



Agenda n° 4

REPORT ON

THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION

SUBMITTED BY
THE ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT
OF TRADE

TO THE 39TH MEETING OF THE FOLLOW UP COMMITTEE
OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL CO-OPERATION OF THE OIC
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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 organized by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and provide support, relevant training, and technical assistance to the OIC Member States.

Within this framework, I.C.D.T submits regularly, progress reports on WTO 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).

In the same vein, ICDT elaborates reports and studies within the framework of the preparations for the WTO ministerial meetings to shed light on the points of view of the Islamic countries and to seek a common platform to reconcile the different standpoints on the subjects under discussion.

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

The report of this year comes in a particular situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine crisis.

Prospects for a swift recovery in world trade have improved, as merchandise trade expanded more rapidly than expected in the second half of last year. According to WTO estimates, the volume of world merchandise trade is expected to increase by 8% in 2021 after declining by 5,3% in 2020, continuing its recovery from the pandemic-induced collapse that bottomed out in the second quarter of last year.

The Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) which was supposed to be held in Kazakhstan in June 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, finally took place from 12th to 17th June 2022 at the WTO headquarters in Geneva. It was chaired by Mr. Timur Suleimenov, Deputy Chief of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Conference concluded with the adoption of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies and a set of key initiatives in the field of trade.

In addition to the DOHA agenda items currently under ongoing discussion in the WTO, this report summarizes the main outcomes of the MC12. Besides, it covers the state of play of the implementation of the Investment Facilitation Agreement which holds great importance for the OIC Member States. The focus will also be on the status of the accession process of the OIC Member States to the WTO.

The present report is divided into four major sections: **Section I:** Recent developments of the WTO activities regarding the OIC Member States; **section II:** ICDT activities within the framework of WTO; **section III:** Training of companies on international trade issues **section IV:** Current status of OIC member countries' accessions to the WTO.

SECTION I: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WTO ACTIVITIES REGARDING THE OIC MEMBER STATES

The recent developments at the WTO included the outcome of the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) held on 12-17 June 2022 in Geneva, regarding the new joint initiatives raised at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2017 as well as the pursuit of the discussions on the DOHA agenda topics. The implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement is also one of the topics of interest for the OIC member countries.

A. Recent WTO Developments

1- RESULTS OF THE TWELFTH WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC12):

The members of the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), which was held on-site, focused on the following topics: (1) WTO response to the COVID-19 pandemic, (2) WTO reform, (3) the current global food crisis, (4) fisheries subsidies, and (5) agricultural negotiations.

Several commentators considered MC12 to have been a success compared to previous conferences. Indeed, except for the work program on agriculture, the draft decisions submitted to Ministers were adopted by consensus of the 164 WTO member states. The summary of the proceedings of the MC12 is presented by theme as follows:

- **WTO Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Preparedness for Future Pandemics** was reflected in a Ministerial Declaration prioritizing the removal of barriers to prompt access to pharmaceuticals (including vaccines and medicines) and the means to scale up research and manufacturing of essential health-related goods. The main decisions of the MC12 address several aspects, including: transparency in the application of measures related to COVID-19 and future pandemics, trade barriers, trade facilitation, and regulatory cooperation on patents protecting COVID vaccines.
- The Reaffirmation of the key role of trade in **global food security**. The discussions on agriculture were concluded with the adoption of a ministerial declaration on the urgent response to food insecurity and a ministerial decision on the World Food Programme (WFP).
- **The adoption of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies**, aiming at prohibiting subsidies to fisheries that contribute to the overexploitation of marine resources.
- The members' commitment to work towards necessary **reform of the WTO** with the aim of improving all its functions. The General Council and its subsidiary bodies will lead the process, the results of which will be submitted to the next WTO Ministerial Conference (CM13). In addition, they agreed to conduct discussions towards having a fully operational dispute settlement system by 2024.
- The discussion of **the Moratorium on tariffs on electronic transmissions**. Members decided to maintain the current practice of not imposing tariffs on electronic transmissions until the next WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13), which is expected to take place in 2023.

a) Other MC12 Themes:

In addition to the above-mentioned main themes, the MC12 adopted decisions and declarations on the following topics:

- **The decision on the work program on Small Economies** aims at facilitating the full integration of small economies into the multilateral trading system.
- **The decision on non-violation and other TRIPS-related complaints**, whereby members requested the Council on Intellectual Property Rights to further examine the scope and modalities of non-violation and other TRIPS-related complaints and make recommendations to the MC13.
- **The declaration on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) issues** calls for further improvements in the implementation of the SPS Agreement to address issues related to international trade in food, animals, and plants.

Regarding the other negotiating issues, the Trade Ministers of the WTO member states urged the discussions to move forward and present the results at MC13. A summary of the state of play of the discussions on these topics as well as the themes of the Doha Agenda is presented in the following paragraphs.

2- **Other WTO Issues:**

As mentioned above, along with the issued decisions and declarations regarding the issues relevant to the MC12, the other topics associated with the new initiatives and themes of the Doha Round are investment facilitation for development, MSMEs, trade, and gender equality, as well as agriculture, services, and special and differential treatment.

WTO Members are continuously negotiating these new initiatives. The objective is to reach a consensus on legal frameworks that will enhance the beneficial impact of international trade on the economic and social development of member states. The ongoing negotiations take into consideration the difficulties of the challenging international circumstances.

B. Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement¹

The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) concluded in Bali in December 2013 came into force on 22 February 2017, following its ratification by two-thirds of WTO members. Four years following the entry into force of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee, adopted, on March 3rd, 2021, a roadmap for reviewing the progress achieved in its implementation.

As of October 15th, 2022, the current rate of implementation of TFA commitments amounted to 74% for all WTO Members². This figure is expected to reach 83 percent by 2023, based on the notifications provided by Members in respect of their respective implementation dates.

According to development levels, the current rate of implementation for commitments is 100% for developed Members, 77.3% for developing Members, and 37.6% for least

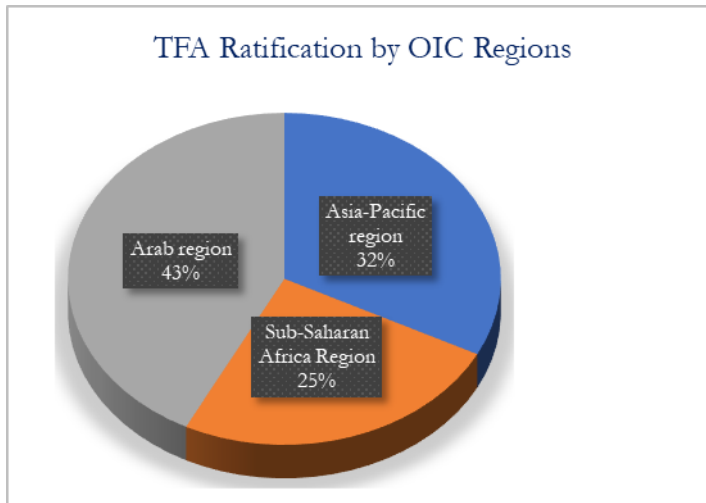
¹ For more details, please consult the WTO database at:

<https://tfadatabase.org/implementation/timeline-table?category=b&from=2017-02-22&to=2022-10-17>

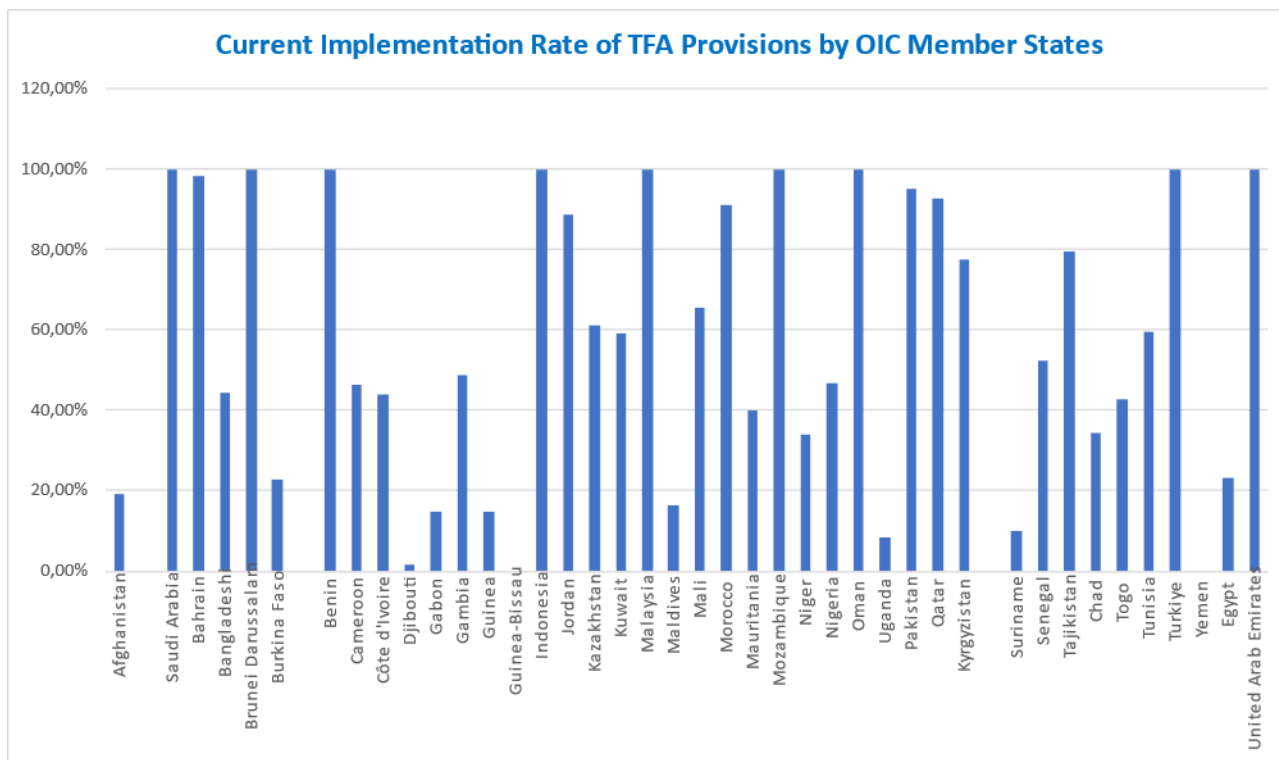
developed countries (LDCs).

Regarding the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the latest countries that have ratified the TFA are Morocco, Egypt, Tajikistan, Maldives, Guinea and Tunisia, and Guinea Bissau bringing the total number of ratifications to 154 out of the 164 members of the WTO. It should be noted that the first member to ratify the Agreement is Hong Kong China.

