific sessions covering different topics

\*\* Cut off date: 29 February 2024

Source: Accessions Division internal data.

## ANNEX 2 – BASIC ECONOMIC PROFILES OF ACCEDING GOVERNMENTS AND ARTICLE XII MEMBERS

**Table 2-1: Acceding Governments**

Acceding Government	Population <sup>1</sup> (thousands)	GDP <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	GDP per Capita <sup>3</sup> (USD)	Trade per capita <sup>3</sup> (USD)	Trade as % GDP <sup>3</sup>	Merchandise exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Merchandise imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)
<b>Algeria</b>	44,903.23	195,415	3,771	1,000	26.50	60,924	39,027	3,523	7,677
<b>Andorra</b>	79.82	3,352.03	41,992.77			N.A.			
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	10,141.76	69,906	5,496	2,314	42.10	38,147	14,540	6,370	7,688
<b>The Bahamas</b>	409.98	73,120	7,221	9,744	33.50	838	3,754	3,624	1,789
<b>Belarus</b>	9,228.07	72,793.46	7,888	4,570	63.30	22,793	38,655	9,191	5,031
<b>Bhutan</b>	782.46	2,642	3,324	1,348	40.60	724	1,511	20	198
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	3,233.53	24,473.91	6,643	3,152	47.50	9,674	15,377	2,833	899
<b>Comoros, Union of the*</b>	836.77	1,233	1,347	272	20.20	54	348	100	155
<b>Curaçao</b>	150		N.A.			553	2,023	1,548	851
<b>Equatorial Guinea</b>	1,674.91	16,451	8,912	3,147 <sup>4</sup>	37.20 <sup>4</sup>	7,500	2,800	181 <sup>5</sup>	1,048 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Ethiopia*</b>	123,379.92	120,369	1,035	147	14.20	3,970	18,663	6,821	7,447
<b>Iran</b>	88,550.57	352,213	3,288	783	23.80	77,200	55,446	6,345	11,400
<b>Iraq</b>	44,496.12	270,364	5,230	1,726	33	138,291	87,216	5,916	23,194
<b>Lebanese Republic</b>	5,489.74	24,494 <sup>5</sup>	6,343 <sup>5</sup>	3,042 <sup>4</sup>	48 <sup>4</sup>	4,370	19,503	5,821 <sup>6</sup>	4,738 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Libya</b>	6,812.34	44,066	6,456	3,132 <sup>4</sup>	32.10 <sup>4</sup>	37,686	29,634	201 <sup>5</sup>	3,258 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Sao Tome and Principe*</b>	227.38	552	2,335	544	23.30	22	196	46	47
<b>Serbia</b>	6,664.45	70,909	9,088	5,244	57.70	29,058	41,148	11,593	9,109
<b>Somalia*</b>	17,597.51			N.A.				635	2,088
<b>South Sudan*</b>	10,913.16	7,871	450	263	58.40	873	1,255	318	1,713
<b>Sudan*</b>	46,874.20	49,423	868	180	20.70	4,357	11,095	1,522	1,386
<b>Syrian Arab Republic</b>	22,125.25	60,043 <sup>7</sup>	2,642 <sup>7</sup>	867 <sup>7</sup>	32.80 <sup>7</sup>	4,514	5,846	2,434 <sup>8</sup>	2,818 <sup>8</sup>
<b>Timor-Leste*</b>	1,341.30	3,659	2,341	972	41.50	473	934	44	526
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	6,430.77	78,003	10,598	N.A.		13,226	3,250	N.A.	
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	35,648.10	80,418	2,027	670	33.10	15,287	28,264	4,806	7,277

