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**REPORT ON**

**THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE ACTIVITIES  
OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION**

**PRESENTED BY**

**THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE**

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# BACKGROUND



The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (I.C.D.T) is a subsidiary organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (O.I.C) in charge of Trade Promotion between Islamic Countries. ICDT was mandated by the Secretary General of the O.I.C and the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation for Islamic Countries (COMCEC) to follow up, in collaboration with the Group of the Islamic Development Bank, on the multilateral trade negotiations organised by the World Trade Organisation (W.T.O) and extend support, provide relevant training and technical assistance to the OIC Member States in this field. Within this framework, I.C.D.T submits on a regular basis, progress reports on these negotiations to the COMCEC annual meetings, the Islamic Commission for Economic, Cultural and Social Affairs of the O.I.C and the Council of the Foreign Affairs Ministers (CFM).

Likewise, ICDT produces reports and studies in preparation of the WTO Ministerial Meetings in order to shed light on the positions of Islamic Countries at these meetings and identify a common platform to coordinate their positions.

Besides, the Centre organizes seminars and workshops on the Multilateral Trade Negotiations for the benefit of the representatives of the OIC Member States from both the public and private sectors and on intra-OIC trade negotiations.

- This report is divided into three sections:
  - ✓ Section I: Recent developments of the WTO activities relating to the OIC Member States;
  - ✓ Section II: ICDT activities in the field of the WTO matters;
  - ✓ Section III: Status of the accession negotiations to the WTO of OIC Member States.

## **SECTION I: Recent Developments of the WTO Activities relating to the OIC Member States**

1. The Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee delivered its report on the status of negotiations on 27 July 2016. In this report, the Chairman informed that there are signs that WTO Members are gradually moving towards a more proposals-driven process. Members have submitted a number of papers. In agriculture, for example, seven papers have been submitted with ideas and queries on a range of issues, including Domestic Support. Also, there is some positive engagement in Services, though less in NAMA. Fisheries subsidies continue to draw much attention. Looking at the Doha Development Agenda issues overall, the Chairman emphasized that if WTO Members want to move forward, so there is a need to significantly deepen the discussions in the months ahead to see if there is any potential for outcomes. And in all of these conversations, there is need to maintain and enhance the focus on development and LDC issues.
2. Another important development took place during the WTO General Council meeting on 3 October 2016 where the General Council accepted Argentina's offer to host the organization of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) next year in Buenos Aires. Argentina will be the first South American country to host the biennial event.
3. Most recently, an amendment to the TRIPS agreement entered into force on 23 January 2017 securing for developing countries a legal pathway to access affordable medicines under WTO rules. Members took the decision to amend the TRIP's Agreement specifically to adapt the rules of the global trading system to the public health needs of people in poor countries. This action follows repeated calls from the multilateral system for acceptance of the amendment, most recently by the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS in June 2016.

#### **4. ACCESSIONS TO WTO AND RATIFICATION OF THE TFA:**

##### **♦ Accession:**

Afghanistan has submitted its application for accession to the WTO in 2004, and will officially become a Member of the WTO, 30 days after receiving its instrument of ratification on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Afghanistan is the 44<sup>th</sup> OIC Member State and the 164<sup>th</sup> country to join the WTO on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

##### **♦ Ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement:**

The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) concluded in Bali in December 2013 entered into force on 22 February 2017, following its ratification by two-thirds of the WTO Members.

The last countries which have ratified the TFA are: Rwanda, Oman, Chad and Jordan, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala (8 March 2017), bringing the total number of ratifications of the 114 WTO members to 164.

Twenty four OIC Member States have ratified the TFA, these countries are: Malaysia, Niger, Togo, Pakistan, Guyana, Côte d'Ivoire, Brunei, Mali, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Albania, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Senegal, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Nigeria, Oman, Chad and Jordan.

The implementation of this Agreement will thus contribute to the reduction of world trade costs by approximatively 14.3%.

Indeed, developing countries and the least developed countries (LDCs), in particular, would benefit from the full implementation of the Agreement, as trade costs are generally higher. The Agreement will help these countries to diversify their trade.

Developing countries could increase by 20% the number of products they export, and this figure could reach 35% for LDCs.

In addition, developing countries could have access to a greater number of foreign markets, an average of one third more, while LDCs would see their access to markets increasing by 60%, making them less vulnerable to external economic shocks.

By 2030, the Agreement could increase world trade by 2.7% and the global GDP by more than 0.5%. Thus, its effects would be greater than the elimination of all tariffs in force around the world.

Furthermore, the TFA contains provisions to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit.

It also provides measures allowing to ensure effective cooperation between customs and other competent authorities on matters relating to trade facilitation and customs compliance. It also includes provisions for technical assistance and capacity building in this area.

To benefit from the Special and Differential Treatment (SDT), a WTO Member must indicate to other WTO Members the calendar of implementing of every measure of Trade Facilitation according to the Categories set out below. The Agreement provides deadlines for such notifications.

Category A: provisions that the Member will implement at the time of the entry into force of the Agreement (or in the case of a Least-Developed Country Member, within one year after the entry into force).

Category B: provisions that the Member will implement after a transition period following the entry into force of the Agreement.

Category C: provisions that the Member will implement at a later date to a transition period following the entry into force of the Agreement and requiring the provision of assistance and support for capacity building.

It should be noted that 94 countries have ratified Category A of the TFA including 28 OIC Member States (See Table 5 in the annexes).

Nine countries have notified Category B and Eight the category C of the Agreement according to the WTO data of 10 March 2017. Only Albania and Chad as Member States have notified Categories C and B (see tables 6 and 7 in the annexes).

5. WTO members expressed strong interest in reviving services negotiations during an informal meeting of the Services Council in Special Session on 4 July 2016. The Chairman concluded that the meeting “went beyond previous expectations” as services negotiators gear up for concrete proposals from members to move negotiations forward. Services negotiators expressed willingness to resume negotiations on: (i) greater **market access** for services and services suppliers from other WTO members; (ii) developing new disciplines to render **domestic regulations** more objective and transparent and to ensure that these are not unnecessarily burdensome; and (iii) services aspects of **e-commerce** (the electronic

supply of services). Some Member States indicated that this could lay the groundwork for potential services outcomes at the Eleventh Ministerial Conference set to take place in 2017.

