

EIGHTH CHINA ROUNDTABLE ON WTO ACCESSIONS  
"ACCESSIONS AND WTO REFORM: ON THE ROAD TO MC12"  
Moscow, Russian Federation, 4 - 6 December 2019

Good morning everyone . First of all, let me thank the organizers of this 'Eighth China Roundtable on WTO Accessions' as well as the host, the Russian Federation, for inviting me to this important event. This is a unique platform for me to inform you about the Joint Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development . Since its launch in December 2017 at the



address arise from unnecessary red tape or cumbersome bureaucratic processes, which serve no clear policy purpose, but can be costly – notably for micro, small and medium -sized business es.

Investment facilitation in our ongoing discussions in Geneva consists of four key areas :

- a. Improving the transparency of investment measures – notably through publication obligations, ideally using electronic means ;
- b.

Norway, Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Turkey, etc.

At the WTO's Eleventh Ministerial Conference held in Buenos Aires in December 2017, 70 WTO Members co-sponsored a [Joint Ministerial Statement](#) calling for "beginning structured discussions with the aim of

3. What is the latest state -of -play of the discussions and what are the possible next steps in the run-

Throughout the identification process, we have benefited from the expertise of international organizations such as UNCTAD, ITC, the OECD and the World Bank, who shared with us their perspectives and expertise on the various issues discussed.

Since the beginning of this year (2019), the discussions have sought to further develop those elements. We started first by looking into examples from other agreements, including FTAs and the WTO. Afterwards, we distilled those examples into a 'Working Document', where the different elements have been couched in legal language within a structured framework. The Working Document was circulated to all WTO Members in July of this year [\[INF/IFD/RD/39\]](#).

In the second half of this year, participating WTO Members have engaged in a comprehensive and

converge on two key objectives – these will be further discussed at the "Stock -taking and Next Steps meeting"

x Third, providing a global forum to promote best investment -facilitation practices and cross-border regulatory cooperation will improve information exchanges between investment authorities – and thus foster peer-learning and capacity building;

x And lastly, linking multilateral investment facilitation reforms to Members' capacity to implement them (as has been done, for instance in the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement) will ensure that developing and least-developed countries receive the technical assistance and capacity - building support they need to implement and benefit from a future investment facilitation framework.