



Agenda n° 5

REPORT ON

THE ISSUES RELATING TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION

SUBMITTED BY ISLAMIC CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE



42ND SESSION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION OF THE OIC (COMCEC)

Istanbul, Republic of Türkiye
October 31 – November 3, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

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 held 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.

This report is being issued amidst ongoing instability in the international environment, marked by persistent geopolitical tensions—particularly in the Middle East—by risks to strategic maritime and energy routes, and by a high degree of uncertainty regarding trade policies. These factors continue to affect transportation costs, energy and commodity prices, and, more broadly, the resilience of global value chains.

However, data available as of mid-September 2026 call for a more nuanced view of previous projections. According to the WTO, the volume of global merchandise trade grew by 4.6% in 2025, but growth is expected to slow to 1.9% in 2026 under the baseline scenario, and to 1.4% under a high-energy-price scenario. Trade in services, which is more dynamic, increased by 5.3% in volume in 2025 and is projected to grow by 4.8% in 2026. The WTO's Trade Barometer, published on September 9, 2026, stands at 102.0, above the trend value of 100, signaling that trade in goods remains resilient despite headwinds.

Within this constrained context, the economies of the Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have demonstrated relative resilience. The overall volume of their trade with the rest of the world, after reaching USD 5 trillion in 2025, is projected to stabilize at around USD 5.1 trillion according to 2026 estimates. This trend is driven in particular by the recovery of services exports, the diversification of trading partners, and the strengthening of intra-OIC trade, despite an international environment that remains uncertain.

The commitment of the Member States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to contributing to the recovery of global trade has been reflected in their active participation in the work of the World Trade Organization. In this regard, the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12), held in Geneva in 2022, was chaired by Kazakhstan, followed by the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13), organized in Abu Dhabi in 2024 under the presidency of the United Arab Emirates. Continuing this momentum, the 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14), held from 26 to 29 March 2026 in Cameroon, marks a significant milestone by highlighting the growing role of developing countries in global trade governance. This dynamic reflects the commitment of OIC Member States to promoting a more inclusive and balanced multilateral trading system, notably through support for reforms related to special and differential treatment, dispute settlement, and the enhanced integration of developing economies into international trade.

UNCTAD data also confirm a sustained expansion in the value of trade during the first half of 2026:

- Global trade in goods reached approximately 13,700 billion USD, an increase of 12.5% compared with the same period in 2025, while trade in services grew by 10.5%. However, a significant portion of this increase reflects rising prices, particularly for energy and transportation.
- The structural transformation of global trade is also continuing: services accounted for 27% of global exports in 2025, and digitally delivered services now account for 56% of global service exports.

For OIC member states, these developments underscore the importance of diversification, trade facilitation, digital connectivity, and capacity building in order to better integrate into value chains and the trade in services.

The commitment of the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to contribute to strengthening the multilateral trading system has been demonstrated by their active participation in the WTO Ministerial Conferences. Following MC12, held in Geneva in 2022 under the chairmanship of Kazakhstan, and MC13, held in Abu Dhabi in 2024 under the chairmanship of the United Arab Emirates, MC14 took place in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from March 26 to 30, 2026.

It adopted decisions on small economies, strengthening the implementation of special and differential treatment in the SPS and TBT Agreements, as well as on the continuation of negotiations on fisheries subsidies. Several key issues, including WTO reform, e-commerce, matters relating to LDCs, and dispute settlement, were referred back to Geneva for further work. In addition, 129 Members are participating in the Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD); at MC14, 165 of the 166 WTO Members supported its incorporation into the WTO framework, although a formal consensus was not reached.

This report summarizes the main outcomes of MC14 and their follow-up actions through September 2026. It also covers the status of implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), developments regarding the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement (IFD), and the progress of OIC member states' accession processes to the WTO. It should be noted that the accession of the Union of the Comoros, an OIC member, was approved at the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13), contributing to the expansion of the WTO, which will have 166 Members by 2026.