6. Several WTO members highlighted the importance of the Paris Agreement on climate change at the 30 June meeting of the Committee on Trade and Environment, where they called for coherence between trade and climate policies.

7. Least developed countries (LDCs) have called on WTO members to consider their priorities after the December 2015 ministerial conference in Nairobi. These priorities, outlined at a 24 June meeting of the WTO's Sub-Committee on LDCs, would serve as a 'roadmap' for the group's engagement in post Nairobi work at the WTO in the months ahead. LDC Group Coordinator (Benin) emphasized, in particular, the need to address domestic support in agriculture, including cotton and implement preferential treatment for LDC services.

8. It is recalled that MC10 has adopted the following decisions:

- ✓ Work program on small economies.
- ✓ TRIPS non-violations and situation complaints.
- ✓ Work program on electronic commerce.
- ✓ The Transition Period under Article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement for least-developed countries for certain obligations with respect to pharmaceutical products as well as the related Waiver Decision adopted by the General Council concerning least-developed countries' obligations under Article 70.8 and 70.9 of the TRIPS Agreement.

9. With regard to Doha Development Agenda, MC10 has adopted the following decisions:

- ✓ Special Safeguard Mechanism for Developing Countries in the area of Agriculture.
- ✓ Public Stockholding for Food Security Purposes.
- ✓ Export Competition in the area of Agriculture.
- ✓ Cotton.
- ✓ Preferential Rules of Origin for Least-Developed Countries.
- ✓ Implementation of Preferential Treatment in Favour of Services and Service Suppliers of Least - Developed Countries and Increasing LDC Participation in Services Trade.

10. The MC10 witnessed differences of views among WTO Members regarding the future Doha Development negotiations. While many Members reaffirmed the Doha Development Agenda, and the Declarations and Decisions adopted at Doha and at the Ministerial conferences held since; other Members did not reaffirm the Doha mandates, as they believed new approaches were necessary to achieve meaningful outcomes in the multilateral negotiations. However, Members expressed strong commitment to advance negotiations on the remaining Doha issues, including all the pillars of agriculture, non-agriculture market access, services, development, TRIPS and rules. Ministers also agreed that officials should work to find ways to advance negotiations and requested the WTO Director-General to report regularly to the General Council on these efforts.

## SECTION II

### THE ICDT ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF WTO MATTERS

ICDT carried out several activities to serve OIC Member States' economic interests with regard to WTO issues. In implementation of COMCEC "WTO - related resolutions", ICDT organized the following TACB seminars for OIC Member States, in partnership with IDB Group, WTO, UNCTAD, ITC and WCO, in order to increase OIC Member States' awareness and to develop their capacities in different international trade fields regulated by WTO agreements:

**1. Seminar on the Outcome of the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference and Accession to the Trade Facilitation Agreement, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, 25 February 2016.**

Within the framework of the implementation of the technical assistance programme for the benefit of the OIC Member States in issues related to the WTO activities, the Islamic Center for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), jointly organized under the auspices of the Ministry in Charge of Foreign Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco, a Seminar on «*The Outcome of the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference and Accession to the Trade Facilitation Agreement*», in Casablanca, on 25 February 2016.

The objective of the seminar was to inform the participants about the main outcomes of the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference of Nairobi, and to introduce the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and its impact on the foreign trade development of the OIC Member Countries.

**2. The First Meeting of Trade and Investment Sub-Committee (TISC), Marrakesh, Kingdom of Morocco, 16 - 17 March 2016:**

On the sidelines of the First Meeting of Trade and Investment Sub-Committee (TISC), participants requested to promote the Single Window Facility in OIC Member States and recommended the following:

ICDT, SESRIC and IDB Group to work together to design an integrated program on this issue including (survey, analytical study, collect and share best practices and capacity building program on Single Window in OIC Member States, while taking into account available technical assistance at regional and international levels.

**3. Working session on the operationalization of Single Window Modalities on the sideline of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum of the OIC TPOs, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016:**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum of the OIC Trade Promotion Organs (TPOs) was organised by the OIC General Secretariat and ICDT in close cooperation of the Ministry of Trade and Investment of KSA in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on 23 May 2016.

The Forum was attended by representatives of trade promotion organs from 31 Member States namely: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Tajikistan, Togo, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Uganda and United Arab Emirates. The representatives of the OIC General Secretariat, ICDT, SESRIC, IDB Group (ITFC and ICIEC), ICCIA and the International Trade Center (ITC) and International Islamic Center for

Reconciliation and Arbitration (IICRA) also attended the Forum.

Participants recommended the following:

- ✓ To establish National Single Window (SW) and to interoperate them at bilateral and regional levels (e.g. an E-Certificate of Origin at OIC level) aiming at facilitating trade among OIC Member States;
- ✓ To conduct a survey on the state of play of SW in the OIC Countries and to identify best practices to share;
- ✓ To organize regional workshops and seminars to highlight the importance of the Single Window facility for intra-OIC trade as well as to encourage and promote the implementation of required steps for the full implementation of the Single Window facility in the OIC countries.

#### **4. Regional Seminar on “The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Prospects of Activating The OIC Single Window” for the benefit of the Member States of the African Countries, Casablanca - Kingdom of Morocco, 30 May-01 June 2016:**

##### **Context:**

Within the framework of the implementation of technical assistance to the OIC Member States on WTO issues, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Department of Cooperation and Integration of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) organized under the auspices of the Ministry in Charge of Foreign Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco a Regional Seminar on "WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and prospects for operationalization of OIC Single Windows for the benefit of the OIC African Member States" from 30 May to 1 June 2016 in Casablanca, Morocco.

##### **Objective:**

The objective of this seminar is to sensitize the public and private sectors of OIC Member States of the importance of the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and its impact on the development of foreign trade among Member States on the one hand, and to share experiences and best practices regarding the implementation of national trade facilitation programs on the other, in particular the establishment and the strengthening of national Single Windows of Foreign Trade and the interoperability between those Single Windows.

##### **Participants:**

The following countries took part in this seminar: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Togo and Tunisia.

The following international organizations also participated namely: the ICDT, the IDB (Department of Cooperation and Integration), the African Alliance for Electronic Commerce (AAEC), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Regional Office of the Economic Commission for Africa (Rabat).

