

Overview of Liberia's commitments

Working Party Members considered the Accession Package of Liberia of high quality, even for an LDC, which would contribute to strengthening the rules-based Multilateral Trading System, providing long term agenda for sustained legislation-based domestic reforms in Liberia. The terms and conditions for the WTO accession of Liberia are designed to support its process of domestic reforms for diversification, modernization, faster growth and integration into the global economy. Its accepted obligations will rationalize domestic rules and will apply on an [MFN](#) basis to all WTO Members.

Market access for goods and services

As part of the accession negotiations, Liberia concluded 6 bilateral market access agreements on goods and 3 bilateral market access agreements on services.

On goods, Liberia has undertaken tariff concessions and commitments that bind tariff rates for all products on average at 26.7 per cent. For agricultural products, this average is 23.8 per cent while for non-agricultural products the average is 27.2 per cent.

Liberia committed to bind tariff lines on ITA products at their currently applied rates, with a view to the [Information Technology Agreement](#) (ITA) accession at a future date.

On services, Liberia has made specific commitments in 11 services sectors, including 102 sub-sectors. These include:

- **Telecommunications:** No limitations other than as indicated in the horizontal commitments. Agreed to apply the WTO [Basic Telecommunications Agreement](#).
- **Legal services:** No limitations other than indicated in the horizontal commitments.
- **Banking:** Foreign banks will be allowed to establish branches.
- **Medical and dental services:** No limitations other than indicated in the horizontal commitments. Reciprocity condition applies in granting license to non-Liberians. This applies to all countries which do accord equal licensing rights to Liberian nationals.

Bilateral Deals

Liberia's bilateral market access deals were:

- On goods with: Canada, the European Union, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and, the United States.
- On services with: the European Union, Japan and, the United States.

Following the conclusion of all bilateral market access negotiations between interested members and the acceding government, the WTO Secretariat consolidates the results of all concluded, signed and deposited bilateral agreements into a Schedule of Concessions and Commitments on Goods ("Draft Goods Schedule") and a Schedule of Specific Commitments on Services ("Draft Services Schedule"). The Schedules are the "Final Market Access Offers" by the acceding governments which, when adopted, become available to all WTO Members.

Rules Package

On its rules Package, Liberia's Accession Working Party Report contains 31 specific commitment paragraphs.

General Commitments related to the Trade Regime

Liberia will ensure non-discriminatory treatment of foreign investors from 1 November 2019.

All Liberia's SOEs will function in a manner consistent with the WTO Agreement.

Liberia will apply pricing policy in a WTO-consistent fashion.

If laws and other acts of Liberia are found to contradict international treaties/agreements, the international treaty/agreement will apply.

Liberia's legislative/regulatory instruments necessary for the application of the WTO provisions had to be adopted and enacted upon accession (with the exception of those in the areas where Liberia is granted transitional periods).

Liberia's laws and regulations will provide individuals or enterprises affected by any administrative action subject to WTO provisions, the right to appeal such action to a higher authority or to the courts, or other independent tribunal in conformity with WTO obligations.

Liberia will grant any natural or legal person, the right to be the importer of record of any product allowed to be imported into Liberia, at any level of distribution. Liberia's laws and regulations relating to the right to trade in goods and all fees, charges or taxes levied on such rights will conform to its WTO obligations. Full rights to import and to export will be granted in a non-discriminatory and non-discretionary manner. Any requirements for commercial registration or application for trading rights will be for customs and fiscal purposes only, will not require investment in Liberia nor confer the right to distribute there.

Liberia will observe the relevant provisions of the WTO Agreement in its trade agreements. It will ensure that the requirements of the WTO Agreements concerning free trade areas, customs unions and other preferential trade arrangements, of which Liberia was, or may become, a member, are met.

Specific Commitments on the Import Regime

Liberia will bind other duties and charges at 0.5% in its Schedule of Concessions and Commitments on Goods (the ECOWAS Community Levy).

Tariff rate quotas, if introduced, will be applied and administered by Liberia in conformity with WTO rules.

Liberia will implement its tariff exemptions in conformity with the WTO rules.

Liberia will bring its fees and charges in connection with importation and exportation and transit, including PSI fees, in compliance with the WTO rules no later than 1 August 2017. It will not introduce/reintroduce any fees or charges for services rendered on an *ad valorem* basis.

All Liberia's laws, regulations and other measures relating to internal taxes and charges levied on imports will be in conformity with its WTO obligations. Exceptionally, the excise tax on Mineral and aerated water will be brought into compliance with Liberia's WTO commitments by 1 August 2017.

Liberia will eliminate and will not introduce, reintroduce or apply quantitative restrictions on imports or other non-tariff measures such as quotas, bans, permits, prior authorization requirements, licensing requirements or other requirements or restrictions having equivalent effect not be justified under the provisions of the WTO Agreement.

The import licensing regime will be in accordance with the WTO Agreement.

Liberia will implement the [Customs Valuation Agreement](#) and the decisions of the Committee on Customs Valuation on Treatment of Interest Charges in the Customs Value of Imported Goods and on Valuation of Carrier Media Bearing Software for Data Processing Equipment.

Liberia's laws and regulations for preferential and non-preferential rules of origin will comply fully with the [Agreement on Rules of Origin](#). Liberia's customs authorities will provide for an assessment of the origin of the import upon the request of an exporter, importer or any person with a justifiable cause. Any request for such an assessment will be accepted even before trade in the goods concerned began; and any such assessment will be binding for three years.

Liberia's preshipment inspection requirements will be temporary and in conformity with the Agreement on Preshipment Inspection and other relevant WTO Agreements.

