



Working groups – 14 November 2012

Regional Conference organized by the OSCE Academy and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ)

14 – 15 November 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Day 1: Parallel working groups

Working group 1

The first working group focused on the impact of Russian WTO accession on Central Asian regional integration. The discussion within the group focused on the effects on Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. Jypara Aibasheva (Ministry of Economy, Kyrgyzstan) discussed the impact of WTO accession on Kyrgyzstan and the impact of Russia's accession. In this regard, she highlighted two important potential impacts:

- First, the trade and economic legislation can be found in a single coherent legal framework;
- Second, Russia's entry to the WTO will mitigate the problems and risks considered to be inadmissible in case of Kyrgyzstan's entry to the Customs Union

The second presentation by Alisher Nazarov (Ministry of Economy and Trade, Tajikistan) focused on the situation of Tajikistan in its preparation to the WTO accession. Vladimir Sherov (St. Petersburg University, Russia) during the working group discussion repeated the idea that the Russian WTO accession would have a limited impact on Central Asian states. However, there are still both negative and positive outcomes of the process for different countries.

The key take-aways from the discussion:

- A more detailed research framework is needed for an in-depth study of the impact on all three countries;
- The Russian market will become more transparent and predictable which could open new opportunities for investment and business;
- The Custom Union has a potential as a form of regional economic integration;
- Kyrgyzstan will probably join the Customs Union on terms taking into account political and economic situation and after conducting some additional analysis whereas Tajikistan will wait for Kyrgyzstan's accession;
- There is an advantage of more accessible transit through Russia for the Central Asian Republics.



Working group 2

The main focus of the second working group was on the description of a “typical” WTO accession and decision-making process. Josip Pervan (IDEAS Centre) discussed the process of bilateral accession negotiations to

the WTO, its rules and challenges and the results of some accession processes. Another input was given by Samer Seif El Yazal (WTO) on the topic of accession to the WTO. The speaker discussed the procedure of accession to the organization, multilateral negotiations and post-accession challenges in detail. The second working group tackling a variety of issues concluded on the increase of complication procedures of the accession process to the WTO. It has also discussed a link between the process of negotiations and its further influence on domestic institutional reforms leading to the creation of a favorable environment for economic development.

Key take-aways:

- Accession to the WTO is getting harder but is still worth it (being part of the club/able to shape the system; push for domestic reforms);
- Lessons Learned: WTO accession negotiations have to be done by well-informed negotiators and based on sector analysis and private sector involvement;
- WTO accession does not automatically call for privatization of state-owned enterprises (transition towards market economy) even though other members may call for it.

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