##### **Axes of the Seminar:**

The experts presented the following topics:

- Overview of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement;
- Implementation of the WTO TFA;
- Other regional and international tools for trade facilitation;
- National experiences of the implementation of WTO TFA (Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Mali,

- Egypt, Tunisia, Burkina Faso);
- Creation measures of a National Single Windows (national experience: Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Cameroon, Senegal, Mali);
  - The role of regional and international organizations in assisting the implementation of national and regional Single Windows;
  - The cooperation between the customs authorities in facilitating cross-border procedures.

After the presentations, participants asked questions on the process of ratification of the Protocol of Amendment of the TFA, the notifications of Categories A, B and C, the ways and means to benefit from technical assistance, the impact of TFA on national economies and the rising awareness at national and regional level.

### **Recommendations**

After a fruitful discussion, the participants proposed the following recommendations:

- ◆ **WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement**
  - Organise a meeting of Customs administrations of the OIC countries;
  - Duplicate the organization of regional awareness raising seminars on WTO TFA to accelerate the ratification of its protocol of amendment;
  - Organize a regional sensitization seminar for the benefit of Employer's Federations of OIC countries in order to assist companies in understanding and showing compliance with regulatory and procedural requirements of cross-border business operations;
  - Establish an OIC task force of the National Trade Facilitation Committees to contribute to the development of intra-OIC trade.
- ◆ **Single Window of Foreign Trade:**
  - Implement a program of technical assistance and sharing of experience in the creation of Single Windows between the developed countries of the OIC and other Member States;
  - Encourage countries to establish national single windows with a vision of regional cooperation in collaboration with the OIC institutions, ITC, WCO, AAEC and other development partners (World Bank, ADB, BADEA) and other institutions such as WAEMU, ECOWAS, CEMAC, COMESA... to take into account the requirements arising from the WTO Agreement as well as regulatory barriers in transport and logistics services;
  - Initiate a pilot project of interoperability of national Single Windows with the countries that have already ratified the SPC-OIC Agreement and conduct its extension to a second phase with other Member States;
  - Request from the participating Member States to fill the Single Windows questionnaire and to send it back to ICDT for the preparation of an assessment report in terms of technical assistance requirements.

### **5. Workshop on "the mechanisms for settlement of trade and investment disputes among the OIC member states" Casablanca - Kingdom of Morocco., 20-21 February 2017,**

Within the framework of the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the OIC organs and technical assistance to Member States in the development of trade, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized in collaboration with the International Islamic

Center for Reconciliation and Arbitration (IICRA), a workshop on **“the Mechanisms for Settlement of Trade and Investment Disputes among the OIC Member States”** on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 in Casablanca - Kingdom of Morocco.

### **Objective :**

This workshop aimed to develop cooperation and coordination among the OIC Member States on reconciliation and arbitration mechanisms for the settlement of trade and investment disputes, with an emphasis on the operationalization of provisions for settlement of disputes relating to the relevant agreements of the OIC, including:

- ♦ Agreement on Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments among the OIC Member States;
- ♦ The General Agreement on Economic, Technical and Commercial Cooperation among the OIC Member States;
- ♦ The Framework Agreement on Trade Preferential System among the OIC Member States;
- ♦ Protocol on the Preferential Tariff Scheme for TPS-OIC (PRETAS);
- ♦ The TPS-OIC Protocol on Rules of Origin.

### **Participants:**

The following countries took part in this seminar: Cameroon, Turkey, Palestine and Morocco. Experts from the following national and international organizations also participated:

The International Chamber of Commerce of Morocco (ICC Morocco), The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Morocco (CFCIM), The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), The Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX), The World Trade Organization (WTO), The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), The International Islamic Center for Reconciliation and Arbitration (IICRA), The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT).

### **Axes of the Workshop:**

The experts presented the following themes:

- ✓ Overview of international trade and investment dispute settlement (WTO, ICDT, UNCITRAL, CFCIM,)
- ✓ Status of the Settlement of Trade Disputes in the OIC Countries (ICDT, IICRA, UNCTAD)
- ✓ Strategies for the establishment of the Center for Arbitration, Mediation and Dispute Settlement through extra-judicial approach (IICRA, ICC Morocco and TOBB)
- ✓ National experiences in the area of settlement of trade and investment disputes (Morocco, Cameroon and Turkey).

### **Recommendations:**

After a fruitful discussion, participants proposed the following recommendations:

#### **\* At national scale:**

- To encourage the OIC Member States to adopt a dispute settlement mechanism in line with the principles of the WTO and UNCITRAL;
- To encourage countries to sign and ratify the Agreement on the Trade Preferential System among OIC Countries, the Agreement on the Promotion, Protection and

Guarantee of Investment between the OIC Member States and the Convention of New York of 1958 and to adopt a legislation on international Trade arbitration based on the UNCITRAL Model Law or inspired from it, in order to boost intra-OIC trade;

- To organize national awareness days and training seminars on dispute settlement in collaboration with the private and public sectors and the academic community;
- To request technical assistance from UNCITRAL in the case of reform of the law of arbitration in force or for the drafting of a draft law on arbitration;
- To encourage the establishment of national arbitration centers for dispute settlement.

**\* At regional scale:**

- To organize an experts meeting in collaboration with the COMCEC and ICDT with a view to reaching a dispute settlement protocol in the framework of the operationalization of Article 15 of the Framework Agreement. In this regard, Morocco remains prepared to take the initiative and propose a reinforced draft text in this respect.
- To Review the applicability of the articles 16 and 17 of the Agreement on the Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments among the OIC Member States by organizing a working group meeting on the interpretation of these two articles.
- To organize an experts meeting in collaboration with the COMCEC and ICDT with a view to reaching a dispute settlement protocol in the framework of the operationalization of Article 15 of the Framework Agreement. In this regard, Morocco remains prepared to take the initiative and propose a reinforced draft text in this respect.
- To Review the applicability of the articles 16 and 17 of the Agreement on the Promotion, Protection and Guarantee of Investments among the OIC Member States by organizing a working group meeting on the interpretation of these two articles;
- To organize thematic workshops on alternative dispute settlement mechanisms in collaboration with experts from the WTO, UNCITRAL, ICDT and regional arbitration centers such as IICRA, CIRCICA, OHADA, to raise public and private sector awareness of the culture of alternative modes.
- To establish a network of arbitration centers in the OIC countries to better coordinate the settlement of trade and investments disputes in the OIC area;
- To exchange experiences between the advanced countries of the OIC for the benefit of other countries requesting capacity building in the field of international trade arbitration using the IDB program of the reverse linkage.