Table 2-2: Article XII Members

Article XII Member	Population <sup>1</sup> (thousands)	GDP <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	GDP per Capita <sup>2</sup> (USD)	Trade per capita <sup>3</sup> (USD)	Trade as % GDP <sup>3</sup>	Merchandise exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Merchandise imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)
<b>Afghanistan*</b>	41,128.77	20,136 <sup>5</sup>	593	136	23	992	5,762	597 <sup>5</sup>	1,042 <sup>5</sup>
<b>Albania</b>	2,777.69	18,509	6,032	2,228	36.9	4,309	8,399	4,962	2,466
<b>Armenia</b>	2,780.47	19,503	5,177	2,232	43.1	5,360	8,769	4,139	2,510
<b>Bulgaria</b>	6,465.097	89,115	11,851	7,304	61.6	50,239	58,049	12,474	6,890
<b>Cabo Verde</b>	593.149	2,224	3,673	1,489	40.5	46	882	542	232
<b>Cambodia*</b>	16,767.84	28,544	1,703	1,646	96.6	22,472	29,805	2,246	2,730
<b>China</b>	1,412,175	18,100,044	11,970	2,214	18.5	3,593,523	2,716,151	422,333	461,450
<b>Croatia</b>	3,855.6	71,019	16,763	8,999	53.7	25,306	44,301	20,925	5,953
<b>Ecuador</b>	18,001	116,360	6,041	1,610	26.6	32,658	33,049	2,757	5,452
<b>Estonia</b>	1,348.84	38,131	26,720	20,887	78.2	22,405	26,228	11,359	8,790
<b>Georgia</b>	3,712.50	24,606	5,306	2,809	52.9	5,583	13,548	5,568	2,920
<b>Jordan</b>	11,285.87	48,836	4,513	1,881	41.7	12,380	27,290	7,832	5,574
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	19,621.97	225,784	10,220	3,175	31.1	84,663	49,586	7,694	9,264
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	6,974.9	11,052	1,382	737	53.3	2,187	9,629	1,267	1,348
<b>Lao PDR*</b>	7,529.48	15,304	2,356	967	41.1	8,198	7,244	405	528
<b>Latvia</b>	1,879.38	42,225	20,483	13,452	65.7	24,121	29,497	7,338	5,034
<b>Liberia*</b>	5,302.68	3,974	677	228	33.7	1,058	1,528	12	206
<b>Lithuania</b>	2,831.64	70,523	23,037	18,174	78.9	46,340	54,938	18,249	11,899
<b>Moldova</b>	2,538.89	14,410	5,105	2,388	46.8	4,335	9,219	2,228	1,329
<b>Mongolia</b>	3,398.37	16,833	4,441	2,748	61.9	12,540	8,704	1,132	3,465
<b>Montenegro</b>	617.21	6,104	8,979	4,805	53.5	742	3,704	2,337	1,006
<b>Nepal*</b>	30,547.58	40,149	1,231	279	22.7	1,296	13,735	1,138	1,967
<b>North Macedonia</b>	2,057.68	13,671	6,427	4,789	74.5	8,727	12,755	2,426	15,77
<b>Oman</b>	4,576.3	114,667	20,354	9,949	48.9	66,456	38,704	2,787	10,607
<b>Panama</b>	4,408.58	71,966	14,568	3,659	43.6	15,278	29,249	15,870	5,896
<b>Russian Federation</b>	144,236.93	2,215,294	12,731	2,986	23.5	588,328	280,353	48,286	69,728
<b>Samoa</b>	222.38	832	4,245	1,410	33.2	42	440	130	102
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	36,408.82	1,108,149	26,088	7,325	28.1	411,184	189,877	31,269	70,078
<b>Seychelles</b>	119.89	1,926	15,799	17,954	113.6	537	1,364	1,665	952
<b>Chinese Taipei</b>	N.A.	761,691	31,459	18,241	58	477,778	435,835	58,181	44,619
<b>Tajikistan</b>	9,952.79	10,467	951	310	32.6	2,142	5,167	134	678

Article XII Member	Population <sup>1</sup> (thousands)	GDP <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	GDP per Capita <sup>2</sup> (USD)	Trade per capita <sup>3</sup> (USD)	Trade as % GDP <sup>3</sup>	Merchandise exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Merchandise imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services exports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)	Commercial services imports <sup>2</sup> (millions USD)
<b>Tonga</b>	106.86	498	4,860	1,864	38.4	14	245	42	104
<b>Ukraine</b>	38,000	151,502	4,334	1,805	41.6	44,376	55,237	15,626	24,331
<b>Vanuatu</b>	326.74	1,001	3,149	1,522 <sup>10</sup>	50.9 <sup>10</sup>	61	484	29 <sup>6</sup>	197 <sup>6</sup>
<b>Viet Nam</b>	98,186.86	406,452	3,798	2,359 <sup>11</sup>	100.0 <sup>11</sup>	371,288	359,148	12,604	25,294
<b>Yemen*</b>	33,696.61	20,645	572	254 <sup>12</sup>	18.5 <sup>12</sup>	903	5,312	179 <sup>9</sup>	1,351 <sup>9</sup>

\* Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

N.A: No data available.

Source: WTO Stats Portal (accessed in January 2024), unless otherwise indicated. For dates of Membership for Article XII Members, and dates of establishment of Working Parties for Acceding Governments, see Annexes 2 and 3, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> For the year 2022. Source: World Bank, Population: All Countries and Economies, available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL> (accessed in January 2024).

<sup>2</sup> For 2022 unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>3</sup> For 2020–2022 unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>4</sup> For 2018–2020.

<sup>5</sup> For 2020.

<sup>6</sup> For 2021.

<sup>7</sup> For 2010.

<sup>8</sup> For 2011.

