

Conference on WTO Accessions for the Greater Horn of Africa to be held in Nairobi

The University of Nairobi, School of Economics in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Trade Organization (WTO) secretariat will be hosting a regional dialogue conference on WTO Accessions for the Greater Horn of Africa from August 28–30, 2017 at the Intercontinental Hotel, Nairobi.

Speaking during a press briefing on August 24, 2017, the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amb. (Dr.) Amina Mohammed said that the ministry and the government in general, emphasizes on partnership and collaboration with the private sector, the academia and all stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation.

The regional dialogue meeting has been convened for four African countries from the greater Horn of Africa that are in the process of acceding to the WTO. The target countries are: Union of Comoros, Federal Republic of Ethiopia, Federal Republic of Somalia and Republic of Sudan.

Other countries that joined WTO recently, have also been invited to the conference. They include: China, Liberia, Oman, Yemen and Seychelles. They are expected to share their accession experiences, reflect on ways in which WTO membership can foster regional integration and cooperation. The dialogue conference will also mobilize support for facilitating and accelerating African accessions.

The Cabinet Secretary also noted that Kenya as a founding member of WTO will continue supporting African countries in capacity building especially on trade negotiations. She added that 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%.

The University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi observed that the School of Economics was awarded the WTO Chair to support capacity building, and international trade. He noted that the University collaborates with the private sector, the industry in doing research and disseminates the research findings to solve the problems facing Africa. Prof. Mbithi was represented by Prof. Isaac Mbeche, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Student Affairs and Ag. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Administration and Finance.