This report is divided into four main sections: Section I presents recent developments in WTO activities relevant to OIC member states, including the follow-up of the 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) and the implementation of the Agreement on Environmental Sustainability (AFE); Section II focuses on the activities of the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade (ICDT) within the framework of the WTO; Section III is devoted to a capacity-building program for women entrepreneurs to address new challenges in the global market; and Section IV provides an overview of the status of OIC member countries' WTO membership and accession processes.

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

Since the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14), held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from March 26 to 30, 2026, the Organization's proceedings has focused on following up on the "Yaoundé Package," WTO reform, e-commerce, development issues, and the continuation of negotiations on fisheries subsidies. For OIC member states, these issues remain particularly important due to their impact on market access, food security, digital transformation, and the integration of developing countries into the multilateral trading system.

MC14 adopted decisions regarding small economies and strengthened the implementation of special and differential treatment in the SPS and TBT Agreements. Several issues on which ministerial consensus was not reached were referred back to Geneva for further work. In the months that followed, Members also continued discussions on investment facilitation for development, e-commerce, and institutional reform of the WTO.

This section thus focuses on the outcomes of MC14 and their follow-up through September 2026, as well as on

the status of implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which is a priority for many OIC member countries.

A. RECENT WTO DEVELOPMENTS

The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference concluded on March 30, 2026, in Yaoundé. It led to the adoption of several decisions and established a work program for continuing discussions in Geneva on issues on which no consensus was reached. The main outcomes of interest to OIC member states can be summarized as follows:

- Regarding fisheries subsidies, ministers were unable to conclude the second track on overcapacity and overfishing. They agreed to continue negotiations in Geneva with a view to formulating recommendations for the 15th Ministerial Conference, in accordance with Article 12 of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.
- Two decisions were adopted in Yaoundé: one aimed at improving the integration of small economies into the multilateral trading system; the other focused on a more precise, effective, and operational implementation of the provisions on special and differential treatment in the Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT).
- Several elements of the “Yaoundé package” were referred back to Geneva for finalization or further discussion, including:
 - WTO reform: Members adopted a work program aimed at continuing institutional discussions, including on the dispute settlement system.
 - E-commerce: The multilateral moratorium on customs duties applied to electronic transmissions expired at the end of March 2026. At the same time, a group of 66 Members adopted interim arrangements to implement the Agreement on E-Commerce among the participants, while continuing discussions on its incorporation into the WTO framework.
 - Complaints in cases where no infringement has occurred and situations under the TRIPS Agreement: the ministerial moratorium also expired at the end of March 2026, and discussions are continuing in Geneva.
 - Issues related to LDCs and development: Monitoring focuses in particular on market access, the effective implementation of special and differential treatment, and the need for technical assistance and capacity building.

In addition to multilateral decisions, several plurilateral initiatives witnessed significant developments in 2026:

- Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD): 129 Members are participating in the initiative. At MC14, 165 of the 166 WTO Members supported the proposal to incorporate the Agreement into the WTO architecture; however, the lack of consensus prevented this incorporation. Participants are continuing their work toward its implementation and future integration.
- Digital Trade, SMEs, and Women’s Entrepreneurship: Post-MC14 proceedings is placing increasing emphasis on the participation of SMEs and women in trade, the use of digital tools, and the reduction of regulatory and infrastructural barriers that limit their access to international markets.
- Cotton and value chains: Proceedings continue on cotton, with a particular focus on the C4 countries and on strengthening local processing capacity and value creation in African economies.
- Agriculture and food security: Negotiations are continuing in Geneva on key agricultural issues, including domestic support, the holding of public stocks for food security purposes, and export restrictions. These issues are of direct interest to many OIC member states that are net food importers.

Overall, the 14th Ministerial Conference served as a transitional phase: it consolidated certain achievements in the areas of development and small economies while referring several key issues back to Geneva. The work

carried out since March 2026 confirms that WTO reform, digital issues, agriculture, fisheries, and development will remain at the center of the multilateral agenda until the 15th Ministerial Conference.

B. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

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

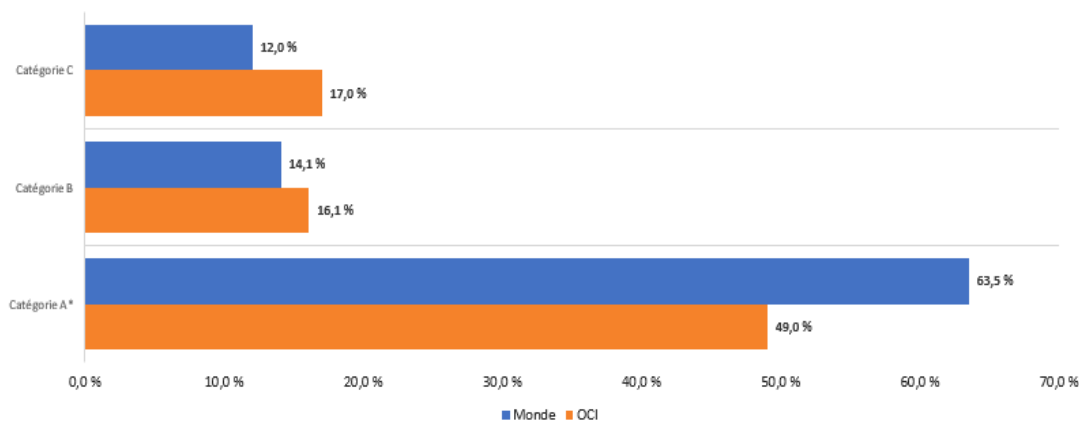
As of mid-September 2026, 162 WTO Members had deposited their instruments of acceptance of the TFA, representing approximately 97.6% of the 166 Members. The four Members that have not yet ratified the Agreement are Haiti, Mauritania, Suriname, and Yemen. The TFA database also indicates a current global implementation commitment rate of approximately 89.6%, up from 87.6% in March 2026.

Among OIC countries that are WTO members, 42 out of 45 have ratified the TFA. The three OIC members that have not yet deposited their instruments of acceptance are Mauritania, Suriname, and Yemen. Concerning implementation commitments, the March 2026 data used for the charts below showed an overall rate of 79.5% for the OIC, lower than the global rate of 87.6%. The gap remains primarily due to the weight of Category C measures, which require technical assistance and capacity-building support. The breakdown by group reveals a significant disparity among OIC subregions. In March 2026, the Arab group stood at around 85.5 percent, compared to 63 percent for the African group. The Asia + Others group stood at around 88 percent.

In March 2026, the overall implementation commitment rate for the TFA reached 79.5% for OIC countries, compared with 87.6% globally. In September 2026, the global rate reached approximately 89.6% according to the TFAD database¹.

