

17 June 2014, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

TAJIKISTAN WILL CATEGORIZE WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT MEASURES

Implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) will be discussed during a two-day national workshop conducted on June 17-18, 2014 in Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan.

Tajikistan public and private stakeholders dealing with trade facilitation are brought together by the International Trade Centre (ITC) in collaboration with the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to determine Tajikistan's target categorization of the TFA commitments for notification to the WTO and initiate the process of building plans to request donors' financial and technical assistance for implementation of category C provisions.

The event is organized under the ITC project on supporting Tajikistan's public and private sector in strengthening their knowledge of the opportunities and challenges stemming from the WTO membership. This project is financed by the Government of Switzerland within its Trade Cooperation Program (TCP) in Tajikistan.

Dr. Mohammad Saeed, ITC Senior Adviser on Trade Facilitation, explaining the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA), which consists of 37 provisions, say that *"TFA will create binding obligations for WTO members to improve customs procedures, transparency and efficiency, as well as cooperation amongst border regulatory agencies and private sector. The developing and least developed Members shall self-designate, on individual basis the provisions of the TFA into Category A (implementation upon entry into force), B (deferred implementation) or C (linked with acquisition of capacity through assistance and support) and the date of their choice for the implementation of respective provisions"*.

Dushanbe workshop participants will make recommendations on the appropriate categorization of each of the TFA measures based on their knowledge of existing legislation and implementation status. Participants will also determine the required actions for Tajikistan to comply with each TFA requirements, the duration and resources necessary for implementation, and the potential need for the external assistance. Private sector inputs will be collected to ensure that the categorization recommendations as well as the envisaged implementation plans take into consideration business's needs.

The WTO is an international organization established in 1995 regulating trade among its Members. The WTO is primarily concerned with the creation of an open, free and fair trade environment where all Members have equal access to wealth gains. With its accession on 2 March 2013, Tajikistan has become the 159th Member of the organization.

The ITC, through this technical assistance project, is committed to support Tajikistan's public and private sector in strengthening their knowledge of the opportunities and challenges stemming from the WTO membership.

About Swiss support: Within its Cooperation Strategy for 2012-2015 Switzerland focuses on the four sectors in Tajikistan, such as Health, Rule of Law, Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, and Private Sector Development. The overall goal of the Swiss Cooperation in Tajikistan is to support the transition process in the country through contributing to the economic development and by helping build institutions and systems which are responsive to the population's needs. For more information: www.swisscoop.tj, www.deza.admin.ch, www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

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