Liberia's legislation on trade remedies will be in conformity with the [Agreement on Safeguards](#), the [Agreement on Anti-Dumping](#), and the [SCM Agreement](#). Liberia will apply any such measures in conformity with the relevant WTO provisions.

The surtax applied to imports of wheat flour will be eliminated by 1 July 2019.

Export Policies: Liberia will apply its export permit and other export control requirements in conformity with WTO provisions. Liberia will administer its subsidy programmes subject to Article 3.1(a) of the [SCM Agreement](#), in conformity with the SCM Agreement, including Article 27.2 thereof.

Industrial Subsidies: Liberia will administer its industrial subsidy programmes in conformity with the [SCM Agreement](#), from 1 November 2019. Incentives granted to firms and individuals authorized by these laws and programmes prior to the date of accession that constitute a prohibited subsidy, will be withdrawn by 1 November 2019.

Agricultural Policies: Liberia will bind agricultural export subsidies at zero.

Technical barriers to trade (product standards and certification): Full implementation of the [TBT Agreement](#) will start from 1 August 2017. During the transition period, existing TBT measures will be applied on a non-discriminatory basis. Any changes made in Liberia's laws, regulations and practice during the transition period will not result in a lesser degree of consistency with the TBT Agreement than existed at the date of accession.

Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures: Full implementation of the [SPS Agreement](#) will start from 1 August 2017. During the transition period, existing SPS measures will be applied on a non-discriminatory basis. Any changes made in Liberia's laws, regulations and practice during the transition period will not result in a lesser degree of consistency with the SPS Agreement on than existed at the date of accession. Liberia will consult with Members upon request if they deem that any measures applied during the transition period affect their trade negatively.

Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs): All laws, regulations and other TRIMs-related measures applied in Liberia will be consistent with the provisions of the [TRIMs Agreement](#), except for measures applied under investment agreements, for which a transitional period until 1 November 2019 was agreed. Liberia will engage in consultations with interested WTO Members, no later than 1 November 2017, regarding WTO-consistent measures that could be applied in connection with these investment agreements. Liberia will not conclude any new investment agreements in any sector that contain provisions contrary to the TRIMs Agreement.

Free Zones and Special Economic Zones (SEZs): Free trade zones will be established, maintained and administered in conformity with the provisions of the WTO Agreement. Liberia will ensure enforcement of its WTO obligations in these zones. The right of firms to register and operate in these zones will not be subject to export performance, trade balancing, or local content criteria requirements. Goods imported into the free trade zones and goods produced in any free trade zones under tax and tariff provisions that exempt imports and imported inputs from tariffs and

certain taxes will be subject to normal customs formalities when entering the rest of the territory of Liberia, including the application of tariffs and taxes.

Transit: Liberia will apply any laws, regulations or other measures governing transit operations and will act in conformity with the WTO Agreement, in particular Article V of the GATT 1994. The levy of 2.5% of the CIF value of goods charged on all trade in transit will be replaced with an administrative fee consistent with the provisions of Article VIII of the GATT 1994, by 1 August 2017.

Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS): Liberia will apply the [TRIPS Agreement](#).

Transparency: Liberia will implement the transparency provisions in the WTO Agreements requiring notification and publication. No law, regulation, judicial decision, administrative rulings, or other measures of general application pertaining to or affecting trade in goods, services and TRIPS will become effective prior to its publication.

At the latest within six months of the entry into force of the Protocol of Accession, Liberia will submit all initial notifications required by the WTO Agreement. Any laws, regulations, or other measures subsequently enacted by Liberia, and which are required to be notified pursuant to the WTO Agreement, will also be notified.

Liberia will ensure the transparency of its privatization programme. It will provide annual reports to WTO Members on developments in the privatization programme, as long as the programme is in existence.

Upon accession Liberia will notify and provide information on the activities of all its SOEs, in accordance with Article XVII of the GATT 1994 and the Understanding on that Article.

Liberia will publish the list of goods and services subject to state monitoring or control and any changes to this list.

WTO Members will be notified, should Liberia decide to enact legislation on trade remedies.

All necessary information on Liberia's subsidy programmes will be notified to the WTO Committee on SCM in accordance with Article 25 of the [SCM Agreement](#) within six months of entry into force of Liberia's Protocol of Accession. Liberia will provide explanatory information in its subsequent notifications under Article 25.

Liberia will notify WTO Members of any measures planned to replace the WTO-inconsistent TRIMs measures applied under the TRIMs-inconsistent investment agreements at least six months prior to the adoption of such new measures.

Next steps

Liberia's Accession Package has been forwarded to the Tenth Ministerial Conference in Nairobi for formal adoption by all [162 WTO members](#).

The final step before Liberia becomes a WTO member would be the ratification of the Accession Package by Liberia's Legislature by 15 June 2016.

Liberia will become a full-fledged member 30 days after it notifies the WTO of the ratification.

Learn [how to become a member of the WTO](#).

Key Facts

Application received: 13 June 2007

Chief negotiator: H.E. Mr Axel Addy, Minister for Commerce and Industry of Liberia

Last member to join the WTO: [Kazakhstan](#)

Working party

Chairperson: H.E. Mr. Joakim Reiter (Sweden / UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General)

Members (20): Argentina; Australia; Brazil; Canada; Chile; China; Côte d'Ivoire; European Union; Ghana; India; Japan; Lesotho; Panama; Sierra Leone; Russian Federation; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; Ukraine; United States; and, Yemen.

Established: 18 December 2007

Meetings: [four](#)