**\* Establishment of an OIC Arbitration Center:**

Accelerate the implementation of an OIC arbitration center within the TOBB as stipulated by the 13<sup>th</sup> OIC Summit held in Istanbul in April 2016 and the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States held in Tashkent in Uzbekistan in October 2016, in order to enhance the volume of intra-OIC trade.

### SECTION III

#### STATUS OF THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS OF OIC MEMBER STATES TO THE WTO

The total number of the WTO Member reached 162 countries with the accession of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan during the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference. Currently, 44 WTO Member States are OIC Members, that is to say more than the quarter of the WTO Members. The WTO Member States account for about 97% of the world economy.

The current number of the OIC Member States that have applied for accession to the WTO is 11, these are: Algeria, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Uzbekistan, Sudan, Syria, Comoros and Somalia. The current status of WTO accessions is as follows:

- Working Party established for Libya and Syria.
- Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime submitted by Iran, Iraq and Uzbekistan.
- Factual Summary of Points Raised circulated by Sudan.
- On-going bilateral market access negotiations on goods by Algeria, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Sudan and Uzbekistan.
- On-going bilateral market access negotiations on services by Algeria, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Sudan and Uzbekistan.
- Draft Report of the Working Party circulated by Algeria, Azerbaijan and Lebanon.
- Somalia submitted its application for accession to the WTO on 7 December 2016.

Azerbaijan told WTO members at an accessions working party meeting on 22 July 2016 that it will enact all possible measures to intensify its accession process. The chair of the Working Party, Ambassador Walter Werner (Germany), commended Azerbaijan for its progress in bringing its trade regime in compliance with WTO rules but urged members and Azerbaijan to “accelerate” the pace of negotiations.

The progression and conclusion of any accession process based on contributions from accessing government. There is always a degree of uncertainty, which depends on many parameters such as: continuous negotiations with WTO Members, the technical complexities, difficulties at the national level and delays when a country wishes to analyze the impact of new or amended legislation.

The WTO accessions take place on the interrelated pathways multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral negotiations. Some processes have made significant progress in 2013, while others have not progressed as expected due to various factors, including further negotiations with Members, technical complexities, internal difficulties and choices.

Significant technical work has been undertaken on several accessions. Thus, the combination of technical assistance and outreach activities of the Secretariat is essential to help Members and acceding governments in their negotiations and better understand the effects and results of accession mean for the future of the Organization. In this regard, the contributions of the Chairmen of working groups were vital. It should be noted that technical assistance benefitted from the financial contribution of the following countries: Australia, Brazil, China, the United States, India and the European Union (EU) and its individual Member States.

## ➤ **TRANSPARENCY OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS:**

Transparency and predictability of the accession process remain key priorities for Members and the WTO Secretariat. In 2013, measures and initiatives for transparency taken over the last four years have continued to be implemented and strengthened.

Thus, the informal group of accessions (GIA) meet regularly. Consultations focused on the following questions: i) sharing and exchange of information on accessions with Members; ii) Secretariat's reports on technical developments in the accession process; iii) reports from the Chairs of the Working Groups to Members on the results of their visits to the countries; iv) planning of meetings on accession and related activities based on the progressive calendar of meetings on accession proposed by the Secretariat; and v) response to specific concerns raised by Members and acceding governments .

The information on WTO accessions Bulletin aims at providing to acceding governments, the Presidents and Members, a summary report of the meetings of the GIA. It also contains useful information on the operational level to help prepare the meetings and negotiations on accession.

The practice of meetings with various groups of WTO Members has intensified to focus on specific issues and concerns of each group. The overall objective is to report to the Members on activities during the calendar year, for their comments and raise concerns to be taken into account. The Secretariat may meet with the Advisory Group of LDCs, the informal group of developing countries, the Asian Group in developing countries, GRULAC, the African Group and the Arab Group. During these meetings, it informed the group of the status of accessions, reported on its activities, exchanged views on the responsibilities of neighbouring / regional groups, considered the concerns rose by acceding governments and Members, and consulted its interlocutors on technical priorities for accession in 2014.

## ➤ **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND AWARENESS-RAISING:**

Technical assistance and capacity building related to accession are focused on the training of government officials. They also include awareness-raising activities intended to Members of Parliament, the private sector, university circles, civil society and the media. Technical assistance and capacity building activities include the following: i) national seminars; ii) sessions on the accessions during the advanced trade policy courses, regional courses and introductory courses for LDCs; iii) workshops; iv) technical missions; v) visits by the Chairmen of the working groups; vi) the creation or strengthening of centres of reference of the WTO; vii) online training; viii) dialogue with groups of WTO Members; and ix) participation in conferences.

## ➤ **TOOLS FOR THE ACCESSION:**

WTO has launched in July 2016 new Accessions Intelligence Portal which provides improved access to information on WTO accessions and many new features, such as direct access to all notified legislation for completed accession. The portal is available at: <https://www.wto.org/accessions>.

Database commitments under the accessions (ACDB): Database on commitments within the accessions (ACDB) was launched in May 2012. It gives access to all the commitments and related information contained in the reports of the working groups of the accession and accession protocols of 31 Members under Article XII MC (<http://acdb.wto.org>).

### **1. Algeria:**

With an observer status since 1987, Algeria officially submitted to the WTO a report on its foreign trade regime in June 1996. The submission of this report represented the first step in the membership procedure in this organisation.

Since then, some WTO Member States, such as the United States, the EU, Switzerland, Japan and Australia, sent a series of questions to Algeria. The answers were sent to the WTO secretariat and a first meeting of the working group on the accession of Algeria to the WTO was held in Geneva in April 1998.

Algeria held five rounds of multilateral negotiations (April 1998, February 2002, May 2002 then November 2002 and May 2003, in 2004 and 2005) and two rounds of bilateral negotiations in the agricultural, industrial and services sectors (April 2002 and November 2002). The examined subjects are: agriculture, customs system, State trade, transparency and legal system reform and TRIPS.

