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WTO ACCESSIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|------|
| List of Abbreviations..... | vi |
| Acknowledgements | vii |
| Foreword by Mr. Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD..... | viii |
| Introduction | |
| I. Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD: Issues and Problems Arising from the Integration of Countries into the Multilateral Trading System, Geneva, 9–10 April 2001 | |
| • Introductory Remarks by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD..... | 1 |
| • Summary of the Meeting..... | 5 |
| • Submissions and Interventions by Experts: | 8 |
| ◦ Issues and Problems Arising from the Integration of Cambodia into the WTO <i>Sok Sopheak</i> | 8 |
| ◦ Accession to the WTO of the Lao People's Democratic Republic <i>Khemmani Pholsena</i> | 12 |
| ◦ Sudan's Accession to the WTO: Experiences and Problems Arising from Implementation of Economic Reform Programs <i>Azhari Basbar</i> | 17 |
| ◦ Yemen's Accession to the WTO. <i>Nagib Hamim</i> | 21 |
| ◦ The Accession of Vanuatu to the WTO: Lessons for the Multilateral Trading System <i>Roman Grynberg Roy Mickey Joy</i> | 24 |
| ◦ Algeria's Experience and Perspective Regarding the Difficulties of the WTO Accession Negotiations and Successful Integration into the Multilateral Trading System <i>Mourad Medelci</i> | 41 |
| ◦ China's Accession to the WTO and Developing Countries' Participation in the Multilateral Trading System. <i>Zhang Xiangchen</i> | 44 |
| ◦ WTO Accession: The Russian Perspective <i>Maxim Medvedkov</i> | 47 |
| ◦ Some Practical Problems and Needs of Viet Nam in Connection with Joining the Multilateral Trading System. <i>Dao Huy Giam</i> | 50 |

| | | |
|--------------------|---|-----|
| ◦ | Some Issues Involved in WTO Accession <i>Harald Kreid</i> | 53 |
| ◦ | Iran's Accession to the WTO <i>S. Jalal Alavi</i> | 56 |
| ◦ | Bulgaria's Experience with WTO Accession and the First Years of Membership <i>Georgi Pirinski</i> | 58 |
| ◦ | Why Demands on Acceding Countries Increase over Time: A Three-Dimensional Analysis of Multilateral Trade Diplomacy <i>Craig VanGrasstek</i> | 78 |
| ◦ | Integration of Countries into the Multilateral Trading System: The Role of Institutions and the Human Factor <i>Peter Naray</i> | 96 |
| • | Annexes to Chapter I: | |
| ◦ | I. Meeting Programme | 104 |
| ◦ | II. List of Participants | 105 |
| II. | General Issues in WTO Accessions | |
| • | UNCTAD's Role in the WTO Accession Process. <i>Murray Gibbs</i> | 109 |
| • | Accession to the WTO: The Process and Selected Issues. <i>Victor Ognivtsev, Eila Jounela, Xiaobing Tang</i> | 116 |
| • | Terms of WTO Accession. <i>Jolita Butkeviciene, Michiko Hayashi, Victor Ognivtsev, Tokio Yamaoka</i> .. | 155 |
| III. | Tariffs, Agriculture and Other Issues | |
| • | WTO Accession Negotiations on Tariffs: Tariff Offers. <i>Victor Ognivtsev, Xiaobing Tang, Tokio Yamaoka</i> | 179 |
| • | WTO Accession Negotiations on Agriculture. <i>Miho Shirotori</i> | 191 |
| • | Energy-Related Issues in the WTO Accession Negotiations. <i>Murray Gibbs, Anar Mamedov</i> | 204 |
| • | Accession of China to the WTO. <i>Xiaobing Tang</i> | 213 |
| Annexes | | |
| Bibliography | | 233 |
| I. | Accession of Countries to the WTO | |

| | |
|----------|---|
| Table 1. | Countries and customs territories that completed WTO accession in 1995–2001 |
| Table 2. | Countries in the process of accession to the WTO |

II. Statistical Information

| | |
|----------|---|
| Table 1. | Share of exports of acceded countries |
| Table 2. | Export structure by main commodities of acceded countries |
| Table 3. | Share of exports of acceding countries in world trade |
| Table 4. | Export structure by main commodities of acceding countries |
| Table 5. | Share of exports of acceded countries in world trade in commercial services |
| Table 6. | Structure of services exports of acceded countries |
| Table 7. | Share of exports of selected acceding countries in world trade in commercial services |
| Table 8. | Structure of services exports of selected acceding countries |

III Sample Documents

- Example of a “standard” Protocol of Accession
- Example of the Notification of Acceptance

List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| accessing country | state or separate customs territory in the stage of accession to the WTO |
| accessed country | state or separate customs territory which has acceded to the WTO |
| ACP | African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States |
| AMS | aggregate measure of support |
| CEFTA | Central European Free Trade Area |
| EC | European Community |
| EEZ | exclusive economic zone |
| EFTA | European Free Trade Association |
| EIT | economy in transition |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | foreign direct investment |
| FTA | free-trade agreement |
| GATS | General Agreement on Trade in Services |
| GATT | General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| GSP | Generalized System of Preferences |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| LDC | least developed country |
| Memorandum | Memorandum on Foreign Trade Regime |
| MFN | most –favoured nation |
| MTA | Multilateral Trade Agreements (Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization) |
| NTMs | non-tariff measures |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| S&D treatment | special and differential treatment |
| SDR | special drawing rights |
| SOEs | state-owned enterprises |
| SPS | sanitary and phytosanitary measures |
| STE | state trading enterprise |
| TBT | technical barriers to trade |
| TRIMs | Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures |
| TRIPS | Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UR | Uruguay Round |
| USTR | United States Trade Representative |
| WIPO | World Intellectual Property Organization |
| World Bank | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development |
| WP | Working Party (on accession) |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |
| WTO Agreement | The Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization |
| WTO Agreements | The Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization and Multilateral Trade Agreements (MTAs) annexed thereto |

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FOREWORD

Since the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, most of the countries that were not original members have applied for accession or at least indicated their interest in doing so in the future. For some of these countries, the advantages of membership are obvious, as it would enable them to avoid discrimination in key export sectors and to acquire rights to defend their interests in a multilateral framework. For other countries – particularly smaller developing countries whose foreign exchange earnings depend on exports of a few primary commodities or services, and which enjoy preferential treatment in their main export markets – the immediate benefits are less evident and are probably linked not to their current situation but to their wish to overcome it and to their long-term strategic interests. Some countries apparently consider that WTO membership will improve their credentials in efforts to attract the necessary investment for diversifying their production base and expanding their supply capacity. Membership can also be viewed as the consolidation of recently achieved democratic rule and of their transition to a market economy.

In general, the acceding countries realize that it is in their interest to participate effectively in the management of globalization so as to guarantee that its speed, nature and direction are compatible with their developmental, economic and financial needs. The only way for them to influence the decisions that will affect the course of globalization is through active participation in the institutions where global economic decision-making takes place. WTO membership permits every country to be an actor, however modest, in the forum that takes the decisions on key issues affecting international trade, and to design their development strategies in a more predictable and stable trading environment.

In the accession process, the country seeking accession is required to accept disciplines that imply economic, legislative and judicial reforms and to organize its administration so as to participate effectively in the accession negotiations and subsequently to implement its obligations as a WTO member. This process will contribute to building the country's institutional capacity as it establishes transparent and efficient economic and trade regimes and to enhancing its capacity to defend its rights in future negotiations at all levels. The terms accepted by the acceding country can have a major impact on the course of its future economic and social development. However, preparation for and participation in

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