



“The Doha Project” for WTO Accession and Participation

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The challenge

The proceedings of the Doha Ministerial in November 2001 impressed upon the United States Government (USG) officials that developing countries required considerable technical support and assistance in order to implement national trade regimes harmonious with World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations. The USG is committed to assisting developing countries and transition countries work through the WTO accession process, and the Doha Project for WTO Accession and Participation (or “the Doha Project”) serves as a tangible expression of support for this commitment.

The draft USG Trade and Investment Strategy calls for Participation Initiatives that will enhance developing countries’ ability to negotiate and/or otherwise participate in the decision-making processes of the World Trade Organization by supporting WTO accession for selected countries, helping them harmonize policies, laws, and regulations to meet WTO requirements.

The approach

Joining the WTO is a complex, procedurally driven process. The DOHA Project for WTO accession and participation relies on methodology, founded on the principles of the WTO rules, that is tailored to meet the needs of the individual country.

Our methodology includes a series of procedural steps to move the process forward:

- Filing of notice of application to the WTO
- Fact finding—Foreign trade memorandum and initial offers on goods and services
- Negotiations—Bilateral market access and multilateral systemic intellectual property regulations and customs
- Drafting of protocol—Foreign trade memorandum submitted to WTO and reviewed by working party meeting
- Interministerial committee technical group review