The OIC Member States that have ratified the TFA are 41 out of 154. The list of these countries by date of notification is attached (Table 4). Furthermore, it is worth noting that 40 OIC countries have notified Category A, 37 countries have notified Category B and 34 countries have notified Category C of the Agreement according to the WTO data of October 2022.



The following figure summarizes the status of the implementation of the TFA by the OIC Member States.



Source: WTO database as of 7-11-2022

SECTION II: ICDT ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF WTO ISSUES

ICDT carried out several activities to serve OIC Member States' economic interests regarding WTO issues, in particular:

A. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

1- Workshop on Post-WTO Eleventh Ministerial Conference (MC11) for the OIC African Member States, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, June 26th-27th, 2019:

ICDT and IsDB's Country Strategy and Cooperation department organized in collaboration with the State Secretariat in Charge of Foreign Trade of the Kingdom of Morocco a Workshop on «The Outcomes of the Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) for the benefit of the African OIC Member States" on 26-27 June 2019 in Casablanca. The workshop aims at coordinating the positions of the OIC Member States within the framework of WTO negotiations.

The following Member States participated in this workshop: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Morocco.

2- Workshop on “Current WTO Negotiations for the OIC Member States Embassies in Geneva”, Geneva, Switzerland, November 14th -15th,2019

The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT), the Country Strategy and Cooperation Department of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva a Workshop on “Current WTO Negotiations for the OIC Member States Embassies in Geneva”, Geneva, Switzerland, 14-15 November 2019. The objective is to discuss the ongoing issues of the WTO negotiations. More than 20 countries and 8 regional and international organizations participated in this event.

3- Virtual workshop on WTO agricultural negotiations and their impact on Intra-OIC agricultural trade, October 26th -28th, 2020

ICDT, in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank, organized a workshop on trade negotiations within WTO and their impact on intra-OIC trade. The objective of this meeting is to inform the executives reporting to the Ministries in charge of this issue in Member Countries on the status of agricultural negotiations and to enable them to master the technical negotiations.

4- Virtual Workshop on The State of Play of WTO Negotiations, in Preparation for The 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12), June 21st - 23rd 2021

For better positioning of the OIC countries in the WTO negotiations, ICDT will organize, in cooperation with the IsDB and the WTO Secretariat, a workshop on the themes to be discussed during the MC12, including Investment Facilitation for Development; electronic commerce; MSMEs; gender equality and fisheries subsidies. The objective is to provide a forum for experts from OIC countries to discuss and exchange experiences on these issues. The workshop was attended by 160 participants from 30 OIC member countries.

5- Virtual Workshop on the State of Play of the Negotiations at the WTO Level, in Preparation for the MC12, 9th -10th November 2021.

The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized, in partnership with the World Trade Organization Secretariat and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) a second regional virtual workshop in preparation for the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), on 9th -10th November 2021. This workshop aims at assisting the OIC member countries to finalize their positions on the issues on the agenda of the MC12 and to be informed on the state of play of the negotiations and their potential outcomes. The meeting was attended by 150 participants from 23 OIC member countries.

6- Regional Virtual Workshop in Preparation For the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference on May 31st, 2022

Within the framework of the preparation for the participation of the OIC Member States in the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) to be held in June 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland, ICDT organized, in partnership with the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), a regional virtual preparatory workshop for this Conference, on 31st May 2022. The main objective of this workshop, which is a follow-up to the two workshops held in June and November 2021, is to provide an opportunity for the countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to exchange views on the issues covered by the agenda of the MC12 and to get the latest information on the state of negotiations and potential outcomes. The present workshop focused on the latest developments since November 2021, to be prepared for the proceedings of this conference. The workshop was attended by 95 participants from 21 OIC member countries.

7- Technical Assistance for the Accession of OIC Member States to the WTO

To facilitate the accession of the OIC Member States to the WTO, ICDT has targeted two groups of countries: the Arab group and the Central Asian group. Since most of the countries are in the Arab zone, a study was carried out in partnership with the WTO and IsDB to assess the needs of the Arab countries and the approaches to be adopted.

The results of this study will be discussed in a regional workshop scheduled for the second half of 2023, for the benefit of negotiators from the countries in question.

8- Activities On Multilateral and Regional Trade Negotiations

Within the framework of the follow-up of multilateral and regional trade negotiations, ICDT has scheduled the organization, of training workshops and seminars on various topics of interest to the Member States during the 2nd quarter of 2023:

- Training workshop on trade defense.
- Training workshop on trade in services.
- Seminar on Regional Integration in the OIC Area.
- Information upgrading seminar on post-MC12 (12th WTO Ministerial Conference) and the preparations for the MC13.

9- Capacity Building in Economic Diplomacy

ICDT signed a partnership agreement with the Mauritanian Diplomatic Academy on March 15, 2023, in Nouakchott, concerning the training of Mauritanian executives on various negotiation and economic diplomacy themes.

Contacts are currently in progress to identify the needs of other African countries in this field.

B. TRADE FACILITATION:

1- Virtual workshop on data collection and analysis of trade in services, 23rd-25th March 2021

Considering the recent developments around the world in terms of trade in services, ICDT, in collaboration with OIC institutions and regional organizations, organized a workshop on data collection, processing, and analysis of trade in services, to help the negotiators of the OIC Member States master the new techniques of Trade Negotiations.

2- Virtual Expert Meeting, on the theme " Food Industry Projects: Perspectives and Problems in Attracting Investments to OIC Countries», May 24th, 2021.

