**WTO National Seminar on the General Agreement on Trade in Services, Services Domestic Regulation, and Investment Facilitation for Development**

**Guyana**

 **Draft Programme**

**Georgetown, 9-12 December 2024**

**NOTE**: The program is structured over four days to cover the role of services and services trade for development, the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), its key obligations and Schedules of specific commitments, as well as Services Domestic Regulation, and Investment Facilitation for Development. Time has also been allocated for presentations by representatives from Guyana, followed by discussions, as well as practical exercises and case studies where applicable. The program can be adapted to reflect Guyana's priorities and interests.

OBJECTIVES:

* At the end of the activity, participants will have deepened their understanding of key features of the GATS and trade in services, including various services policies issues in different sectors.
* At the end of the activity, participants will have familiarized themselves with the new Disciplines on Services Domestic Regulation (SDR), including with a view to supporting the relevant appraisal of Guyana’s regulatory frameworks and discussing potential economic effects of implementation of the SDR Disciplines.
* At the end of the activity, participants will have familiarized themselves with the Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement, including the special and differential treatment provisions for developing country Members and the possibility to undertake a IFD needs assessments.

**Monday, 9 December**

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| 8h30 – 9h00 | **Registration** |
| 9h00 – 9h30 | **Opening Session*** Welcome and opening remarks by Guyana *(Name to be confirmed by Guyana)*
* General introduction and objectives of the workshop by WTO Secretariat
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| 09h30 – 10h30 | **The Role of Services and Services Trade in fostering economic development**This session will examine the pivotal role of essential infrastructural services (such as financial, telecommunications, digital, transport, and logistics services) in supporting the efficient functioning of modern economies, export diversification, and integration into global value chains. The discussion will also explore how services are traded, and the reasons for the importance of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other trade in services agreements.This session will also introduce the new **WTO-World Bank initiative on Trade in Services for Development (TS4D)**,including objectives, and initial work program of assistance for developing countries.  |
| 10h30 – 10h45 | *Coffee Break* |
| 10h45 – 12h30  | **Key features of the GATS, general obligations and specific commitments** * Structure, scope & coverage (including modes of supply)
* Architecture of the GATS: Agreement, Annexes, Schedules of specific commitments
* General obligations – Most-Favoured-Nation treatment, certain basic transparency provisions, the availability of domestic legal remedies, etc.
* Specific commitments – Market Access, National Treatment, Additional Commitments
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| 12h30 – 14h00 | *Lunch Break* |
| 14h00 – 16h00 | **Key features of the GATS, general obligations and specific commitments** (continued) |

**Tuesday, 10 December**

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| 9h00 – 10h30 | **Schedules of Specific Commitments*** Scheduling guidelines and techniques, horizontal and sector-specific commitments
* Classifications: W120, UN CPC, etc.
* Guyana's Schedule of specific commitments
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| 10h30 – 10h45 | *Coffee Break* |
| 10h45 – 12h30 | **Introduction to the World Bank-WTO trade in services regulatory survey, the Services Trade Policy Database (STPD), and Services Trade Restrictions Index (STRI)(Online)** |
| 12h30 – 14h00 | *Lunch Break* |
| 14h00 – 16h00 | **Discussion on key services sectors of particular interest to Guyana: how trade in these services is carried out; main trade/investment issues in this sector; relevant** **regulatory issues.** * **Presentations by Guyana's authorities, followed by discussions**
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**Wednesday, 11 December**

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| 9h00 – 10h30 | **Market access and regulatory commitments - Two complementary tools to facilitate trade in services*** The WTO Disciplines on Services Domestic Regulation
* Guyana's experience
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| 10h30 – 10h45 | *Coffee Break* |
| 10h45 – 12h30 | **Market access and regulatory commitments - Two complementary tools to facilitate trade in services**(continued) |
| 12h30 – 14h00 | *Lunch Break* |
| 14h00 – 16h00 | **Market access and regulatory commitments - Two complementary tools to facilitate trade in services**Exercise   |

**Thursday, 12 December**

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| 9h00 – 10h30 | **Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement*** Introduction: importance of investment facilitation and retention; negotiations on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) at the WTO
* Overview of the IFD Agreement: objectives, structure, scope & definitions
* Key sections and obligations: II. Transparency of investment measures; III. streamlining and good governance of investment authorization procedures; IV. Focal points, domestic regulatory procedures and cooperation; VI. Sustainable investment.
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| 10h30 – 10h45 | *Coffee Break* |
| 10h45 – 12h30 | **Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement** (continued) |
| 12h30 – 14h00 | *Lunch Break* |
| 14h00 – 16h00 | **Investment Facilitation for Development** * Special and differential treatment as a key pillar of the IFD Agreement; IFD needs assessments
* Latest state-of-play regarding the incorporation of the IFD Agreement into the WTO
* Short exercise, group discussion
* Key take-aways
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