

2 December 2021

Venue: International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG)

Registration and program

Registration link for the Business Forum is available [here](#). Deadline for registration is 21 November.

The event will be held in hybrid format. Once you register please select whether you will participate virtually or in person.

Due to COVID-19 requirements, a limited number of participants will be allowed to attend in person. For that reason, we would appreciate timely registration as places will be offered on first come first served basis.

Participants attending in person will be issued special badges to allow them access to the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) which will be valid for one day. Information on badge collection will be sent closer to the date.

Those registered as attending virtually will receive prior to the event the links needed to connect.

For any questions, please email MC12.BF@wto.org.

Draft program is attached

8:30 -9:15 FORUM OPENING

Welcome Remarks:

- **Kassym-Jomart Tokayev**, *President of Kazakhstan (TBC)*
- **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, *Director-General, World Trade Organization*
- **Guy Parmelin**, *President of Swiss Confederation (TBC)*

9:20 - 9:55

What does the WTO need to do to get back on track: Conversation with business

Plenary Session #1

10:00 - 10:55

Outlook and opportunities at MC12: Deliverables and Future Agenda

What can MC12 deliver for business, the global economy and people of the world.

Plenary Session #2

11:00 - 11:55

WTO Reform, what is needed to make the organization fit for purpose in the 21st century

Everyone has an idea of what reform of the WTO entails but as yet we are far from consensus on the best path for reform. Should reform encompass new areas of activity or is it best to address longstanding negotiating issues first. How should the dispute settlement system be reformed? Are different negotiating models required? Reform of the WTO is crucial for the retaining the organization's relevance but what is the best means of achieving this goal?

Plenary Session #3

12:00 - 12:55

The Role of the WTO in Combatting the COVID-19 Pandemic

Trade has contributed positively to the COVID-19 pandemic response and the WTO has played a central role by focussing on export restrictions, the importance of trade facilitation, supply chain resilience and the pragmatic use of the TRIPs agreement provisions.

12:45 Networking Lunch

Plenary Session #4 14:00 - 14:55

Trading in a post COVID-19 world: how digital trade and shifting supply chains will transform trade in the future

At the beginning of the pandemic there was wide speculation that global supply chains could be upended by crisis. Reshoring was much discussed as a way forward. A McKinsey survey in May 2020 indicated that 93% of companies planned to make their supply chains more resilient. But supply chains have proven stubbornly resilient to the impact of COVID-19 with most companies now seeking to diversify their supplies rather than reshoring. Nonetheless, the pandemic and technological advances have changed the supply chain landscape offering opportunities as well as risks for exporters and importers.

Plenary Session #5 15:00 - 15:55

Building a more inclusive and sustainability driven WTO: making trade greener

Sustainable development and the protection and preservation of the environment are fundamental goals of the WTO. This session will focus on how can we make trade greener for better and more sustainable economic growth and what WTO can do to help support MSMEs to help them participate in international trade and make them more resilient post COVID-19?

Plenary Session #6 16:00 - 16:55

What can regional trade agreements teach the WTO about charting the future course for trade

Regional trade agreements are becoming a key element in international trade relations. They have become deeper and more complex; their coverage evolved from tariff liberalization to new areas of trade. How can these agreements impact the work of the WTO and the way its members negotiate and build new multilateral trade agreements in the future.

Plenary Session #7

17:00 - 17:20

The future of global trade: recommendations from the private sector

Guidance from the private sector has been critically important to the work of the WTO. The role of the private sector was instrumental in brokering an agreement on Trade Facilitation and in the launching of the Joint Statement Initiatives. As MC12 winds down, what is that business leaders want from the WTO at this meeting and in the years to come.

17:30 - 17:55

Closing Address

18:15

Delivering of Business Recommendations to DG Ngozi and Minister Sultanov