To encourage Investment Promotion Agencies of OIC countries to develop their activities in the agri-food sector, the Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS) held, on May 24, 2021, a Virtual expert meeting devoted to the examination of opportunities and challenges to attract investment in OIC countries in this sector.

In this context, the ICDT presented its activities relating to investment promotion and capacity-building programs to develop trade and investment in the field of agri-food in the OIC zone.

3- Virtual Roundtable on Foreign Direct Investment Policies and Trends in OIC Member Countries, October 21st, 2021

ICDT organized in collaboration with IsDB and SESRIC a round table on the topic of policies for the promotion of foreign direct investments in the OIC countries. This meeting allowed us to explore the possible ways of thinking, favoring the development of investments for better regional integration at the OIC level. It also provided an opportunity to share national experiences on FDI promotion strategies, especially in a context marked by the economic and social implications inherent to COVID-19.

4- Workshop on the Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and its Impact on the OIC Regional Action Plan, March 23rd-24th 2022, Dubai

Within the framework of the ongoing consultations with the OIC Member States on the implementation of Category C of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA), the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) and the Regional Integration and Cooperation Department of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) organized a Workshop on " The Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and its Impact on the OIC Regional Action Plan " on 23-24 March 2022 in Dubai, UAE on the sidelines of the Expo 2020 Dubai. This workshop is a follow-up to the three virtual consultation meetings held between January 25 and February 24, 2022.

Ministries in charge of Trade, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Customs Administrations as well as experts from the WTO (through virtual channels), UNCTAD, and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, the Arab League, IsDB, and ICDT participated in this workshop. The recommendations issued in this workshop mainly concern needs assessment, setting up of a technical assistance action plan including priority actions, and strengthening cooperation and synergy between the partners involved in the deployment of this program, namely: WTO, UNCTAD, the Global Trade Facilitation Alliance, IsDB and ICDT.

5- Supporting the Digitization of Foreign Trade Procedures:

The digitalization of foreign trade procedures will help reduce the transaction costs of exports and imports of goods in the Member States. To meet the expectations of Member States, ICDT and GATF in partnership with IsDB are pursuing the identification of the needs of countries in terms of digitalization of foreign trade procedures which concern phytosanitary and transport certification. In this regard, the Centre has proceeded with the following:

Electronic phytosanitary certification:

- Organization of two exploratory missions for the implementation of the e-Phyto solution in the process of international trade, in Nigeria (November 28th - December 2nd , 2022) and in Togo (March 13th -17th , 2023). These two missions, coming in response to requests from these two countries, aim to assess the needs of key players in the public and private sectors in terms of digitalization. Furthermore, the missions are intended to identify the difficulties encountered in the field to obtain the phytosanitary certificate as well as the best ways to successfully digitalize this process to maximize its impact in terms of trade facilitation of the countries concerned.
- National workshop for the official launching of the project of the digitization of the procedures of granting of phytosanitary certificate (e-phyto) on June 26th, 2023 in Lomé (Togo) and on May 23-24, 2023, in Lagos (Nigeria).
- Other missions are planned during the second half of 2023 and the first half of 2024 and will cover Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Oman, Albania, and Benin.

Digitalization of Land Transport Procedures:

- Assisting African OIC Member Countries in their processes of digitalizing transport procedures (e-TIR). The first projects cover the Morocco-Mauritania, Senegal-Mali and Burkina Faso-Côte d'Ivoire cross-border posts in 2023.

6- Supporting OIC Countries of Africa in the Adoption of the Conventions on International Road Transport (TIR).

- Organizing, in collaboration with the IsDB and the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), a Training Workshop on the Convention on International Road Transport and Goods, on 28th and 29th June 2022 in Casablanca. This workshop is organized for the benefit of the executives of the Ministries in charge of trade and transport as well as the Customs Administrations of 23 countries of Sub-Saharan

Africa members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The main objective of the workshop is to introduce the provisions of the TIR International Road Transport Convention and the International Conventions on the Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) with a view to illustrating the advantages and benefits of their adoption by these countries.

- Contribution to the proceedings of the workshop on the TIR Convention held in Geneva on 8 February 2023 under the theme: "Implementation of the TIR Convention - Challenges and Opportunities" organized by UNECE and IRU.
- Organization of a TIR workshop for the benefit of the IGAD countries members of the OIC, in Djibouti on 1st and 2nd March 2023 in partnership with the IsDB and the IRU.

7- Implementation of the WTO TFA Category C:

The technical assistance for the implementation of the TFA category C concerns, first of all, the African OIC member countries that have requested assistance. National and regional workshops have been scheduled during the first half of 2023. These include the following:

- Virtual sessions in partnership with UNCTAD and the World Bank to provide technical assistance to the members of the National Trade Facilitation Committee of the Republic of Guinea for the identification of the state of play of the implementation of the TFA Category C measures and technical assistance needs
- Organization of a national training workshop on the identification of appropriate timeframes for implementation of these measures, June 7-9, 2023, in Conakry, Guinea.
- Organization of a national training workshop for the simplification of customs procedures, in partnership with the Moroccan Customs and Indirect Tax Administration, for the benefit of Gabon, in Libreville from March 13-17, 2023.
- Holding national and regional workshops for the benefit of other OIC African Member States during the 2nd quarter of 2023.

Section III: TRAINING OF COMPANIES ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES

Within the framework of boosting cooperation, technical assistance, and capacity building aimed at promoting trade and investment among OIC Member States, The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized a series of thematic trainings targeting 2200 participants from SMEs in 57 Member States. They can be summarized as follows:

A. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

1- Virtual Workshop on Food Export Strategies for Cameroonian Companies, February 2nd -3rd, 2022.

This virtual workshop was organized on February 2-3, 2022, in cooperation with the National Center for Trade Promotion of Cameroon (NCTP) under the aegis of the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Cameroon and in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts of Cameroon (CCIMA). This workshop focused on all the constraints faced by companies in the export process. The axes addressed are the development of a business plan, mastery of the standards of international trade, and opportunities to access new foreign markets. The workshop was attended by 70 participants from public and private companies and organizations.

2- Virtual Training Workshop on "The Resilience of SMEs To Covid-19", February 9th, 2022

The main objective of this workshop is to provide information and guidance for effective adaptation to the effects of the pandemic. The issues discussed are related to COVID crisis management methods including customer and supplier relations as well as managing changing business priorities. The workshop was attended by 175 participants from 23 countries.

3- Virtual training workshop on "making the presential- virtual international trade fair profitable", January 31st - February 1st, 2022

The Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) organized on January 31 and February 1, 2022, a virtual training workshop on "How to make profitable participation in an international face-to-face and virtual trade fair" for the benefit of companies and trade promotion organs (TPOs) of the OIC countries.

The main objective of this workshop is to assist TPOs, MSMEs, and organizers of fairs and exhibitions to better prepare themselves to participate in fairs and exhibitions before, during, and after using new information technologies such as digital marketing in the covid and post-covid context, to maximize the participation of companies, visitors, and investors in fairs and exhibitions.

The workshop was attended by 180 participants from 16 countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, India, Palestine, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, Togo, Türkiye, Uganda, USA, and France.

4- Virtual Training Workshop on "Export Pricing and Documentation", on February 15th -16th, 2022

The objective of this training workshop is to introduce participants to pricing methods and documentation during the export process. Topics covered include the identification of the export process, the legal and commercial relevance of the main documents used in the export process, the logistical costs of the pre-export process, and export pricing. This workshop was attended by 190 economic operators from 25 OIC countries.

5- Online Training Program for Business Executives and Public Institutions in Charge of Trade and Investment in OIC Member States, 1st Semester of 2023

With a view to upgrading training and information for the benefit of business owners, especially women and youth as well as executives of public institutions in charge of trade and investments, regarding the approaches of positioning on the international markets, ICDDT will organize an online training cycle starting from the second half of May 2023. These training sessions will take the form of 3-hour webinars, conducted by international experts. This cycle will be articulated, initially, on the following two modules:

- **Module 1** will focus on transportation and logistics and will cover the following technical training topics:

Topics	Scheduled date
Techniques for drawing up transport contracts in international trade	May 17 th , 2023
Audit of the import process	May 23 rd , 2023
Control and inspection of goods in international trade	June 6 th , 2023
Audit of the international transport process of goods	June 21 st , 2023
Supply chain security for exporting companies	June 22 nd , 2023

- **Module 2** focuses on Digital Marketing and will cover the following technical training topics:

Topics	Scheduled date
Needs analysis and market research in digital marketing	May 18 th , 2023
Analysis of international digital marketplaces	May 30 th 2023
Digital communication management	May 31 st , 2023
Digital strategy	June 7 th , 2023
Management of payment and international distribution	June 8 th , 2023
Creation of an online store	June 13 th to 15 th 2023

B. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1- Virtual Training Workshop on "Risks Related to International Trade" on March 3rd, 2022.

This training workshop focused on the identification of the main risks related to international trade, the different manifestations of these risks, as well as the possible solutions to circumvent these risks. 125 participants from 31 OIC countries took part in this event.

2- Virtual Training Workshop on "International Payment Methods" on March 16th, 2022

The objective of this workshop is to enable participants to master the use of payment instruments by presenting the lowest cost and lowest risks to secure international commercial transactions. The training focused on the following themes: the difference between payment instruments and techniques, the documentary remittance technique (REMDOC), and the Letter of credit (CREDOC). 67 participants from 22 OIC countries took part in the workshop.

3- Virtual Training Workshop on "The New Rules of Incoterms 2020" on March 28th, 2022

The objective of this workshop is to enable participants to master the practices of the new version of INCOTERMS, and to acquire the necessary skills to be able to contractually choose the right INCOTERM for each situation. The topics discussed are the role of INCOTERMS in international sales contracts, the new provisions of the 2020 version, and the in-depth study of each INCOTERM in the 2020 version. The workshop was attended by about 54 private and public operators from the 23 OIC countries.

4- Virtual Training Workshop on Trade Negotiation Techniques for MSMEs, February 23, 2022

The workshop was dedicated to MSMEs and members of the National Trade Facilitation Committees and focused on the mastery of trade negotiations in order to promote the competitiveness and efficiency of the MSMEs' representatives. This workshop provided a clear understanding of trade negotiation and the techniques for successful trade negotiations. This workshop was attended by 195 executives from 22 OIC countries.

5- Online Training Cycle on International Trade Issues, 2nd semester of 2023

To ensure an upgrading of training and information for the benefit of business owners, especially women and youth as well as executives of public institutions in charge of trade and investments, on the various topics related to international trade, ICDT will organize an online training cycle during the 2nd half of 2023. These trainings will take the form of 3-hour webinars, conducted by international experts. The targeted topics are: rules of origin,

customs valuation, intellectual property, preferential agreements, sanitary and phytosanitary norms and standards.