Progress on TFA Implementation Commitments

OIC and the World as of September 16, 2026



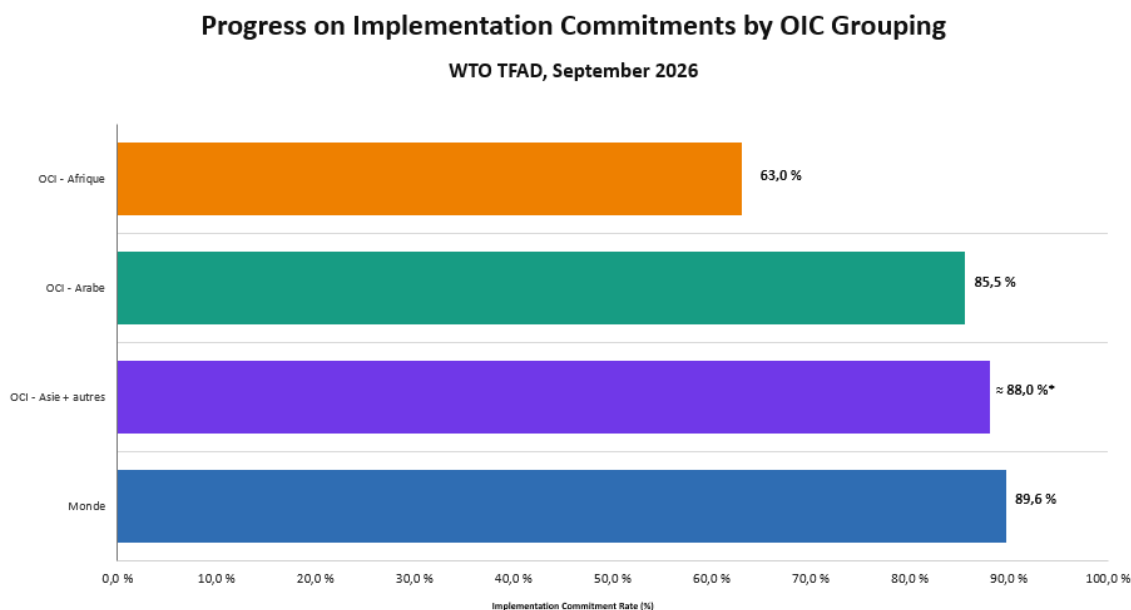
Category A: Measures to be implemented as soon as the TFA enters into force. Category B: Measures requiring additional time. Category C: Measures requiring additional time, as well as technical assistance and capacity building.

* World: Category A = developed members (23.0 points) + Category A commitments (40.5 points).

World: Category A = developed members (23.0 points) + Category A commitments (40.5 points).

¹ Trade Facilitation Agreement Database de l'OMC

The WTO/TFAD database allows for real-time tracking of commitments to implement the TFA by member, region, and community. It shows that disparities among OIC groups remain significant, particularly among African countries, where the use of Categories B and C remains more widespread.



Source: WTO TFAD. World: as of September 15, 2026. OIC groups: latest comparative figures available in the source chart. * Approximate figure.

SECTION II: ICDT ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF WTO ISSUES

Within the framework of assisting member states in multilateral and regional trade negotiations, ICDT has carried out a number of capacity-building activities on WTO issues, including the preparation of Ministerial Conferences, accession to this organization, implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and regional integration. These activities are as follows:

A. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Activities relating to trade negotiations recently involved preparations for the 13th and 14th WTO Conferences, as well as technical assistance for the accession to the WTO of certain OIC member countries.

1. *ICDT Participation in the 2025 Edition of the WTO Public Forum:*

Mrs. Latifa Elbouabdellaoui, Director General of the ICDT, participated as a speaker in a session of the WTO Public Forum on 18 September 2025 at the WTO headquarters. This session, entitled ‘Unleashing Africa’s Digital Potential through Infrastructure’, examined recent developments in e-commerce and the potential role of the private sector in bridging infrastructure and capacity gaps in Africa.

On this occasion, Mrs. Elbouabdellaoui presented the ICDT's experience in digitalizing foreign trade procedures between African member countries of the OIC. She highlighted the e-phytos and e-TIR initiatives as tools for facilitating trade between these countries.

2. Regional Workshop on Ongoing WTO Negotiations and Preparations for the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference, 9–10 February 2026, Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco.

This workshop was organized in partnership with the WTO and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) on 9–10 February 2026 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco. It enabled participants from Member States to be informed of the latest developments in negotiation issues since MC13. The discussions also addressed the preparations and the potential agenda for the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference, which was held in Yaoundé, Republic of Cameroon, from 26 to 29 March 2026.

This workshop builds on previous initiatives, including the MC13 preparatory workshop organized in Tunisia in 2024, and aims to strengthen coordination and cooperation among OIC Member States on WTO-related issues.

3. Technical Assistance for the Accession of OIC Member States to the WTO

Technical assistance in this regard involved the preparation of a study on the challenges and potential opportunities of Arab countries' accession to the WTO. The findings of this study were presented at the 12th Round Table on WTO Accession, held on the sidelines of MC13 on 24–25 February 2024 in Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates).

