

**2018 ANNUAL SESSION OF THE  
PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO**

**PRACTICAL  
INFORMATION**

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## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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Illustration: The WTO building in Geneva: map of the area

### Date and venue

1. The 2018 Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO will be held on Thursday, 6 December, and Friday, 7 December, at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva (see map on page 4). The meeting room is located in the CR-building which is the modern edifice next to the WTO's main entrance.
2. An inaugural ceremony will take place at 3 p.m. on 6 December and will be followed by plenary working sessions. The morning session will start at 10 a.m. and finish at 1 p.m., whereas afternoon sessions will start at 3 p.m. and finish at 6 p.m.
3. In order to avoid a long wait at the security check, delegates are kindly requested to present themselves at WTO well in advance, if possible at noon on 6 December and at 8.30 a.m. on 7 December.

### Participation and registration

4. Participation in the Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO will be guided by the general principles set out in Article 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference.
5. As a rule, the number of MPs in each national delegation should not exceed five. Observer delegations should be in principle limited to two persons.
6. In order to ensure the success of the session, it is of paramount importance that each parliament nominate MPs who are directly involved in parliamentary activities dealing with international trade and especially WTO negotiations.

7. All delegates are kindly requested to complete and submit the enclosed registration form which is also available on the IPU website at <https://www.ipu.org/download/5005>. Delegates are also kindly requested to notify the presence of persons with reduced mobility in their delegation so that adequate arrangements may be made to enable their movement within WTO premises.
8. The form should be returned to the Secretariat of the Inter-Parliamentary Union by **15 November 2018 at the latest**. Any modifications concerning the composition of the delegation should likewise be communicated to the IPU Secretariat.
9. The Registration Desk will be located at the entrance of the WTO compound and will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on 6 December and from 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on 7 December.
10. For identification and security reasons, all delegates are requested to wear their identification badges at all times during the session and at social functions.

### **List of Delegates**

11. A provisional List of Delegates will be distributed at the beginning of the session. This list will be issued on the basis of confirmations received by the IPU Secretariat by the registration deadline of 15 November (possible changes will be accepted up to 6 p.m. on Monday, 3 December). Delegations are kindly requested to report any changes in the provisional list to the Registration Desk. A revised list will be published on the IPU website after the session.

### **Working modalities**

12. Procedural arrangements for the session will be in conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, adopted at its Brussels session in November 2004.
13. A detailed work programme of the session will be circulated in advance of the Conference and published on the IPU website.
14. All panel discussions, hearings and debates on substantive themes will take place in plenary. The debate on each substantive theme will be launched by rapporteurs who will have some eight minutes each to present their discussion papers. Delegates can participate in the debate either by making brief statements or by asking questions. The debate will be interactive; no formal statements will be delivered and no list of speakers will be drawn up in advance. The order of interventions and questions will be decided by the Chair.
15. The draft outcome document of the session will be prepared by the Steering Committee and communicated to the participants in advance of the session, in accordance with Art. 7.1 of the Rules. Specific arrangements concerning the submission of amendments to the draft (Article 7.2 of the Rules) will be announced on the spot.

### **Languages**

16. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. Official written documentation of the session will be available in English and French only.

### **Documents**

17. The only official documents of the session will be its programme, agenda, the list of delegates, discussion papers prepared by the rapporteurs, the draft outcome document elaborated by the Steering Committee and information notes prepared by the Secretariat. WTO may provide background documents for distribution to delegates upon registration.

18. Should participants and observers wish to distribute their own documents or other material pertaining to the agenda of the session, they may use a table provided for that purpose in the immediate vicinity of the meeting room.

### **Cloakroom**

19. During the meeting, a cloakroom will be made available to the delegates for their personal belongings. However, the WTO Secretariat would like to note that there is no surveillance and, consequently, it declines all responsibility in case of damage or loss.

### **Official reception**

20. Details concerning the official reception, to be held in the evening of 6 December on WTO premises, will be provided on registration.

### **Visas**

21. Attention is drawn to the strict provisions in force regarding entry into Switzerland, which is part of the Schengen zone. Delegates requiring an entry visa to Schengen States must obtain it from the Swiss consulate or diplomatic mission responsible for the necessary arrangements in the delegates' country of residence.

### **Hotel accommodation**

22. Delegates are responsible for their own hotel expenses. In view of the fact that several major international meetings are taking place in Geneva in the month of December 2018, it is imperative that hotel reservations be made as soon as possible. Booking of rooms can be done on-line through the website of the *Geneva Tourism Office* (<https://www.geneve.com/en/>).

23. Delegations from countries having a Permanent Mission in Geneva can make their hotel reservations through their respective Mission. The Missions are used to receiving national delegations to UN meetings and to handling hotel reservations for them and many have signed preferential tariff agreements with hotels close to the WTO.

### **Local transport and taxis**

24. The WTO is right across the street from the final stop ("Jardin Botanique") of bus no.1, which leaves from the city centre (train station "Cornavin" and Place Bel-Air). From the airport, hop on bus no. 28 to the final stop ("Jardin Botanique"). Tickets must be purchased and validated before entering buses or trams. Individual tickets are available from vending machines at main bus stops, and cards for multiple trips can be purchased at a reduced rate from newsagents in town bearing the "TPG" (Geneva transport service) sign.

25. In Geneva, taxis are only available on call and cannot be hailed in the streets. There are taxi ranks in almost all main squares in Geneva. Taxis can be called by telephone by dialling the following local numbers: 022 3202020, 022 3202202 and 022 3314133.