<sup>9</sup> For 2018.

<sup>10</sup> For 2015–2017.

<sup>11</sup> For 2016–2018.

<sup>12</sup> For 2014–2016.

### ANNEX 3 – SUMMARY TABLE OF ONGOING ACCESSIONS

	Country	Application	Working Party Established	Memorandum	First Working Party Meeting	Latest* Working Party Meeting	Number of Working Party Meetings	Goods Offer		Services Offer		Draft Working Party Report**
								Initial	Latest*	Initial	Latest*	
1.	Algeria	06/1987	06/1987	07/1996	04/1998	03/2014	12	03/2002	11/2013	03/2002	10/2013	02/2014
2.	Andorra	07/1997	10/1997	03/1999	10/1999	—	1	09/1999	—	09/1999	—	—
3.	Azerbaijan	06/1997	07/1997	04/1999	06/2002	07/2023	15	05/2005	04/2023	05/2005	02/2015	05/2023
4.	Bahamas	05/2001	07/2001	04/2009	09/2010	04/2019	4	03/2012	08/2018	03/2012	08/2018	12/2018 (FS)
5.	Belarus	09/1993	10/1993	01/1996	12/1997	07/2019	7	03/1998	05/2004	02/2000	09/2006	01/2020
6.	Bhutan	09/1999	10/1999	02/2003	11/2004	01/2008	4	08/2005	08/2023	08/2005	11/2023	08/2023
7.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	05/1999	07/1999	10/2002	11/2003	02/2018	9	10/2004	02/2007	10/2004	02/2007	10/2017
8.	Comoros	02/2007	10/2007	10/2013	12/2016	01/2024	10	10/2016	04/2017	10/2016	04/2017	12/2023
9.	Curaçao	10/2019	03/2020	09/2021	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10.	Equatorial Guinea	02/2007	02/2008	12/2022	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
11.	Ethiopia	01/2003	02/2002	01/2007	05/2008	01/2020	4	02/2012	02/2024	12/2019	12/2019	12/2019 (FS)
12.	Iran	09/1996	05/2005	11/2009	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
13.	Iraq	09/2004	12/2004	09/2005	04/2007	04/2008	2	03/2024	03/2024	03/2024	03/2024	07/2022 (FS)
14.	Lebanese Republic	02/1999	04/1999	06/2001	10/2002	10/2009	7	11/2003	06/2004	12/2003	06/2004	04/2017
15.	Libya	12/2001	07/2004	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
16.	Sao Tome and Principe	02/2005	05/2005	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
17.	Serbia	12/2004	02/2005	03/2005	10/2005	06/2013	11	04/2006	11/2008	10/2006	11/2008	10/2012
18.	Somalia	12/2015	12/2016	05/2022	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
19.	South Sudan	12/2017	12/2017	12/2018	03/2019	03/2019	1	—	—	—	—	—
20.	Sudan	11/1994	10/1994	01/1999	07/2003	07/2021	5	07/2004	05/2021	06/2004	06/2021	06/2021 (FS)
21.	Syrian Arab Republic	10/2001	05/2010	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
22.	Timor-Leste	04/2015	12/2016	06/2017	10/2020	01/2024	7	05/2021	06/2022	06/2021	06/2022	12/2023
23.	Turkmenistan	11/2021	02/2022	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
24.	Uzbekistan	12/1994	12/1994	10/1998	07/2002	11/2023	7	09/2005	06/2023	09/2005	11/2021	08/2023 (FS)

\* As of the date of this document.

\*\* Most recent Factual Summary (FS), draft Working Party Report or Elements of a draft Working Party Report.

