





## WTO TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY ACCESSIONS PROGRAMME

## SECOND GLOBAL SEMINAR ON WTO ACCESSIONS SAUDI ARABIA 10-YEAR WTO ACCESSION SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY SESSION ACCESSIONS BOOK LAUNCH BY WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL ROBERTO AZEVÊDO

## Geneva, Monday, 28 September 2015, 14:50 ±15:10, Room D

Dear colleagues,

1. I am honored to share today some thoughts on our accession experience and post accession state of affairs.

2. A year after Ukraine declared its independence in 1991, we began our WTO accession. It was 14 years of intense work, steep learning process, political will and flexibility in order to change, adapt and integrate into the modern world.

3. At those times Ukraine had to resolve many immediate issues related to establishing all necessay institutions and policies of an independent state, to move away from non-market economy, to totally eliminate its post-Soviet legacy. Striving for democracy, rule of law and free market became the guiding principles of political, social and economic life.

4. From an economic point of view, Ukraine was an integral part of the massive and highly inefficient Soviet economy. The collapse of the USSR resulted in disruption of economic ties, it which was replaced by rather simple free trade agreements between the CIS.

5. Accession to the GATT/WTO was a defined political and economic priority for the country and a recognized trigger for reform.

6. The Working Party on the Accession of Ukraine was established in December 1993. It initially consisted of 44 Members (including the then EU), and later the number grew to 52 Members. Ukraine signed 52 bilateral protocols with Members.

7. Three WP Chairs led us through the accession, and I take this opportunity to pay tribute: Mr. A. Stoler, Deputy Permanent Representative of the US to the WTO; Mr. S. Marchi, Ambassador of Canada and; Mr. M. Matus, Ambassador of Chile.

8. Ukraine is grateful to them for their leadership, trade diplomacy advice, sincere dedication to Ukraine's accession. Their strong belief in its success had a highly motivating effect on Ukraine's negotiators. Part IV on FKDLUSHUVRQ¶V SHUVSHFWLYH LV D XQLTXH H[SHULHQFH, SHUVRQDO read.

9. Accession is a concerted effort by several players, where the Parliament has a role of crucial importance. In 2005-2007 alone, the parliament adopted nearly 50 laws to advance the accession and more importantly, substantial internal reform in many areas.

10. On 5 February 2008, at the General Council meeting, the Protocol on Accession of Ukraine was signed. This comprised 1,170 pages of Ukraine's solid and reliable contribution to the WTO.







11. This job done, new tasks and challenges are on agenda for Ukraine today.

12. Right after the accession Ukraine's economy was hit by the global crisis. The impact and how Ukraine coped with it you can find in the book to launch in a day.

13. But today Ukraine is facing unprecedented combination of extremely adverse economic and political factors - annexation of our territory and military conflict in the East, intentional disruption of traditional trade ties by our neighbor.

14. It is not the WTO rules or how to comply them that poses a challenge for Ukraine today. The biggest issue is deliberate undermining and neglect of international obligations.

15. Despite immense difficulties Ukraine did not slip into protectionism or violation of the WTO basic principles. On the contrary Ukraine applies all legal instruments of this system to mitigate the negative impacts on trade and economic development and/or to make necessary adjustments to sustain shocks and diversify trade.

16. Ukraine has a long-term interest in building liberalized and predictable MFN market access. Therefore, we have a clear position in accession negotiations with prospective new members:

- support universality of the WTO,
- support accessions on ambitious terms and conditions,
- country-specific flexibility for developing countries and LDCs

17.







FTAs, which cover Europe, Eurasia, Northern America. We continue talks with countries where we can open up Middle East, Africa.

Dear colleagues,

26. 7KHVH DUH VRPH RIREVHUYDWLRQV RI8NUDLQH¶V DFFHVVLRCheDbQoot SRVW we are launching.

27. I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words on the book.

28. Yes, the book is about unique experiences of individual countries. It is a collection of points of views, opinions and approaches of the authors of the Chapters.

29. This book is a recognition of unprecedented and unparalleled joint contribution of Art XII Members who have brought to the system their values, which if shared, will help develop further trust and respect in the multilateral system. Our interconnectivity today must be secured and it is our common responsibility to make sure all international obligations are obeyed.

30. Finally,