6- Training Workshops on Market Access for Women Entrepreneurs in OIC Member States

Within the framework of encouraging women entrepreneurship, ICDT will organize in collaboration with the Cooperation and Capacity Building Department of IsDB and the Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada a series of 3-day training sessions in Lahore (Pakistan) on the sidelines of the 18th Trade Fair of OIC Member States scheduled to take place from 16th to 18th June 2023, in Morocco and in Chad respectively in September and October 2023.

These trainings, which will be organized in cooperation with the Ministries in charge of trade and TPOs of the said countries, aim at supporting SMEs and women cooperatives to enhance their access to international markets and to better integrate value chains, leading to increased intra-OIC trade and investment flows with the rest of the world for the benefit of the public and private sectors of OIC countries.

SECTION IV: STATUS OF ACCESSION OF OIC MEMBER STATES TO WTO

A. Process of Accession and Technical Assistance

1- Process of Accession to WTO

OIC States members of the WTO are still 44 countries. 11 OIC Member States are in the process of accession to the WTO.

Accessions to the WTO take place through interdependent channels of multilateral, plurilateral, and bilateral negotiations. Some processes have made significant progress since 2013, while others have not progressed as expected due to various factors, including further negotiations with Members, technical complexities, internal difficulties, and differences in choices.

The terms of accession include a component related to the support of countries through technical assistance, alongside other awareness-raising and dialogue tools enabling acceding countries to better prepare the process of dialogue with other member countries to honor their commitments.

2- Technical Assistance and Awareness Raising

Technical assistance and capacity building related to accessions are focused on training government officials. They also include awareness-raising activities for public and private actors. Besides, they include activities for members of parliament, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the media.

In this context, ICDT has launched a study in partnership with IsDB and WTO, intending to identify the type of technical assistance that would facilitate the WTO accession process to OIC member countries.

3- Tools For accessions

In July 2016, the WTO launched a new Accessions Intelligence Portal which serves to improve access to information on WTO memberships as well as many new features, such as direct access to all laws notified for completed memberships. The portal is available at: <https://www.wto.org/accessions>.

Membership Commitments Database (ACDB): The Membership Commitments Database was launched in May 2012. It provides access to all the commitments and related information contained in the membership working group reports and membership protocols of the 31 Members under Article XII MC (<http://acdb.wto.org>). In 2018, the database has been updated to include the accession protocols of all Article XII Members and the commitments contained therein.

B. Status of Accessions to WTO

The accession status of members is detailed according to each country:

a) Algeria:

The Working Group on the Accession of Algeria was established on 17 June 1987. Algeria formally deposited its aide-memoire on Foreign Trade to the WTO in June 1996. Algeria submitted its initial offer of market access for goods and services in 2002. The working group, which is chaired by Ambassador José Luis Cancela (Uruguay) and includes 43 countries, has held 14 meetings to date, the last of which took place in March 2014. The review of the Algerian foreign trade regime is in progress.

b) AZERBAIJAN:

The Working Group on the Accession of Azerbaijan was established on 16 July 1997, the same year Azerbaijan applied for membership. Azerbaijan submitted an aide-memoire on its foreign trade regime in April 1999. Azerbaijan submitted its initial offer of market access for goods and services in 2005. The working group has so far held fourteen meetings, the last of which was held in July 2017. The review of this country's foreign trade regime is in progress.

c) COMOROS:

The Working Group on the Accession of Comoros was established on October 9, 2007, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Luis Enrique CHÁVEZ BASAGOITIA (Peru) and then Ambassador Omar ZNIBER (Morocco). The Aide-Memoire on the foreign trade regime of this country was presented on October 25, 2013. To date, it has held 7 meetings, the last one in May 2022. Comoros presented its market access offers for goods and services in 2016. They distributed a factual summary of the points involved. The review of Comoros' foreign trade regime is underway based on a draft report of the Working group.

d) IRAQ:

Iraq submitted its application to join the WTO on September 30, 2004. The Working group, chaired by Mr. Guillermo Valles Galmez (Uruguay) and then Ambassador Omar Hilal

(Morocco), was established in December 2004. The Working group held its first meeting in 2007. Iraq has not currently submitted its market access offer for products and services.

e) IRAN:

Iran submitted its application to join the WTO in 2004. A working group was established in 2005 which held a single meeting in the same year. The Aide Memoire on the Foreign Trade Regime was circulated in November 2009. Iran has not yet submitted its market access offer for goods and services.

f) LEBANON:

The Working Group on the Accession of the Republic of Lebanon, which was established on April 14, 1999, has so far held 7 meetings, the last one in 2009. Lebanon's aide-memoire on the foreign trade regime was distributed in June 2001. Lebanon submitted its initial offer for access to the goods and services markets in 2003 and circulated its factual summary of the points raised by the Member States. The review of its foreign trade regime is underway based on a draft report of the Working group.

g) Libya:

Libya formally applied to join the WTO on November 25, 2001. The Working Group was established in 2004. Libya has not yet submitted an aide-memoire on its foreign trade regime and the working group has not yet met.

h) Sudan:

The working group for the admission of Sudan was established on October 25, 1994. To date, it has held 5 meetings under the chairmanship of Mr. Naoki HIKOTA (Japan), the last of which was held in 2021. Sudan submitted its initial market access offer for goods and services in 2004 and circulated its factual summary of the points raised by the Member States. The examination of its foreign trade regime submitted in 1999 has not yet been completed.

i) UZBEKISTAN:

The Working Group on the accession of Uzbekistan was established on 21 December 1994. It has held 5 meetings so far, the last one was held in June 2022, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Taeho LEE (Republic of Korea). Uzbekistan submitted an aide-memoire on its foreign trade regime in September 1998 and presented its initial market access offer for goods and services in 2005.

j) SOMALIA:

The Somalia Accession Working group was established on December 7, 2016. The process of appointing a working group chair is ongoing.

k) SYRIA:

The Syrian Arab Republic's Working Group was established on May 4th, 2010. The Working Group has not yet met.

1) Turkmenistan

The Turkmenistan Working Group was established on February 23,2022 but has not met to date.

Conclusion:

Although WTO membership offers significant advantages, accession negotiations present a challenge for all acceding governments, particularly those belonging to LDCs. The terms and conditions of accession require domestic reforms. Acceding LDCs have limited technical, human, and financial resources to address the complex aspects of WTO accession. In this regard, the study to be conducted by ICDT, IsDB and WTO seeks to identify the needs of OIC member countries in terms of facilitating the process of their accession to the WTO.

Given the importance of assisting OIC member countries in these areas, ICDT and IsDB organize annual capacity-building programs in the form of training and awareness-raising workshops. It is worth mentioning that special attention is accorded to the Least Developed Countries.

ICDT, in partnership with IsDB, will pursue joint endeavors in organizing other meetings and workshops for the exchange of experiences and expertise, and the harmonization of countries' positions, especially in view of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference.

ANNEXES

Table 1: Dates for the setting up of the OIC Observer Working Groups at the WTO

Country	Date of the setting up of a working group	Chairman of the working group
Algeria	June 17 th 1987	Uruguay
Azerbaijan	July 16 th 1997	Germany
Comoros	October 9 th 2007	Peru \ Morocco (since May 2022)
Iraq	December 13 th 2004	Morocco
Iran	May 26 th 2005	-
Lebanon	April 14 th 1999	France
Libya	July 27 th 2004	Spain
Somalia	December 7 th 2016	-
Sudan	October 25 th 1994	Japan
Syria	May 4 th 2010	-
Uzbekistan	December 21 st 1994	Korea
Turkmenistan	February 23 rd	-

Source: WTO, March 2020

Table 2: Summary Table of Ongoing Accessions

Acceding Economy	Date of Application	Working Group Established in	Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR) circulated in	First Working Group Meeting held in	Number of Working Group meetings	offer on goods circulated in		offer on services circulated in		Factual Summary of Point Raised circulated in	Review of foreign trade regime ongoing on basis of a Draft Report of the Working Group
						Initial offer	Last offer*	Initial offer	Last offer*		
Algeria	June 1987	June 1987	July. 1996	April 1998/ March 2014	14	Feb 2002	Nov 2013	March 2002	Oct 2013	Feb 2014	
Azerbaijan	June 1997	July. 1997	April 1999	June 2002/ July 2017	14	May 2005	Sept 2013	May 2005	Feb. 2015	Jan 2015	✓
Comoros	Feb. 2007	Oct. 2007	Oct.2013	Designation Sept2013 March 2018	4	Oct 2016		Oct 2016			✓
Iran	July. 1996	May 2005	Nov. 2009		/						✓
Iraq	Sept. 2004	Dec. 2004	Sept. 2005	May 2007/ April 2008	2						
Libya	Jan 1999	April 1999	June 2001	Oct 2002/ Oct 2009	7	Nov 2003	June 2004	Dec 2003	June 2004	Oct 2009	
Uzbekistan	June 2007	Dec. 2007	April 2011	July. 2002/ July 2012	3						
Lebanon	Dec 2004	Feb. 2005	March 2005	Oct 2005/ Oct 2009	7	April 2006	Nov 2008	Oct 2006	Nov 2008	Oct 2012	
Sudan	Dec. 1994	Dec 1994	Oct .1998	July 2002/ July 2017	4	Sept 2005		Sept 2005			✓
Syria	Oct 2001	May201									
Somalia	Dec 2015	Dec 2016									

Source : WTO/ Updated in March 2020

Table 3: LIST OF OIC MEMBER STATES MEMBERS OF THE WTO

COUNTRIES	DATE OF ACCESSION
1. Albania	September 8 th 2000
2. Bahrain	January 1 st 1995
3. Bangladesh	December 13 th 1993
4. Benin	January 1 st 1995
5. Brunei	January 1995
6. Burkina Faso	June 3 th 1995
7. Cameroon	December 13 th 1995
8. Chad	October 19 th 1996
9. Côte d'Ivoire	January 1 st 1995
10. Djibouti	May 31 th 1995
11. Egypt	June 30 th 1995
12. Gabon	January 1 st 1995
13. The Gambia	October 23 th 1996
14. Guinea	October 25 th 1995
15. Guinea-Bissau	May 31 th 1995
16. Guyana	January 1 st 1995
17. Indonesia	January 1 st 1995
18. Jordan	April 11 th 2000
19. Kuwait	January 1 st 1995
20. <u>Kazakhstan</u>	<u>November 30th2015</u>
21. Kyrgyzstan	December 20 th 1998
22. Malaysia	January 1 st 1995
23. Maldives	May 31 th 1995
24. Mali	May 31 th 1995
25. Morocco	January 1 st 1995
26. Mauritania	May 31 th 1995
27. Mozambique	August 26 th 1995
28. Niger	December 13 th 1996
29. Nigeria	January 1 st 1995
30. Oman	November 9 th 2000
31. Pakistan	January 1 st 1995
32. Qatar	January 13 th 1996
33. Saudi Arabia	December 11 th 2005
34. Senegal	January 1 st 1995
35. Sierra Leone	July 23 th 1995
36. Suriname	January 1 st 1995
37. Tajikistan	March 2 nd 2013
38. Togo	May 31 th 1995
39. Tunisia	March 29 th 1995
40. Türkiye	March 26 th 1995
41. Uganda	January 1 st 1995
42. United Arab Emirates	April 10 th 1996
43. Yemen	June 26 th 2014
44. Afghanistan	July 29 th 2016