## ANNEX 4 - WTO ACCESSIONS WORKING PARTY CHAIRPERSONS

As of 29 February 2024

No.	Government	Date Working Party established	WP Chairperson*
1.	Algeria	17 June 1987	Vacant
2.	Andorra	22 October 1997	N.A.*
3.	Azerbaijan	16 July 1997	H.E. Mr. Alparslan ACARSOY (Türkiye)
4.	The Bahamas	18 July 2001	H.E. Ms. Nadia THEODORE (Canada)
5.	Belarus	27 October 1993	Pending
6.	Bhutan	6 October 1999	H.E. Dr. Desirée SCHWEITZER (Austria)
7.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	15 July 1999	H.E. Ms Anita PIPAN (Slovenia)
8.	Comoros, Union of the	9 October 2007	H.E. Mr. Omar ZNIBER (Morocco)
9.	Curaçao	3 March 2020	H.E. Mr. Matthew WILSON (Barbados)
10.	Equatorial Guinea	5 February 2008	H.E. Dr. José R. SANCHEZ-FUNG (Dominican Republic)
11.	Ethiopia	10 February 2003	Ms. Rebecca FISHER LAMB (United Kingdom)
12.	Iran	26 May 2005	Pending
13.	Iraq	13 December 2004	H.E. Mr. Saqer ABDULLAH ALMOQBEL (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
14.	Lebanese Republic	14 April 1999	Mr. Etienne OUDOT DE DAINVILLE (France)
15.	Libya	27 July 2004	N.A.*
16.	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	26 May 2005	N.A.*
17.	Serbia	15 February 2005	H.E. Ms Margit SZŰCS (Hungary)
18.	Somalia	7 December 2016	H.E. Ms. Nina TORNBERG (Sweden)
19.	South Sudan	13 December 2017	H.E. Dr. Ahmed Ihab GAMALELDIN (Egypt)
20.	Sudan	25 October 1994	Mr. Naoki HIKOTA (Japan)
21.	Syrian Arab Republic	4 May 2010	N.A.*
22.	Timor-Leste	7 December 2016	H.E. Mr. Rui MACIEIRA (Portugal)
23.	Turkmenistan	23 February 2022	N.A.*
24.	Uzbekistan	21 December 1994	H.E. Mr. Seong deok YUN (Republic of Korea)

\* The Chairperson is appointed after the circulation of a Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime by the acceding government.

# ANNEX 5 - ACCESSIONS NEGOTIATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE XII

Government*	Membership Date	Working Party Report	Goods Schedule	Services Schedule	Protocol of Accession	General Council Decision
1. Ecuador	21/01/1996	<a href="#">WT/L/77</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1, 2</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ECU/6</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ECU/5</a>
2. Bulgaria	01/12/1996	<a href="#">WT/ACC/BGR/5</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/BGR/7</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/BGR/6</a>
3. Mongolia	29/01/1997	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MNG/9</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MNG/11</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MNG/10</a>
4. Panama	06/09/1997	<a href="#">WT/ACC/PAN/19</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/PAN/21</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/PAN/20</a>
5. Kyrgyz Republic	20/12/1998	<a href="#">WT/ACC/KGZ/26</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/KGZ/29</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/KGZ/28</a>
6. Latvia	10/02/1999	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LVA/32</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LVA/35</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LVA/34</a>
7. Estonia	13/11/1999	<a href="#">WT/ACC/EST/28</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/EST/30</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/EST/29</a>
8. Jordan	11/04/2000	<a href="#">WT/ACC/JOR/33</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/JOR/35</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/JOR/34</a>
9. Georgia	14/06/2000	<a href="#">WT/ACC/GEO/31</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/GEO/33</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/GEO/32</a>
10. Albania	08/09/2000	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ALB/51</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1, 2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ALB/53</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ALB/52</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>
11. Oman	09/11/2000	<a href="#">WT/ACC/OMN/26</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/OMN/28</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/OMN/27</a>
12. Croatia	30/11/2000	<a href="#">WT/ACC/HRV/59</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1, 2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/HRV/61</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/HRV/60</a>
13. Lithuania	31/05/2001	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LTU/52</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LTU/54</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LTU/53</a>
14. Moldova	26/07/2001	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MOL/37</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1-4</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MOL/40</a>	<a href="#">WT/ACC/MOL/39</a>
15. China	11/12/2001	<a href="#">WT/ACC/CHN/49</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/432</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/432</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(01)/3</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>		
16. Chinese Taipei	01/01/2002	<a href="#">WT/ACC/TPKM/18</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/433</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/433</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(01)/4</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>		
17. Armenia	05/02/2003	<a href="#">WT/ACC/ARM/23</a> & <a href="#">Corr.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/506</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/506</a>
18. North Macedonia	04/04/2003	<a href="#">WT/ACC/807/27</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/494</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/494</a>
19. Nepal	23/04/2004	<a href="#">WT/ACC/NPL/16</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(03)/19</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(03)/19</a>
20. Cambodia	13/10/2004	<a href="#">WT/ACC/KHM/21</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(03)/18</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(03)/18</a>
21. Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of	11/12/2005	<a href="#">WT/ACC/SAU/61</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/627</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/627</a>
22. Viet Nam	11/01/2007	<a href="#">WT/ACC/VNM/48</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/662</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/662</a>
23. Tonga	27/07/2007	<a href="#">WT/ACC/TON/17</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/644</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/644</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(05)/4</a>				
24. Ukraine	16/05/2008	<a href="#">WT/ACC/UKR/152</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/718</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/718</a>
25. Cabo Verde	23/07/2008	<a href="#">WT/ACC/CPV/30</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/715</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/715</a>
26. Montenegro	29/04/2012	<a href="#">WT/ACC/CGR/38</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/841</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/28</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/7</a>				<a href="#">WT/L/841</a>
27. Samoa	10/05/2012	<a href="#">WT/ACC/SAM/30</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/840</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/27</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/1</a>				<a href="#">WT/L/840</a>
28. Russian Federation	22/08/2012	<a href="#">WT/ACC/RUS/70</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/839</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/24</a>
		<a href="#">WT/MIN(11)/2</a>				<a href="#">WT/L/839</a>
29. Vanuatu	24/08/2012	<a href="#">WT/ACC/VUT/17</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/862</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/823</a>
30. Lao People's Democratic Republic	02/02/2013	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LAO/45</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/865</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/865</a>
31. Tajikistan	02/03/2013	<a href="#">WT/ACC/TJK/30</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/872</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/872</a>
32. Yemen	26/06/2014	<a href="#">WT/ACC/YEM/42</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(13)/24</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(13)/24</a>
					<a href="#">WT/L/905</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/905</a>