The ICDT continued consultations with its partners to organize activities supporting WTO accession, including:

- The launch of a joint publication by the ICDT, the IsDB, and the WTO entitled *“Best Practices for WTO Accession in the Arab Region”*, on the occasion of the 13th China Round Table on WTO Accession, held from 12 to 14 May 2025 in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.
- Participation in the 14th China Round Table on WTO Accession, held on 25 March 2026 in Yaoundé, on the sidelines of the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference.
- Capacity-building support provided to the Comoros on post-accession practices to the WTO;
- Presentation of the recommendations of the study prepared in collaboration with the WTO, the IsDB, and the Arab Monetary Fund on best practices for WTO accession, during the last quarter of 2026 in Abu Dhabi.
- Examination of opportunities to provide support to Asian countries seeking accession to the WTO.

4. Activities to support regional integration projects

In line with the support provided to member states in the area of regional integration, the following activities have recently taken place:

- Regional Workshop and Conference of the Private Sector of North Africa and the Middle East on the theme, organized by the FAO MENA, from January 20 to 23, 2025 in Tunis on the theme "How to finance the transformation of agri-food systems?" On this occasion, the ICDT presented the OIC's experience in the development of agri-food trade between member countries.
- The ICDT took part in the 14th edition of the Abu Dhabi Annual Investment Meeting (AIM2025), held under the theme "The Roadmap for the Future of Global Investment." On this occasion, the ICDT, in partnership with the World Economic Forum, organized a breakfast debate on April 8, 2025, focusing on the WTO Investment Facilitation Agreement. The event brought together over 40 participants, including representatives from OIC Member States' Ministries of Investment, investment promotion agencies (IPAs), international organizations, and expert consulting firms.
- A webinar to present the 2024 edition of the FAO report on the state of agricultural commodity markets in OIC Arab Group countries is scheduled for 8 May 2025. The session will focus on highlighting trade opportunities that support the achievement of food security objectives in the OIC Arab Countries.

- The Organization, in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC), of an online workshop on July 15 and 16, 2025, on “Mechanisms for promoting digital trade as an engine of economic and social development.” This initiative targeted executives from institutions in charge of trade in the Republic of Iraq. The webinar brought together 39 officials from the Iraqi Ministry of Trade and other institutions involved in digital trade, as well as representatives from the ICDT and ITC.
- Participation of the ICDT in the Morocco-Togo economic and diplomatic symposium held on June 17 and 18, 2025, in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, under the theme “**Morocco-Togo Cooperation: Consolidating Achievements to Build the Future Together.**” In this regard, Mrs. Elbouabdellaoui stressed the importance of developing the partnership between the two countries and with other OIC countries as a lever for economic resilience in the face of challenges arising from the unstable international context.
- The organization, from 24 to 26 November 2025 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, of a capacity-building workshop under the theme “The Role of Credit Information and Unique Entity Identifiers in Supporting Decision-Making in Trade and Investment”, in partnership with ICIEC, the IsDB Group, BADEA, and Afreximbank.
- The 6th Forum of Regional Cooperation Organizations (RCOs), held on October 5 and 6 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco, in partnership with the IsDB. The meeting was attended by approximately 40 participants representing 22 international organizations and provided an opportunity to review the roadmap for joint activities to be carried out by the participating RCOs.
- Participation in the 17th UN–OIC General Meeting on Cooperation, held July 22–24, 2026, in Geneva, which enabled the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT) to promote its technical assistance initiatives on international trade policy to UN agencies.
- Launch forum for the North African Grain Council (NAGC) in Casablanca, Morocco, on November 16 and 17, 2026. The goal is to make this Council—which includes all stakeholders in the grain production process—an institutional tool for strengthening grain trade, economic monitoring, investment, standards, food security, resilience, and the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This Forum will bring together stakeholders from the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Sudan, Chad, and Tunisia.

B. Trade Facilitation Activities:

The implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) is a key factor in the development of intra-OIC trade. It consists of initiatives to simplify and reduce import and export procedures, notably through digitalization and the adoption of international best practices in terms of regulations, in compliance with the provisions of the TFA. ICDT's initiatives in this area are described in the following paragraphs.