**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
12. Turkmenistan (establishment of the working group on February 23, 2022)

LIST OF OIC MEMBER STATES NON-WTO MEMBERS

Palestine

Table 4: List of OIC Member States that have ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

Member States	Date of Ratification
1. Albania	2016-05-10
2. Afghanistan	2016-07-29
3. Bahrain, Kingdom of	2016-09-23
4. Bangladesh	2016-09-27
5. Benin	2018-03-28
6. Brunei Darussalam	2015-12-15
7. Burkina Faso	2018-09-21
8. Cameroon	2018-11-30
9. Chad	2017-02-22
10. Cote d'Ivoire	2015-12-08
11. Djibouti	2018-03-05
12. Egypt	2019-06-24
13. Gabon	2016-12-05
14. Gambia, The	2017-07-11
15. Guinea	2019-10-24
16. Guinea-Bissau	2022-09-20
17. Guyana	2015-11-30
18. Indonesia	2017-12-05
19. Jordan	2017-02-22
20. Kazakhstan	2016-05-26
21. Kuwait, the State of	2018-04-25
22. Kyrgyz Republic	2016-12-06
23. Malaysia	2015-05-26
24. Maldives	2019-10-01
25. Mali	2016-01-20
26. Morocco	2019-05-14
27. Mozambique	2017-01-06
28. Niger	2015-08-06
29. Nigeria	2017-01-16
30. Oman	2017-02-22
31. Pakistan	2015-10-27
32. Qatar	2017-06-12
33. Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of	2016-07-28
34. Senegal	2016-08-24
35. Sierra Leone	2017-05-05
36. Tajikistan	2019-07-02
37. Togo	2015-10-01
38. Tunisia	2020-07-17
39. Türkiye	2016-03-16
40. Uganda	2018-06-27
41. United Arab Emirates	2016-04-18

Table 5: Status of commitments of OIC countries under the Trade Facilitation Agreement

Member	Current rate	The current implementation rate of the implementation of Cat. A	The current rate of Cat. B implementation commitments	The current rate of Cat. C implementation commitments	Rate of implementations of remaining implementations of Cat. B	Rate of implementations of remaining implementations of Cat. C
Afghanistan	26.9%	11.3%	4.2%	11.3%	23.1%	50.0%
Albania	76.1%	75.6%	0.4%		20.6%	3.4%
Bahrein,	90.3%	61.3%	28.6%	0.4%	1.7%	8.0%
Bangladesh	34.5%	34.5%			36.6%	29.0%
Benin	91.2%	65.5%	21.8%	3.8%		8.8%
Brunei	91.6%	91.6%			8.4%	
Burkina Faso	13.9%	13.0%		0.8%	17.6%	68.5%
Cameroun	15.1%	1.7%	13.4%		31.9%	52.9%
Chad	34.5%	34.5%			30.3%	35.3%
Cote d'Ivoire	44.1%	34.0%	2.1%	8.0%	2.9%	52.9%
Djibouti	1.7%	1.7%			23.5%	74.8%
Egypt	23.1%	23.1%			2.5%	74.4%
Gabon	13.9%	13.9%			21.4%	64.7%
The Gambia	51.3%	48.7%		2.5%	38.2%	10.5%
Guinea	14.7%	14.7%			33.2%	52.1%
Guyana	83.2%	73.1%	2.1%	8.0%	0.8%	16.0%
Indonesia	88.7%	88.7%			11.3%	
Jordan	88.7%	81.5%	7.1%		1.7%	9.7%
Kazakhstan	44.5%	44.5%			47.9%	7.6%
Kuwait	59.2%	59.2%				
Kyrgyzstan	60.1%	16.4%	13.4%	30.3%	3.8%	36.1%
Malaysia	94.1%	94.1%			5.9%	
Maldives	16.4%	16.4%			36.1%	47.5%
Mali	65.5%	65.5%			17.2%	17.2%
Mauritania	44.5%	39.9%	4.6%			55.5%
Morocco	91.2%	91.2%			0.8%	8.0%
Mozambique	85.7%	65.5%	10.5%	9.7%		14.3%
Niger	34.0%	31.9%	2.1%		4.6%	61.3%
Nigeria	40.8%	15.1%	14.3%	11.3%	28.2%	31.1%
Oman	100.0%	97.5%	2.5%			
Pakistan	79.0%	25.6%	40.3%	13.0%	2.5%	18.5%
Qatar	92.9%	92.9%				
Saudi Arabia,	100.0%	100.0%				
Senegal	61.8%	52.5%		9.2%	10.5%	27.7%
Sierra Leone	5.9%	0.8%	5.0%		14.7%	79.4%
Suriname	10.1%	10.1%				89.9%
Tajikistan	77.7%	55.9%	21.8%			22.3%
Togo	67.2%	42.9%		24.4%	32.8%	
Tunisia	59.7%	59.7%				40.3%
Türkiye	100.0%	100.0%				
Uganda	8.4%	8.4%			27.3%	64.3%
U A Emirates	97.9%	97.1%	0.8%		2.1%	