Algeria submitted initial offers concerning goods and services in March 2002 and revised offers were distributed on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005. The revised elements of a draft report of the working group and the latest new facts concerning the legislation were also examined during the meeting of the working group on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

With respect to bilateral meetings, Algeria has met about ten countries; these are: the United States, Japan, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Cuba, Uruguay, Turkey and the Republic of Korea.

- The working group on the accession of Algeria, which is chaired by M. Alberto Pedro DALOTTO (Argentina, 2012), numbers 43 countries.

The 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the working group in charge of the accession of Algeria to the WTO took place on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2005 at the headquarters of the WTO.

The agenda items of this meeting dealt with the progress of bilateral negotiations relating to market access, the consideration of the draft report of the working group and the new development of the Algerian legislation.

The working group in charge of the accession of Algeria to the WTO is currently tackling a document entitled "draft report of the working group on the accession of Algeria to the WTO". This document will comprise the main issues that will be discussed at the meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> October 2005.

Besides, on the sidelines of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the working group, bilateral meetings were held during the period going from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2005 with the representatives of some WTO Members, particularly with the United States, Switzerland, New Zealand and Malaysia within the framework of the resumption of talks relating to the market access of commodities and services.

The Bilateral Negotiations in the field of market access are underway on the basis of revised offers concerning goods and services. The multilateral review on the foreign trade regime is underway and a revised draft report of the Working Party was circulated in June 2006.

**- On 17 January 2008, members reviewed the revised draft Working Party report:**

The Working Party report describes Algeria's foreign trade regime and the reforms undertaken in recent years to bring Algeria's legal and institutional framework into compliance with WTO rules. Members also evaluated the progress made in the ongoing bilateral negotiations on market access for goods and services.

Members have acknowledged Algeria's progress in reforming its trade regime in order to be fully compatible with WTO rules. Algeria has passed new legislation on Technical barriers to trade (TBT); sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues; intellectual property (TRIPS); antidumping, safeguards and countervailing measures; pricing policies; customs valuation; importation of pharmaceuticals products; exports of beef, sheep and palm trees.

The Algeria's Working Group revised an offer on specific commitments in services and was circulated in February 2012.

The long march of Algeria for its accession to the WTO is explained also by the will of the Algerian government to lead, first, internal reforms, to successfully upgrade some areas likely to be threatened by competition and to achieve a diversification of its economy. A roadmap to accelerate the negotiation process of Algeria's accession to the WTO was developed and a series of bilateral talks to resolve differences and finalize agreements is planned between March and April in addition to the holding of an informal meeting with the Working Group on the accession of Algeria to the organization, in anticipation of the formal meeting to be held in June 2012.

**- Bilateral negotiations on market access of goods and services:**

Algeria has completed negotiations with Brazil, Uruguay, Cuba, Venezuela and Switzerland. It still needs to conclude negotiations with the EU, Canada, Malaysia, Turkey, the Republic of Korea, Ecuador, the USA, Norway, Australia and Japan.

The tenth meeting of the working Group took place in January 2008.

Additionally, five bilateral agreements were signed by Algeria within the framework of the negotiations process for its accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012 with Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela and Argentine. Negotiations on the conclusion of a similar agreement with the EU, main trading partner of the United States have reached an advanced stage.

Negotiations for the signature with the other WTO Member States are still undergoing and Algeria is on the verge of concluding an agreement with Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand, while talks with Japan, Canada, Malaysia, Turkey and Ukraine are progressing well.

The long progression of Algeria towards its accession to the WTO reflects the will of the Algerian government to conduct, first, internal reforms, successfully upgrade some areas that might be threatened by competition and achieve a diversification of its economy.

The eleventh meeting of the Working Group was held on 5 April 2013 in the presence of the Minister of Trade, Mr. Mustapha Benbada. On this occasion, Algeria introduced for consideration by the working group twelve documents relating to revised offers for goods and services, the revised legislative action plan and proposals for amendments, supplements and updating of the draft report of the group.

Mr. Minister stressed that Algeria is willing to "bring its trade regime into conformity with WTO agreements." However, he wished "the granting of reasonable periods of transition" for some measures, which are not compliant with the agreements.

He also indicated that a program was drawn up under which member countries should send their questions before 10 May 2013 to Algeria, which has pledged to make the answers at the end of June or on 15 July 2013 and propose to hold another round of negotiations in Autumn 2013.

The Algerian delegation met on 2, 3 and 4 April 2013 the delegations of twelve Members of the WTO. These are from Malaysia, Indonesia, Ecuador, Argentina, the United States of America, El Salvador, Canada, Norway, New Zealand, Japan, Australia and Turkey.

Four bilateral agreements with Uruguay, Cuba, Switzerland and Brazil already signed were deposited at the WTO secretariat, while two other agreements with Venezuela and Argentina are being finalized.

-The Working Party on the Accession of Algeria met on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 in order to take stock of the situation regarding Algeria's negotiations for the accession to the WTO. During this meeting, WTO members expressed satisfaction at the significant progress made by Algeria.

Members' comments focused on quantitative import restrictions, including prohibitions, restrictions on investment, export subsidies, discriminatory application of domestic taxes, the system for recording information on geographic indications, price policies, marketing rights and agricultural policies.

The other issues to be tackled concern industrial policies and subsidies, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and trade related investment measures.

Besides, further to the future consultations among Members, the Algerian government and the WTO Secretariat will decide when to hold the next meeting of the Working Group. Beforehand, Algeria should provide updated information on developments in legislation, respond to the questions of Members and update its Legislative Action Plan, and then, Members should review this information.

## **2. Azerbaijan:**

Azerbaijan's Working Party was established on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1997. Azerbaijan submitted a Memorandum on its Foreign Trade Regime in April 1999. Replies to a first set of questions concerning the aide-memoir were circulated in July 2000 then a second series in December 2001. The first meeting of the working group was held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2002. The last meeting of the working group was held on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2005. Bilateral negotiations on market access are underway on the basis of revised offers concerning goods and services.

A Summary of Points raised -an informal document outlining the discussions in the Working Party- was prepared by the Secretariat and circulated in December 2008. This summary was revised in July 2009.

Azerbaijan told WTO members at an accessions working party meeting on 22 July 2016 that it will enact all possible measures to intensify its accession process. The chair of the Working Party, Ambassador Walter Werner (Germany), commended Azerbaijan for its progress in bringing its trade regime in compliance with WTO rules but urged members and Azerbaijan to "accelerate" the pace of negotiations.

### **Negotiations on market access:**

Azerbaijan signed an Agreement with Georgia in April 2010. Negotiations are underway with the European Union and with ten WTO's members.

The Working Group held its ninth meeting on 24 February 2012 during which the latest reforms adopted by Azerbaijan to advance its accession to the WTO and bring its trade regime into conformity with WTO rules were discussed. The group also discussed the

legislative development and reviewed progress in bilateral negotiations on market access for goods and services.

The latest revision of factual summary of November 2012. The tenth meeting of the Working Group was held on 7 December 2012 and the WTO Members discussed the status of negotiations on market access, the trade regime and legislative reforms for the accession of Azerbaijan to the WTO.

In addition, Mr. Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chief Negotiator of Azerbaijan gave on this occasion, an overview of the economic situation of the country and the development of relevant legislation in the context of the WTO. He said that the objective of his government was to diversify and modernize the economy in order to reduce its dependence vis-à-vis the oil and gas sector.

Regarding bilateral negotiations on market access, the Deputy Minister said that Azerbaijan had signed a bilateral agreement with the Kyrgyz Republic in March 2012 and had recently concluded bilateral negotiations with China. Other bilateral negotiations were held with Brazil, Canada, Korea, the United States, Japan, Norway and the European Union on the sidelines of the meeting of the Working Group.

The representatives of China, the United States, India, Japan, Norway, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Switzerland, Turkey and the European Union welcomed the contributions presented by Azerbaijan and expressed support for the accession of the country.

During the discussion, members requested to be given accurate details on the economic policies of Azerbaijan, state trading enterprises and privatization policy, prices, investment and competition, the exemptions from VAT and the application of excise duty and on the adoption of the Law on Customs Tariff. They also wished to have information on fees and charges for services rendered supplements, customs valuation, rules of origin, export bans, subsidies for industrial products, export subsidies agricultural products, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, government procurement and intellectual property.

The Secretariat was entrusted with developing the documentation by drawing up a draft report of the Working Group on the factual summary of raised points. Bilateral negotiations on market access are underway with interested Members on the basis of a revised offer concerning goods distributed in September 2013, and a revised offer relating to services, distributed in October 2013. Four Bilateral Agreements were deposited at the WTO Secretariat (United Arab Emirates, Oman, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey). The eleventh meeting of the Working Group took place on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2014.

During this meeting, WTO members discussed the trade regime of Azerbaijan on the basis of the draft report of the Working Group. Thus, Members asked Azerbaijan to provide clarifications on tax exemptions, investment incentives, the operation of foreign companies, privatization, technical barriers to trade, subsidies, transit and Intellectual Property.

The twelfth meeting of the Working Group was held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the Chairman of the Working Group welcomed the steps taken by Azerbaijan to bring its trade regime into conformity with WTO rules and requested the government to accelerate the stages of its accession to the WTO and the members of this group to submit their questions before 15 April 2015.

### **3. Comoros:**

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 2007, the General Council set up a Working Party in charge of examining the accession application of Comoros to the WTO. It allowed its Chairman to appoint the Chairman of the Working Party in consultation with Members and the representatives of Comoros (Document WT/ACC/COM/1).

The Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2013 (WT/ACC/COM/3). The Chairman of the Working Group was appointed on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The first meeting of the Working Group should be held as soon as the Comoros have completed their first round of questions and answers with Members.

### **4. Iraq:**

Iraq made its application for accession to the WTO on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004, under Article XII. A working group chaired by Mr Guillermo Valles Galmez (Uruguay) was established at the meeting of the General Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004.

Iraq has submitted an aide-memoir on its foreign trade system but the working group has not met yet.

For the first time since Iraq's application in 2004, the Working Party met to discuss and examine Iraq's trade legislation and its conformity with the WTO principles.

Iraq met bilaterally with Brazil, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, Jordan, Morocco, Norway Oman Taiwan, the EU and Viet Nam. Iraq was invited to submit initial offers to advance their market access negotiations on goods and services.

Iraq will prepare documents on agriculture, services, technical barriers to trade, sanitary and phytosanitary issues and intellectual property, it will also prepare a general legislative plan of action providing members with a state of play of current and future legislation.

Working Party members, on 2 April 2008, supported Iraq's rapid accession to the WTO and argued it would contribute to the country's integration into the world economy. Iraq's Trade Minister, H. E. Dr. Al-Sudani, stated that Iraq was determined to overcome the country's difficult circumstances to move forward on the accession process and added that Iraq's membership would represent a significant addition to the international community.

#### **Review of trade legislation:**

At this stage of the accession, members examine all aspects of Iraq's trade and economic policies to assess their conformity with WTO principles.

Since the 1st Working Party meeting held in May 2007, Iraq has provided members with a legislative action plan which shows the state of play of the ongoing legal reforms. Iraq also provided information on its sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, technical barriers to trade (TBT) and the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) as well as information on its domestic support and export subsidies in agriculture.

#### **Bilateral negotiations:**

Iraq has met with several members on the sidelines of the Working Party. Market access negotiations will start once Iraq tables its initial offers on goods and services.

Iraq submitted its Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime in September 2005. The Working Party met for a second time in April 2008 to continue the examination of Iraq's foreign trade regime.

Iraq has provided several documentary contributions requested by the Working Group. It has yet to submit its initial offers on market access for goods and services. The next meeting of the Working Group should be held as soon as Iraq has submitted its initial offers on market access.

#### **5. Iran:**

Iran submitted its application for accession to the WTO to the General Council during its session held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July 2004 in Geneva (WT/ACC/IRN/1). This application was unanimously adopted by the General Council on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2005. A working group was established at the meeting of the General Council held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2005.

The Aide-memoir on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in November 2009. Questions from Members about it were transmitted to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in February 2010. Technical contributions, including responses to Members' questions were distributed in 2011. Before a meeting of the Working Group to be convened, the Chairman of the General Council will consult with Members to appoint a Chairman of the working Group

#### **6. Lebanon:**

Lebanon's Working Party was established on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1999. The aide-memoire on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in June 2001 and the answers to issues concerning the aide-memoire were circulated in June 2002. The working group met for the first time on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

Multilateral work is proceeding on the basis of a revised draft Working Party Report that was circulated in October 2009. Bilateral market access negotiations are conducted on the basis of revised offers on goods and services. The Seventh meeting of the Working Party was held in October 2009.