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 May 24th, 2023, in Lagos (Togo) finalized in June 2024 and on September 27th, 2023, in Lomé (Togo) and executed in July 2024.
- The actions carried out within the framework of this project during the year 2023 include:
 - Organization of 5 training workshops in Nigeria and 3 in Togo for exporting companies, forwarding agents and administrative staff.
 - Exploratory mission with public treasuries for the electronic payment project.
 - Acquisition of IT equipment by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), a member of GATF. To date, 9 computers, 80 tablets and accessories, and 80 SIM cards have been distributed to Nigeria, along with 13 computers, 47 tablets and accessories, antivirus software, 10 printers and 47 SIM cards.
- The implementation of simplified procedures and international trade controls for agricultural products will continue in 2025 through the introduction of electronic phytosanitary certificates, or "e-Phyto", in Chad, Mauritania, and Burkina Faso.
- Organization of a workshop on June 3 and 4, 2024 in Bangkok (Thailand), to launch a report entitled "Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation in Asian OIC Countries". This report is based on the results of the 5th United Nations Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation (2023).
- A training workshop was organized from August 5 to 7, 2024 in Bogor, Republic of Indonesia, focusing on improving the risk management of the control and inspection system for imports of fish and fishery products in Indonesia. The event was held in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank, the Global Trade Facilitation Alliance, TFO Canada, the Indonesia Quarantine Authority (IQA), and the Marine & Fishery Quality Assurance Agency (MFQAA).

• Digitalization of Land Transport Procedures:

Assistance to African OIC Member Countries in their process of digitalizing transport procedures (e-TIR) has involved supporting African OIC countries in adopting International Road Transport (TIR) Conventions, including the issue of digitalizing procedures. Activities to digitize foreign trade procedures will help reduce the transaction costs of exporting and importing goods in Member States. Actions undertaken in 2023 and those scheduled for 2024 are :

- The ICDT, IsDB, UNECE, IRU, and CETMO are organizing a regional workshop on “Road Connectivity and its Impact on Regional Trade in Atlantic Africa” on November 11 and 12, 2025 in Casablanca, Kingdom of Morocco. The objective of the workshop is to raise awareness among Atlantic African countries, particularly within the Morocco–Gabon Arc, about the importance of implementing the TIR and CMR Conventions. The event will emphasize the need to establish effective road connectivity in partnership with key stakeholders in the transport and trade sectors.
- The ICDT and UNCTAD organized a webinar on “Trade Facilitation and Global Supply Chains: Objectives and Implications for International Trade” on Thursday, September 25, 2025. This webinar highlighted the legal aspects of trade facilitation and global supply chains, with a particular focus on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. The topics discussed also included the consequences of disruptions to transport and logistics chains (ports, corridors, transit routes, etc.) on the flow of trade and security of supply, while presenting possible solutions to cope with this issue.
- Presentation of the recommendations of the study on transport and its role in the development of intra-OIC trade, on the occasion of the 2nd OIC Transport Ministers’ Conference, held in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 12 February 2026.

SECTION III: INITIATIVES TARGETING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

A. CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TO ADDRESS NEW CHALLENGES IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

The economic empowerment of women is a priority area in ICDT's action plan. In OIC member states, women-led businesses continue to face several constraints: limited access to financing and markets, insufficient business and digital skills, low integration into value chains, and difficulties in accessing technology. To address these challenges, the ICDT's program is structured around five complementary components:

1. Capacity building and ongoing training;
2. Professional networking and online matchmaking;
3. Business promotion and participation in trade shows and forums;
4. Business intelligence and access to market information;
5. Coaching and personalized support for women-led businesses.

This program is being implemented under cooperation agreements signed with professional associations in the following pilot countries: Morocco, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Azerbaijan. The project will be expanded to other member countries in a second phase, with an ambitious goal of covering all 57 OIC member states, in order to further promote intra-OIC trade.