Government*	Membership Date	Working Party Report	Goods Schedule	Services Schedule	Protocol of Accession	General Council Decision
33. Seychelles	26/04/2015	<a href="#">WT/ACC/SYC/64</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/944</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/944</a>
34. Kazakhstan	30/11/2015	<a href="#">WT/ACC/KAZ/93</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/957</a>	<a href="#">WT/L/957</a>
35. Liberia	14/07/2016	<a href="#">WT/ACC/LBR/23</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(15)/38</a> <a href="#">WT/L/973</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(15)/38</a> <a href="#">WT/L/973</a>
36. Afghanistan	29/07/2016	<a href="#">WT/ACC/AFG/36</a>	<a href="#">Add.1</a>	<a href="#">Add.2</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(15)/39</a> <a href="#">WT/L/974</a>	<a href="#">WT/MIN(15)/39</a> <a href="#">WT/L/974</a>

\* Sorted by date of membership.



## ANNEX 6 – TIMETABLE OF COMPLETED ACCESSIONS

	Ecuador		Bulgaria		Mongolia		Panama		Kyrgyz Republic	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	09/1992		09/1986		07/1991		08/1991		02/1996	
Working Party Established	10/1992		02/1990		10/1991		10/1991		04/1996	
Memorandum	05/1993		07/1993		01/1992		06/1993		08/1996	
1st Meeting of Working Party	07/1993	2 months	07/1993	1 month	06/1993	1 year 5 months	04/1994	10 months	03/1997	7 months
Draft Working Party Report	10/1994	1 year 5 months	05/1994	10 months	12/1994	2 years 11 months	05/1996	2 years 11 months	04/1998	1 year 8 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	07/1995	2 years 2 months	09/1996	2 years 2 months	06/1996	4 years 5 months	09/1996	2 years 3 months	07/1998	1 year 11 months
Report Adopted by Council	07/1995	2 years 2 months	10/1996	3 years 3 months	07/1996	4 years 6 months	10/1996	3 years 4 months	10/1998	2 years 2 months
Membership	01/1996	2 years 8 months	12/1996	3 years 5 months	01/1997	5 years	09/1997	4 years 3 months	12/1998	2 years 4 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>3 years 4 months</b>		<b>10 years 3 months</b>		<b>5 years 6 months</b>		<b>5 years 1 month</b>		<b>2 years 10 months</b>	

	Latvia		Estonia		Jordan		Georgia		Albania	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	11/1993		03/1994		01/1994		07/1996		11/1992	
Working Party Established	12/1993		03/1994		01/1994		07/1996		12/1992	
Memorandum	08/1994		03/1994		10/1994		07/1997		01/1995	
1st Meeting of Working Party	03/1995	7 months	11/1994	8 months	10/1996	2 years	03/1998	11 months	04/1996	1 year 3 months
Draft Working Party Report	12/1996	2 years 4 months	11/1998	4 years 8 months	04/1999	4 years 6 months	02/1999	1 year 10 months	07/1999	4 years 6 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	09/1998	4 years 1 month	04/1999	5 years 1 month	11/1999	5 years 1 month	10/1999	2 years 6 months	07/2000	5 years 6 months
Report Adopted by Council	10/1998	4 years 2 months	05/1999	5 years 2 months	12/1999	5 years 2 months	10/1999	2 years 6 months	07/2000	5 years 6 months
Membership	02/1999	4 years 6 months	11/1999	5 years 8 months	04/2000	5 years 6 months	06/2000	3 years 2 months	09/2000	5 years 8 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>5 years 3 months</b>		<b>5 years 8 months</b>		<b>6 years 4 months</b>		<b>4 years 1 month</b>		<b>7 years 10 months</b>	

	Oman		Croatia		Lithuania		Moldova		China	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	04/1996		09/1993		01/1994		11/1993		07/1986	
Working Party Established	06/1996		10/1993		02/1994		12/1993		03/1987	
Memorandum	06/1996		06/1994		12/1994		12/1996		02/1987	
1st Meeting of Working Party	04/1997	10 months	04/1996	1 year 10 months	11/1995	11 months	06/1997	6 months	10/1987	8 months
Draft Working Party Report	03/1999	2 years 9 months	08/1998	2 years 2 months	06/1997	2 years 6 months	07/1999	2 years 7 months	12/1994	7 years 10 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	09/2000	4 years 3 months	06/2000	6 years	10/2000	5 years 10 months	12/2000	4 years	09/2001	14 years 7 months
Report Adopted by Council	10/2000	4 years 4 months	07/2000	6 years 1 month	12/2000	6 years	05/2001	4 years 5 months	11/2001	14 years 9 months
Membership	11/2000	4 years 5 months	11/2000	6 years 5 months	05/2001	6 years 5 months	07/2001	4 years 7 months	12/2001	14 years 10 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>4 years 7 months</b>		<b>7 years 2 months</b>		<b>7 years 5 months</b>		<b>7 years 4 months</b>		<b>15 years 5 months</b>	

	Chinese Taipei		Armenia		North Macedonia		Nepal*		Cambodia*	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	01/1992		11/1993		12/1994		05/1989		12/1994	
Working Party Established	09/1992		12/1993		12/1994		06/1989		12/1994	
Memorandum	10/1992		04/1995		04/1999		08/1998		06/1999	
1st Meeting of Working Party	11/1992	1 month	01/1996	9 months	07/2000	1 year 3 months	05/2000	1 year 9 months	05/2001	1 year 11 months
Draft Working Party Report	03/1998	5 years 5 months	03/1997	1 year 11 months	05/2002	2 years 11 months	06/2003	4 years 10 months	03/2003	3 years 9 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	09/2001	8 years 11 months	11/2002	6 years 7 months	09/2002	3 years 5 months	08/2003	5 years	07/2003	4 years 1 month
Report Adopted by Council	11/2001	9 years 1 month	12/2002	6 years 8 months	10/2002	3 years 6 months	09/2003	5 years 1 month	09/2003	4 years 3 months
Membership	01/2002	9 years 2 months	02/2003	6 years 10 months	04/2003	4 years	04/2004	5 years 8 months	10/2004	5 years 4 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>10 years</b>		<b>9 years 3 months</b>		<b>8 years 3 months</b>		<b>14 years 11 months</b>		<b>9 years 10 months</b>	

	Saudi Arabia		Viet Nam		Tonga		Ukraine		Cabo Verde*	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	06/1993		01/1995		06/1995		11/1993		11/1999	
Working Party Established	07/1993		01/1995		11/1995		12/1993		07/2000	
Memorandum	07/1994		09/1996		05/1998		07/1994		07/2003	
1st Meeting of Working Party	05/1996	1 year 10 months	07/1998	1 year 10 months	04/2001	2 years 11 months	02/1995	7 months	03/2004	8 months
Draft Working Party Report	01/2000	5 years 6 months	11/2004	8 years 2 months	03/2003	4 years 10 months	03/2004	9 years 8 months	06/2005	1 year 11 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	10/2005	11 years 3 months	10/2006	10 years 1 month	11/2005	7 years 6 months	01/2008	13 years 6 months	12/2007	4 years 5 months
Report Adopted by Council	11/2005	11 years 4 months	11/2006	10 years 2 months	12/2005	7 years 7 months	02/2008	13 years 7 months	12/2007	4 years 5 months
Membership	12/2005	11 years 5 months	01/2007	10 years 4 months	07/2007	9 years 2 months	05/2008	13 years 10 months	07/2008	5 years
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>12 years 6 months</b>		<b>12 years</b>		<b>12 years 1 month</b>		<b>14 years 6 months</b>		<b>8 years 8 months</b>	

	Montenegro		Samoa*		Russian Federation		Vanuatu*		Lao PDR*	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	12/2004		04/1998		06/1993		06/1995		07/1997	
Working Party Established	02/2005		07/1998		07/1993		07/1995		02/1998	
Memorandum	03/2005		02/2000		03/1994		11/1995		03/2001	
1st Meeting of Working Party	10/2005	7 months	03/2002	2 years 1 month	07/1995	1 year 4 months	07/1996	8 months	10/2004	3 years 7 months
Draft Working Party Report	02/2008	2 years 11 months	06/2003	3 years 4 months	03/2002	8 years 10 months	09/1999	3 years 10 months	02/2012	10 year 11 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	12/2011	6 years 9 months	11/2011	11 years 7 months	11/2011	17 years 8 months	05/2011	15 years 6 months	10/2012	11 years 7 months
Report Adopted by Council	12/2011	6 years 9 months	12/2011	11 years 10 months	12/2011	17 years 9 months	10/2011	15 years 11 months	10/2012	11 years 7 months
Membership	04/2012	7 years 1 month	05/2012	12 years 3 months	08/2012	18 years 5 months	08/2012	16 years 9 months	02/2013	11 years 11 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>7 years 4 months</b>		<b>14 years 1 month</b>		<b>19 years 2 month</b>		<b>17 years 2 months</b>		<b>15 years 7 months</b>	