The Working Group will hold its meeting upon the provision by the Lebanese Republic of the necessary contributions.

#### **7. Libya:**

Libya deposited an official application for accession to the WTO on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2001 (Doc.WT/ACC/LBY/1). The WTO Members agreed on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2004 to start negotiations with Libya on its membership.

Libya has not submitted yet the aide-memoir on its foreign trade system and the working group has not met yet.

#### **8. Sudan:**

The Working Party on the accession of Sudan was established on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1994. Sudan's Memorandum on its Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in January 1999. Replies to a first set of questions concerning the Memorandum were circulated in November 2000 and a second set of questions were put in January 2003. The second meeting of the working group was held in March 2004.

The bilateral negotiations on market access for goods and services are underway, on the basis of the initial offer concerning services and a revised offer concerning goods.

Two bilateral agreements (with Brazil and China) concerning market access have been deposited at the Secretariat. Updated technical contributions are pending, and especially legislative and constitutional updated information following the independence of South

Sudan in 2012. The Secretariat keeps regular technical contacts with Sudan to identify areas in which documents and updated information are required. This accession is pending.

WTO members expressed unanimous support for the resumption of Sudan's WTO membership negotiations at the 3rd meeting of the Working Party on the country's accession held on 31 January 2017-13 years after its last formal meeting.

Sudan's Minister of International cooperation, Mr Osman Ahmed Fadul Wash, underscored the government's commitment to the accession process.

He also called on members to accelerate negotiations in consideration of Sudan's status as a least developed country (LDC).

Sudan reported that it had concluded bilateral market access agreements with two WTO members. It also reported renewed engagement with interested members, based on revised market access offers on goods and services.

Members of the Working Party reviewed the foreign trade regime of Sudan on the basis of the updated Memorandum on Foreign Trade Regime and other inputs provided by Sudan.

Sudan also updated members on legislative developments and reaffirmed its commitment to bring its trade regime into conformity with WTO rules.

#### **9. Uzbekistan:**

The Working Party on the accession of Uzbekistan to the WTO was established on 21 December 1994. Uzbekistan submitted its aide-memoir on the Foreign Trade Regime in September 1998 and replies to questions on his aide-memoir were circulated in October 1999. Bilateral market access contacts have been initiated. The Working Party met for the first time on July 17<sup>th</sup> 2002.

Uzbekistan has started bilateral negotiations on market access with interested members on the basis of initial offers concerning goods and services submitted in September 2005. The third meeting of the working group took place in October 2005.

#### **10. Syria:**

Syria's request for accession was notified to the Director General of the WTO on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2001 (WT/ACC/SYR/1).

On 4<sup>th</sup> May 2010, the General Council agreed to establish a Working Party to examine the accession application to the WTO submitted by the Arab Republic of Syria.

The Arab Republic of Syria is designed to benefit from administrative arrangements for the category I.

#### **11. Somalia:**

Somalia has taken the first step in the WTO accession process by sending an accession request to the Director General Ms. Faduma Abdulahi Mohamud, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations in Geneva, in accordance with Article XII of the Marrakesh Agreement and which was circulated to WTO Members on 7 December 2016. The Working Group on the Accession of Somalia was established on that day but has not yet met.

#### **Conclusion:**

Although the membership of the WTO provides clear benefits, negotiations on accession are a challenge for all acceding governments, especially LDCs. The terms and conditions

of the accession impose internal reforms. Acceding LDCs have limited technical and human capacity and financial resources to deal with the complex aspects of the accession to the WTO.

In 2012, the General Council adopted the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on LDCs to further strengthen, streamline and make the 2002 Decision on the accession of least developed countries operational (Guidelines on LDC accession). These recommendations were developed in accordance with the Decision adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the WTO.

The General Council's Decision of 2012 was adopted as an addendum to the 2002 Guidelines on LDC accession. The extension of technical assistance tailored by the WTO Secretariat to acceding LDCs at all stages of the accession process to the WTO remained a priority in 2013. It was made by means of interactions with delegations in Geneva or in capitals.

The Program of China for LDCs and accessions has contributed greatly to strengthening the negotiating capacity of LDCs. So far, seven (7) trainees were trained under this program. In 2013, the WTO Secretariat has continued its dialogue with regional groups in the WTO and the Consultative Group of LDCs.

There are three OIC LDCs, in the process of acceding to the WTO: Afghanistan, Comoros and Sudan. It should be noted that among the 47 LDCs, only 31 are WTO members.

Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing countries have met on 12 September 2012 in Almaty (Kazakhstan) to discuss ways and means to enhance the commercial potential of these countries and to establish a common position on major current business issues.

The purpose of the meeting organized by the Government of Kazakhstan and the United Nations Office for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) is devoted to preparing for the Conference year review of the Almaty Programme to be held in 2014.

Developing countries (LLDCs) have no access to land and the sea and are relatively isolated from world markets, so they have to bear transport costs higher than average and low participation in international trade.

The landlocked OIC countries are the following: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Chad, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Niger, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

## *ANNEXES*

**Table 1:  
Dates of setting up working groups, of the OIC Observer Countries to the WTO**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of the setting up of a working group</b>	<b>Chairman of the working group</b>
Algeria	17 <sup>th</sup> June 1987	Argentina
Azerbaijan	16 <sup>th</sup> July 1997	Germany
Comoros	9 <sup>th</sup> October 2007	-
Iraq	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2004	Uruguay
Iran	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2005	-
Lebanon	14 <sup>th</sup> April 1999	France
Libya	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2004	-
Somalia	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2016	-
Sudan	25 <sup>th</sup> October 1994	Morocco
Syria	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2010	-
Uzbekistan	21 <sup>st</sup> December 1994	Mexico