B. TRAINING WORKSHOPS DEVOTED TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Between 2020 and 2026, more than 2,200 participants from small and medium-sized enterprises, operator associations, and professional federations benefited from the Centre's training and support programs. The Centre's activities included organising webinars and B2B meetings, providing booths at economic events, and offering access to the Centre's digital platforms.

In 2026, the Centre continued this momentum by placing greater emphasis on the use of digital tools to support trade and investment. In this regard, on April 22, 2026, the ICDT organized a training workshop on the Centre's trade and investment tools for startups, microenterprises, and trade support institutions. This activity aims to improve economic operators' access to trade information and data, facilitate business matchmaking, and strengthen the use of digital platforms developed by ICDT.

This training program thus contributed to a better understanding of the Centre's digital tools, enhanced the visibility of participating companies, and expanded opportunities for networking, partnerships, and market access. It brought together startups and microenterprises, as well as representatives from chambers of commerce, trade promotion organizations, and investment promotion agencies from OIC member states.

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

A. PROCESS OF ACCESSION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. Process of Accession to WTO

As of mid-September 2026, the WTO has 166 Members. Of the 57 OIC member states, 45 are WTO Members; the most recent is the Union of the Comoros, which became a Member on August 21, 2024. Eleven OIC member states have an accession working group and are proceeding, at different paces, with their accession processes. Palestine remains a non-member and is not included among these eleven accession processes.

Accession to the WTO is based on multilateral negotiations within a working group, supplemented by bilateral negotiations on market access for goods and services. Progress varies by country. In 2025–2026, the most visible progress among OIC member states is notably in Uzbekistan and Somalia, while several other processes remain largely inactive or have not held a formal meeting in several years.

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:

- **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.

- **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 fifteen meetings, the last of which was held in July 2023. The review of this country's foreign trade regime is in progress.

- **Iraq:**

Iraq submitted its application for WTO membership on 30 September 2004, and the Working Group on Iraq's Accession was established on 13 December 2004. The Working group held its third meeting in July 2024 and is currently chaired by Ambassador Saqer Abdullah ALMOQBEL from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

- **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.

- **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, under the chairmanship of Mr. Etienne OUDOT DE DAINVILLE (France). 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.

- **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.

- **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.

- **Uzbekistan:**

The Working Group on the accession of Uzbekistan was established on 21 December 1994. It has held 7 meetings so far, the last one was held in June 2022, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Seong deok YUN (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.

- **Somalia:**

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

- **Syria:**

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

- **Turkmenistan:**

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

CONCLUSION:

The process of acceding to the WTO remains challenging, particularly for least developed countries and economies with limited institutional capacity. However, the latest data for 2025–2026 show that rapid progress is possible when domestic reforms, market access negotiations, and dialogue with Members proceed simultaneously.

For OIC countries, the need for technical assistance remains significant, particularly in the areas of regulatory compliance, trade negotiations, interministerial coordination, and private-sector engagement.

In this context, the ICDT and its partners—notably the IsDB and the WTO—can continue to support acceding countries through capacity-building activities, the sharing of experiences from recently admitted countries, and assistance in preparing the necessary documents and reforms, following the example of initiatives benefiting the Comoros.

Particular attention could be given to processes that have recently regained momentum, notably those involving Uzbekistan, Somalia, and Iraq, while continuing to provide tailored support to other OIC member states whose negotiations remain ongoing.

ANNEXES

Table 1: Summary Report on the Accession Working Groups of OIC Member States (September 2026)

Country	Date of the setting up of a working group	Last meeting / recent developments
Algeria	June 17 th , 1987	Last meeting: March 2014
Azerbaijan	July 16 th , 1997	16 th meeting: September 2024
Iraq	December 13 th , 2004	3rd meeting : July 2024
Iran	May 26 th , 2005	No formal meetings listed
Lebanon	April 14 th , 1999	Last meeting: October 2009
Libya	July 27 th , 2004	No formal meetings listed
Somalia	December 7 th , 2016	1st meeting: February 2025
Sudan	October 25 th , 1994	5 th meeting: July 26, 2021
Syria	May 4 th , 2010	No formal meetings listed
Uzbekistan	December 21 st , 1994	13 th meeting: July 27–28, 2026
Turkmenistan	February 23 rd , 2022	No formal meetings listed

Source: WTO, Portal for Accessions and Official Communications, accessed September 15, 2026.