	Tajikistan		Yemen*		Seychelles		Kazakhstan		Liberia*		Afghanistan*	
	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo	Date	Time Since Memo
Application	05/2001		04/2000		05/1995		01/1996		06/2007		11/2004	
Working Party Established	07/2001		07/2000		07/1995		02/1996		12/2007		12/2004	
Memorandum	02/2003		11/2002		08/1996		09/1996		04/2011		03/2009	
1st Meeting of Working Party	03/2004	1 year 1 month	11/2004	2 years	02/1997	6 months	03/1997	6 months	07/2012	1 year 3 months	01/2011	1 year 10 months
Draft Working Party Report	06/2011	8 years 4 months	12/2009	7 years 1 month	09/2013	17 years 1 month	05/2005	8 years 8 months	03/2015	3 years 11 months	06/2013	4 years 3 months
Report Adopted by Working Party	11/2012	9 years 9 months	10/2013	10 years 11 months	11/2014	18 years 3 months	06/2015	18 years 9 months	10/2015	4 years 6 months	11/2015	6 years 8 months
Report Adopted by Council	12/2012	9 years 10 months	12/2013	11 years 1 month	12/2014	18 years 4 months	07/2015	18 years 10 months	12/2015	4 years 8 months	12/2015	6 years 9 months
Membership	03/2013	10 years 1 month	06/2014	11 years 7 months	04/2015	18 years 8 months	11/2015	19 years 2 months	07/2016	5 years 3 months	07/2016	7 years 4 months
<b>Total Time</b>	<b>11 years 10 months</b>		<b>14 years 2 months</b>		<b>19 years 11 month</b>		<b>19 years 10 months</b>		<b>9 years 1 month</b>		<b>11 years 8 months</b>	

<b>Overall Average (from establishment of Working Party)</b>	<b>10 years 2 months</b>
<b>LDCs Accessions</b>	<b>12 years 6 months</b>
<b>Non-LDCs Accessions</b>	<b>9 years 4 months</b>

\* LDCs. Cabo Verde, Samoa and Vanuatu acceded to the WTO as LDCs. They graduated from LDC status in 2007, 2014, and 2020, respectively.

## ANNEX 7 – DATA ON TRADE PERFORMANCE

**Table 7-1: Value of merchandise trade and annual percentage change (1995–2022)**

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Article XII Members	Value	857	911	975	899	941	1,208	1,194	1,360	1,746
	Annual percentage change		6.2%	7.1%	-7.8%	4.6%	28.4%	-1.1%	13.9%	28.4%
World	Value	10,453	10,953	11,331	11,186	11,646	13,102	12,603	13,157	15,362
	Year-on-year percentage change		4.8%	3.4%	-1.3%	4.1%	12.5%	-3.8%	4.4%	16.8%

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Article XII Members	Value	2,307	2,845	3,469	4,217	5,122	3,998	5,278	6,573	6,926	7,270
	Annual percentage change	32.1%	23.3%	21.9%	21.5%	21.5%	-21.9%	32.0%	24.6%	5.4%	5.0%
World	Value	18,696	21,296	24,500	28,301	32,667	25,281	30,741	36,775	37,171	37,929
	Year-on-year percentage change	21.7%	13.9%	15.1%	15.5%	15.4%	-22.6%	21.6%	19.6%	1.1%	2.0%

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Article XII Members	Value	7,321	6,344	5,942	6,753	7,635	7,592	7,456	9,725	10,369
	Annual percentage change	0.7%	-13.3%	-6.3%	13.6%	13.1%	-0.6%	-1.8%	30.4%	6.6%
World	Value	38,065	33,291	32,242	35,718	39,368	38,352	35,527	44,915	50,541
	Year-on-year percentage change	0.4%	-12.5%	-3.2%	10.8%	10.2%	-2.6%	-7.4%	26.4%	12.5%

Source: WTO Stats Portal (accessed in January 2023).

