

## **Pertinent discussions at WTO conference on accessions**

**Date and time:** Thu, 2017-08-31 10:37

**Location / Venue:**

Intercontinental Hotel.

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Non World Trade Organization (WTO) members participating in the three-day regional dialogue conference for the Greater Hon of Africa have been urged to accelerate the process of accession to WTO

The target countries are the Union of Comoros, Federal Republic of Ethiopia, Federal Republic of Somalia and Republic of Sudan.

The conference held from August 28-30, 2017 presented a platform to exchange experiences and lessons learned from the accession processes in the region, reflect on ways in which WTO membership can foster regional integration and cooperation and mobilize support for facilitating and accelerating African accessions. Other countries (China, Liberia, Oman, Yemen and Seychelles) that joined WTO recently, were also represented at the conference. They shared their accession experiences and reflected on ways in which WTO membership can foster regional integration and cooperation.

The conference was organized by the University of Nairobi, School of Economics in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Trade Organization (WTO) secretariat.

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Speaking during the opening ceremony, the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amb. (Dr.) Amina Mohammed said that the government will provide technical expertise to the four countries, which are in the process of being admitted to WTO.

“Accession to WTO by African countries is crucial for regional and continental integration process. Accelerated regional integration will increase intra-Africa trade which currently stands at 12% compared to Europe at over 60%,” she said.

The University of Nairobi [Vice-Chancellor](#) [8], Prof. Peter Mbithi said that the University is ready to make its contribution using both theoretical and empirical research approaches to articulate issues confronting multi-lateral trading system and generate useful knowledge that can help nations to work together in reaping the benefits of international trade using their comparative advantages.

“I believe we can work together with WTO and other state actors present here to address these challenges through capacity building, research and reporting and through outreach programs by articulating our regional perspectives to the rest of the world and influencing national policy adaptations to WTO,” he said.

UoN's [School of Economics](#) [9] in collaboration with WTO has been instrumental in coordinating various training programs in Regional Trade Policy for the English speaking Africa countries. Towards the end of 2009, the School of Economics was awarded the WTO Chair for the Eastern Africa region.

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