Source: WTO

**Table 2: Summary Table of Ongoing Accessions**

	Application	Working Party Established	Memorandum	First/Latest* Working Party Meeting	Number of Working Party Meetings *	Goods Offer		Services Offer		Draft Working Party Report **
						initial	latest*	initial	latest*	
<u>Algeria</u>	<u>Jun 1987</u>	<u>Jun 1987</u>	<u>July 1996</u>	<u>April 1998</u> <u>March 2014</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Feb 2002</u>	<u>Nov 2013</u>	<u>Mar 2002</u>	<u>Oct 2013</u>	<u>February 2014</u>
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	Jun 1997	Jul 1997	Apr 1999	Jun 2002/ <b>Feb 2015</b>	<b>12</b>	May 2005	<b>Sept 2013</b>	May 2005	Feb. 2015	<b>Jan 2015</b>
<b>Comoros</b>	Feb 2007	Oct 2007	October 2013	Designation Sept 2013						
<b>Iran</b>	Jul 1996	May 2005	Nov 2009							
<b>Iraq</b>	Sep 2004	Dec 2004	Sept 2005	May 2007/ April 2008	2					
<b>Libya</b>	Jan 1999	April 1999	June 2001	Oct 2002/Oct 2009	7	Nov 2003	June 2004	Dec 2003	June 2004	Oct 2009
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	June 2007	Dec 2007	April 2001	July 2002/July 2012	1					
<b>Lebanon</b>	Dec 2004	Feb 2005	March 2005	Oct 2005/June 2013	13	<b>April 2006</b>	Nov 2008	Oct 2006	Nov 2008	<b>Oct 2012</b>
<b>Sudan</b>	Dec 1994	Dec 1994	Oct 1998	Jul 2002/Oct 2005	3	Sept 2005		Sept 2005		

**Note:** \*As of the date of this document. \*\* Most recent Factual Summary (FS), draft Working Party Report or Elements of draft Working Party Report.

**Table 3: List of the OIC Member States, WTO Members**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>DATE OF ACCESSION</b>
1. Afghanistan	29 July 2016
2. Albania	8 September 2000
3. Bahrain	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
4. Bangladesh	13 December 1993
5. Benin	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
6. Brunei	January 1995
7. Burkina Faso	3 June 1995
8. Cameroon	13 December 1995
9. Chad	19 October 1996
10. Côte d'Ivoire	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
11. Djibouti	31 May 1995
12. Egypt	30 June 1995
13. Gabon	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
14. Gambia	23 October 1996
15. Guinea	25 October 1995
16. Guinea-Bissau	31 May 1995
17. Guyana	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
18. Indonesia	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
19. Jordan	11 April 2000
20. Kazakhstan	30 November 2015
21. Kuwait	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
22. Kyrgyzstan	20 December 1998
23. Malaysia	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
24. Maldives	31 May 1995
25. Mali	31 May 1995
26. Morocco	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
27. Mauritania	31 May 1995
28. Mozambique	26 August 1995
29. Niger	13 December 1996
30. Nigeria	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
31. Oman	9 November 2000
32. Pakistan	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
33. Qatar	13 January 1996
34. Saudi Arabia	11 December 2005
35. Senegal	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
36. Sierra Leone	23 July 1995
37. Suriname	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
38. Tajikistan	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2013
39. Togo	31 May 1995
40. Tunisia	29 March 1995
41. Turkey	26 March 1995
42. Uganda	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1995
43. United Arab Emirates	10 April 1996
44. Yemen	26 June 2014

**LIST OF OIC MEMBER STATES CANDIDATES FOR ACCESSION TO THE WTO  
(OBSERVERS)**

1. Algeria
2. Azerbaijan
3. Comoros
4. Iran
5. Iraq
6. Lebanon
7. Libya
8. Sudan
9. Syria
10. Uzbekistan
11. Somalia

**LIST OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES, NON MEMBERS OF WTO**

1. Palestine
2. Turkmenistan

**Table 4: State of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement ratifications of the OIC Member States (As of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017: 24 members/114)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of ratification</b>
1. Malaysia	26 May 2015
2. Niger	4 August 2015
3. Togo	1 October 2015
4. Pakistan	27 October 2015
5. Guyana	30 November 2015
6. Côte d'Ivoire	8 December 2015
7. Brunei	15 December 2015
8. Mali	20 January 2016
9. Turkey	16 March 2016
10. United Arab Emirates	18 April 2016
11. Albania	10 May 2016
12. Kazakhstan	26 May 2016
13. Saudi Arabia	28 July 2016
14. Afghanistan	29 July 2016
15. Senegal	24 August 2016
16. Bahrein	23 September 2016
17. Bangladesh	27 September 2016
18. Gabon	5 December 2016
19. Kyrgyzstan	6 December 2016
20. Mozambique	6 January 2017
21. Nigeria	16 January 2017
22. Oman	22 February 2017
23. Chad	22 February 2017
24. Jordan	22 February 2017

**Table n° 5: State of the OIC Member States notifications of Category A of the WTO TFA (as of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017: 28 members/94)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>
1. Turkey	16 July 2014	15. Jordan	18 September 2014
2. Malaysia	23 July 2014	16. Senegal	27 October 2014
3. Qatar	25 July 2014	17. Nigeria	10 November 2014
4. Saudi Arabia	22 July 2014	18. Gabon	17 December 2014
5. Morocco	4 August 2014	19. Egypt	7 January 2015
6. Tajikistan	4 August 2014	20. Pakistan	20 March 2015
7. Indonesia	4 August 2014	21. United Arab Emirates	2 June 2015
8. Brunei	8 August 2014	22. Uganda	6 August 2015
9. Côte d'Ivoire	11 August 2014	23. Bahrain	24 November 2015
10. Kyrgyz	11 August 2014	24. Suriname	30 November 2015
11. Kuwait	14 August 2014	25. Guyana	5 January 2016
12. Oman	14 August 2014	26. Kazakhstan	24 February 2016
13. Tunisia	4 September 2014	27. Cameroon	27 May 2016
14. Albania	10 September 2014	28. Burkina Faso	9 March 2017

**Table n ° 6: State of the OIC Member States notifications of Category B of the WTO TFA (as of 21<sup>ST</sup> February 2017: 2 members/9)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>
1. Albania	21 February 2017	2. Chad	21 February 2017

**Table n ° 7: State of the OIC Member States notifications of Category C of the WTO TFA (as of 21<sup>ST</sup> February 2017: 2 members/8)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of notification</b>
1. Albania	21 February 2017	2. Chad	21 February 2017