

A collection of colorful, circular icons arranged in a ring-like pattern. Each icon represents a different economic or social sector, such as a person with a headset (customer service), a hand holding a smartphone (digital technology), a person with a microscope (science/health), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a suitcase and an airplane (travel), a person with a tractor (agriculture), a person with a gear (industry), a person with a graduation cap (education), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a location pin (logistics), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail), a person with a shopping cart (retail).

Supporting Turkmenistan's Accession to the World Trade Organization under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Integrated Trade Agenda 2030

**Roundtable and Donor Engagement to Support Turkmenistan's
Accession to the World Trade Organization**

30 May 2023, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda (CITA) 2030

CITA 2030 aims to assist CAREC members in integrating further with the global economy through: (i) trade expansion from increased market access, (ii) greater diversification, and (iii) stronger institutions for trade.

CITA priorities and interventions include—

- (i) Support for members to comply with their WTO commitments, including policy adjustments, transparency measures, and trade policy reviews;
- (ii) Experience-sharing, capacity building, and advisory on the accession processes for non-WTO members (*e.g., Azerbaijan: ex-ante impact assessment of WTO accession (2022) and Uzbekistan: Alignment of plant health legislations with WTO SPS Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement (2018-2021)*);
- (iii) Study on mapping and reduction of nontariff barriers;
- (iv) Implementation of the WTO Agreements on Trade Facilitation, on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and on Application of SPS Measures;
- (v) Better coordination of sectoral policies and priorities, evidence-based policymaking, and enhanced capacity of government agencies.

ADB/CAREC Support for Turkmenistan's Accession to the WTO

Under TA 9712: Implementing the Integrated Trade Agenda in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program

- To help CAREC countries increase market access, promote greater economic diversification and strengthen trade institutions
- \$2,400,000 covering Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
- Supporting Turkmenistan's accession to the WTO is a key priority

ADB/CAREC Support for Turkmenistan's Accession to the WTO

Preparation of the Memorandum on Foreign Trade Regime (MFTR)

- Engagement of technical advisors/WTO accession experts
- Introductory/kick-off seminar on the preparation of the MFTR (Dec 2020)
- Workplan for the draft MFTR, developed in consultation with the WTO Secretariat and Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Potential activities in July-December 2023

- Capacity building and technical sessions on the preparation of the MFTR
- Knowledge-sharing on WTO accession among acceding countries in CAREC (Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) at the sideline of the Central Asia WTO Forum in September 2023
- Joint activities with WTO and other development partners/donors to create synergies

Draft MFTR Preparation Workplan for Turkmenistan

Requisites/Issues:

Establishment of working groups

Designation of focal points from each Ministry/Agency

Updating the MFTR timeline

Identifying capacity needs

| MFTR Clusters | Topics/Areas/Chapters | Timeline |
|---------------|--|--------------------------|
| Cluster 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction Economy, Economic Policy and Foreign Trade Mechanism for the Development and Implementation of Policies Affecting Foreign Trade in Goods and Trade in Services Annex II: Statistics and Publications Annex III: List of Laws and Regulations Draft Legislative Action Plan | July – August 2023 |
| Cluster 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies Affecting Trade in Goods Subsections "Trading Rights (including registration requirements for engaging in import and export)", "Trade Facilitation Procedures"; Subsection A "Regulation of Imports"; Subsection B "Export Regulation". | September – October 2023 |
| Cluster 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy Affecting Trade in Goods Section C "Internal Policies Affecting Trade in Goods" | November – December 2023 |
| Cluster 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade-Related Intellectual Property Regime Trade-Related Services Regime Transparency Trade Agreements Annex IX, Trade Agreements | January – February 2024 |

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Existing and Potential Support and Next Steps

- Current ADB/CAREC TA 9712 to be completed in January 2024
- Subject to progress of current activities, ADB may seek further funding to continue technical assistance in the following areas:
 - capacity building for the negotiating team and the agency or unit to be established in-charge of WTO accession
 - ex-ante assessment on the impact of WTO accession of Turkmenistan
 - policy reforms needed to be aligned with WTO agreements
 - subregional knowledge-sharing or dialogue (esp. with other CAREC countries who are also WTO acceding members: Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan)