

# GATT <sup>News</sup> WTO

FROM GATT TO THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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**STATEMENT BY PETER SUTHERLAND, DIRECTOR GENERAL, GATT,  
ON WTO APPLICATION BY RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

I was very pleased to receive the Russian Federation's application to join the WTO. The Russian authorities have already achieved much in terms of trade and economic reform - and that, despite considerable financial and social pressures. But the WTO application shows a willingness to take on far-reaching multilateral commitments as a means of driving the reform process forward with vigour over the coming years.

For the World Trade Organization a successful accession negotiation for the Russian Federation will help ensure the word "World" really means just that. No doubt those negotiations will be far from easy. However, a good start with the previous GATT application has already been made and I expect a determined, serious and urgent restart to what will now be a wider WTO accession process early next year. Certainly, all WTO members have everything to gain from the entry, at an early date and on the right terms, of a growing Russian economy into the Organization.

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