Table 2: Key Milestones in the Ongoing Accession Processes of OIC Member States

Country	Request	Working group	Reminder	1st meeting	Last meeting	Status as of September 2026
Algeria	06/1987	06/1987	07/1996	04/1998	03/2014	Open process; draft report available
Azerbaijan	06/1997	07/1997	04/1999	06/2002	09/2024	16 th meeting; market access negotiations underway
Iran	09/1996	05/2005	11/2009	—	—	No formal meeting/offer indicated
Iraq	09/2004	12/2004	09/2005	04/2007	07/2024	3 rd meeting; initial offers for goods/services submitted
Lebanon	02/1999	04/1999	06/2001	10/2002	10/2009	Draft report; open process
Libya	12/2001	07/2004	—	—	—	Initial phase
Somalia	12/2015	12/2016	05/2022	02/2025	02/2025	1 st meeting held; negotiations launched
Sudan	11/1994	10/1994	01/1999	07/2003	07/2021	5 th meeting; revised offers and legislative documents
Syria	10/2001	05/2010	—	—	—	No formal meeting indicated
Uzbekistan	12/1994	12/1994	10/1998	07/2002	07/2026	13 th meeting; 31 bilateral agreements submitted
Turkmenistan	11/2021	02/2022	In preparation	—	—	Preparation of the memorandum; initial phase

Source: WTO, Summary Table of Ongoing Accessions and Accession Updates; updated as of September 15, 2026.

Table 3: List of OIC Member States that are WTO Members (updated: September 2026)

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. Comoros 2024	(exact date to be determined)
9. Chad	October 19 th 1996
10. Côte d'Ivoire	January 1 st 1995
11. Djibouti	May 31 th 1995
12. Egypt	June 30 th 1995
13. Gabon	January 1 st 1995
14. The Gambia	October 23 th 1996
15. Guinea	October 25 th 1995
16. Guinea-Bissau	May 31 th 1995
17. Guyana	January 1 st 1995
18. Indonesia	January 1 st 1995
19. Jordan	April 11 th 2000
20. Kuwait	January 1 st 1995
21. Kazakhstan	November 30 th 2015
22. Kyrgyzstan	December 20 th 1998
23. Malaysia	January 1 st 1995
24. Maldives	May 31 th 1995
25. Mali	May 31 th 1995
26. Morocco	January 1 st 1995
27. Mauritania	May 31 th 1995
28. Mozambique	August 26 th 1995
29. Niger	December 13 th 1996

COUNTRIES	DATE OF ACCESSION
30. Nigeria	January 1 st 1995
31. Oman	November 9 th 2000
32. Pakistan	January 1 st 1995
33. Qatar	January 13 th 1996
34. Saudi Arabia	December 11 th 2005
35. Senegal	January 1 st 1995
36. Sierra Leone	July 23 th 1995
37. Suriname	January 1 st 1995
38. Tajikistan	March 2 nd 2013
39. Togo	May 31 th 1995
40. Tunisia	March 29 th 1995
41. Türkiye	March 26 th 1995
42. Uganda	January 1 st 1995
43. United Arab Emirates	April 10 th 1996
44. Yemen	June 26 th 2014
45. Afghanistan	July 29 th 2016

Source: WTO, List of Members and Dates of Accession, accessed September 15, 2026.

LIST OF OIC MEMBER STATES CANDIDATES FOR WTO MEMBERSHIP (OBSERVERS)

1. Algeria
2. Azerbaijan
3. Iran
4. Iraq
5. Lebanon
6. Libya
7. Sudan
8. Syria
9. Uzbekistan
10. Somalia
11. Turkmenistan (working group set up on 23 February 2022)

LIST OF OIC MEMBER STATES NON-MEMBERS OF THE WTO

Palestine