



IMPLEMENTATION OF WTO PROVISIONS AND BUSINESS AWARENESS OF WTO ACCESSION

16 April 2012, Dushanbe

NEW EFFORTS TO ASSIST TAJIKISTAN IN WTO ACCESSION

Benefits and challenges of WTO accession, as well as lessons from other countries' WTO accession process and membership will be under the focus of a conference in Dushanbe city.

"WTO accessions and their business implications- Lessons from Other Countries" conference will be held on 17 April, 2012 at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan. The conference is the introductory event of the recently approved project on "Implementation of WTO provisions and business awareness of WTO Accession" funded by the Government of Switzerland through the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The project will be implemented by International Trade Centre (ITC) in close collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, selected business associations and service providers.

The present project is a component of SECO's Trade Cooperation Programme (TCP) in Tajikistan. The TCP's overall objective is to contribute to the implementation of complex domestic reforms of Tajikistan to become a full member of the WTO. The project will focus on sectors of agro industrial products, textiles, and financial, telecommunications, transport and energy services.

The project's first conference will bring together representatives of all relevant ministries, agencies, international organizations and the private sector, with a total of approximately 60 participants. Mr. Sharif Rahimzoda, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan, Mr. Saidrahmon Nazriev, Deputy Minister of Economic Development & Trade, Ms. Larisa Kislyakova, Deputy Chairman, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tajikistan, Mr. Zavkijon Zavkiev, Investment Council on Improvement of Investment Climate under the President of Tajikistan, Mr. Zayd Saidov, Chairman, Association of Producers and Entrepreneurs of Tajikistan, Mr. Nekroy Zabiroy, Chairman, Coordination Council of Business Associations and Public Unions of Tajikistan, Ms. Matluba Uljabaeva, Chairwoman, National Association of SMEs of Tajikistan (NASMB), as well as representatives from Swiss Cooperation Office in Tajikistan, WTO and ITC, will give speeches at the conference.

Mr. Sharif Rahimzoda, Tajik Minister of Economic Development and Trade says: *"membership of WTO provides secure and predictable market access under the umbrella of legally enforceable rules, which govern international trade. The ability of the private sector to seize the opportunities presented by this system depends to a great extent on the Government's commitment to implement the domestic policy reform agenda based on solid consensus among the major stakeholders. The Government must establish a business environment which is conducive to private investments in the economy"*.

Mr. Jean-Sebastien Roure, Senior Officer, ITC Business & Trade Policy Section says: *"WTO membership no doubt obliges Member Governments to complete domestic reforms. It is also well recognised that in order to advance the process of Tajikistan's WTO Accession, both multilaterally (rules and regulations) as well as bilaterally (market access negotiations), the progress on services sector reforms is of utmost importance"*.

Perspectives on benefits expected and implications for Tajikistan of WTO membership, the current status of Tajikistan's accession bid, other countries' accession experience, access to competitive infrastructure services, as well as public private dialogues in the context of WTO accession are the main themes to be discussed at the conference.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations who's goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business. The organisation has 153 members and 4 more countries, including the Russian Federation have already completed their accession negotiations and are now awaiting ratification of their accession package. Another 22 governments, including Tajikistan, have applied to accede to the WTO, which are at different stages in the process.

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