**Table 7-2: Value of trade in commercial services\* and annual percentage change (1995–2022)**

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Article XII Members	Value	155	168	189	177	179	200	210	237	274	349
	Annual percentage change		8.4%	12.5%	-6.3%	1.1%	11.7%	5.0%	12.9%	15.6%	27.4%
World	Value	2,369	2,536	2,629	2,653	2,784	2,955	2,975	3,159	3,644	4,396
	Year-on-year percentage change		7.0%	3.7%	0.9%	4.9%	6.1%	0.7%	6.2%	15.4%	20.6%

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Article XII Members	Value	411	488	639	755	671	788	929	1,009	1,109
	Annual percentage change	17.7%	18.8%	31.0%	18.1%	-11.0%	17.4%	17.8%	8.6%	10.0%
World	Value	5,179	5,846	6,973	7,868	7,046	7,676	8,623	8,905	9,442
	Year-on-year percentage change	17.8%	12.9%	19.3%	12.8%	-10.4%	9.0%	12.3%	3.3%	6.0%

(Billion dollars and percentage)

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Article XII Members	Value	1,229	1,158	1,156	1,241	1,396	1,405	1,083	1,343	1,480
	Annual percentage change	10.8%	-5.8%	-0.1%	7.3%	12.5%	0.7%	-22.9%	24.0%	10.2%
World	Value	10,210	9,739	9,863	10,710	11,745	12,147	9,924	11,533	13,326
	Year-on-year percentage change	8.1%	-4.6%	1.3%	8.6%	9.7%	3.4%	-18.3%	16.2%	15.5%

\* From 2005 onwards, the commercial services values are compiled using a new services classification in the balance of payments (BPM 6). Thus, figures are not directly comparable to those from earlier years.

Source: WTO Stats Portal (accessed in January 2023).

**ANNEX 8 – ACCESSIONS MANAGEMENT****Accession Working Party Management**

Accession Working Party	Code	Secretary	Co-Secretary	Administrative Manager/Support
<b>1. Algeria</b>	DZA	Tvarusko	<i>Al Wazzan</i>	Tandara-Stenier
<b>2. Andorra</b>	AND	<a href="mailto:accessions@wto.org">accessions@wto.org</a> - No Activity		
<b>3. Azerbaijan</b>	AZE	Bratanov	Tvarusko	Wardak
<b>4. Bahamas</b>	BHS	Tvarusko	Miashiro	Tandara-Stenier
<b>5. Belarus</b>	BLR	Bratanov	Tvarusko	Wardak
<b>6. Bhutan*</b>	BTN	Rasulov	Miashiro	Wardak
<b>7. Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	BIH	Varyanik	Tvarusko	Tandara-Stenier
<b>8. Comoros*</b>	COM	Bratanov	Tvarusko	Tandara-Stenier
<b>9. Curaçao</b>	CUW	Bratanov	Marchand	Tandara-Stenier
<b>10. Equatorial Guinea</b>	GNQ	Tvarusko	Marchand Perez-Esteve	Tandara-Stenier
<b>11. Ethiopia*</b>	ETH	Tvarusko	Varyanik <i>Liwanda</i>	Wardak
<b>12. Iran</b>	IRN	Varyanik	<i>Al Lawati</i>	Tandara-Stenier
<b>13. Iraq</b>	IRQ	Hassan	Marchand <i>Al Lawati</i>	Wardak
<b>14. Lebanese Republic</b>	LBN	Hassan	<i>Al Wazzan</i>	Tandara-Stenier
<b>15. Libya</b>	LBY	Bratanov	<i>Al Lawati</i>	Wardak
<b>16. Sao Tome et Principe*</b>	STP	Pérez-Esteve	Miashiro	Wardak
<b>17. Serbia</b>	SRB	Varyanik	Tvarusko	Tandara-Stenier
<b>18. Somalia*</b>	SOM	Perez-Esteve	Tvarusko <i>Liwanda</i>	Wardak
<b>19. South Sudan*</b>	SSD	Perez-Esteve	<i>Liwanda</i>	Wardak
<b>20. Sudan*</b>	SDN	Hassan	<i>Al Lawati</i>	Tandara-Stenier
<b>21. Syrian Arab Republic</b>	SYR	Perez-Esteve	<i>Al Wazzan</i>	Wardak
<b>22. Timor-Leste*</b>	TLS	Varyanik	Miashiro	Wardak
<b>23. Turkmenistan</b>	TKM	Varyanik	Smirnova	Tandara-Stenier
<b>24. Uzbekistan</b>	UZB	Rasulov	Smirnova	Tandara-Stenier

\* Least developed countries (LDCs)

**ACCESSIONS STAFF DISPOSITION 2023**

- Director;
- Nine Professionals;
- Two Administrative Managers; and
- Four rotating interns under the WTO Accessions Internship Programme