ADB – Turkmenistan WTO accession support – Private-sector training

Ashgabat • October 2026

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Purpose of this plenary

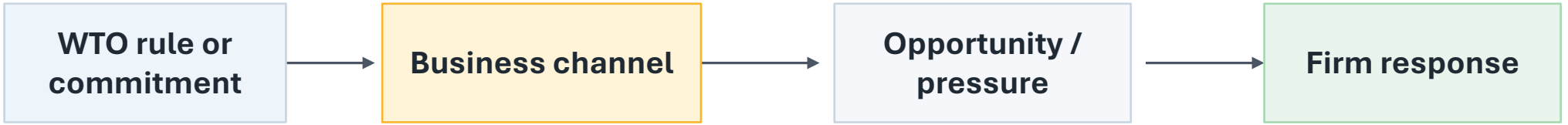
Move from analysis to practical next steps for firms and for the accession process

1	2	3	4
Identify one opportunity	Identify one concern	Define the evidence needed	Separate firm and government action

The output is not a generic list of requests. It is a structured set of issues that can inform business strategy, domestic reform and WTO accession engagement.

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What we have learned so far



Competition exposure is not automatically vulnerability.
Market access is not automatically an export opportunity.

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What today’s cases surfaced

Competition / adjustment
Wheat: meaningful imports, domestic production and adjustment capacity.

Imported-input competitiveness
Construction/energy: equipment, base metals, logistics and services.

Regulatory market entry
Tomatoes: SPS, perishability, preferences and border procedures.

Market size vs current position
Cotton yarn: huge markets are not automatically best.

Tariff vs delivered cost
Potassium chloride: freight, registration and buyer access matter.

Plenary task
Convert these issues into firm action, domestic reform needs, external market-access follow-up and, where relevant, accession/transition evidence.

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The private sector has three different roles

Business decision-maker

Upgrade, export, source, partner, comply, diversify

Domestic reform partner

Identify bottlenecks in customs, standards, licensing, finance, logistics

Accession informant

Provide evidence for export interests and adjustment concerns

The same issue may belong to one, two or all three categories.
The plenary will help classify them.

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Not every business problem is a WTO accession/transition issue

Issue type	Example	Useful response
External market-access issue	Foreign tariff, certification or licensing requirement	Record issue; prepare post-accession follow-up
Domestic reform issue	Slow clearance, unclear standard, weak services	Raise with responsible agencies; propose reform
Firm-level capability gap	Quality, scale, packaging, management	Business action; investment; partnerships
Evidence gap	No data on cost, inputs, market demand	Collect information before asking for a commitment

Good engagement starts by classifying the problem correctly.

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From opportunity to action: the four questions for each group

Opportunity	What is one concrete opportunity for our sector or firms?
Concern	What is one significant accession-related pressure or concern?
Evidence	What information would make this useful for government or firms?
Action	What should firms do, and what should government consider?

Each table should leave the plenary with one concise message, not a long wish list.

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What counts as useful evidence?

- Cost and price data
- Input dependence
- Market barriers
- Certification gaps

- Adjustment costs
- Employment / SMEs
- Export demand

“Our sector is important” is not enough.
Negotiators and reform agencies need facts that show how a measure affects firms.

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Export interests and adjustment concerns

Export interest

What external market-access issue or domestic reform would help us expand?

Adjustment concern

Where could our sector face adjustment pressure, and what transition or support is justified?

Both are legitimate.
Both are stronger when evidence-based and linked to a realistic business response.

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Action is not only a request to government

Firm action	Upgrade quality; reduce costs; train staff; certify; find partners; test markets
Business association action	Aggregate evidence; identify common bottlenecks; prepare sector submissions
Government action	Improve procedures; strengthen infrastructure; publish rules; design WTO-consistent support
Accession team action	Use business evidence to shape Turkmenistan's own commitments, transition issues and domestic reforms

A strong plenary output distinguishes who needs to do what next.

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Plenary activity: table task

Step 1
Discuss your sector or product

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Step 2
Choose one opportunity and one concern

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Step 3
Define evidence and action

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Step 4
Report back in two minutes

Report-back format: Opportunity • Concern • Evidence needed • Firm action • Domestic reform / external market-access / accession-transition issue

Do not present a long sector speech. Present a decision-ready message.

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Facilitator classification matrix

Issue raised	External market-access	Accession / transition	Domestic reform	Firm action	Evidence needed

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Bridge to Block 2: what should the next training block deepen?

Business readiness diagnostic	**Export preparation and compliance**	**Sector-specific accession issues**	**Structured public-private dialogue**

During the final part of the day, participants should help scope follow up support: timing, format, case selection and what practical tools would be most useful.

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Closing message

WTO accession changes the operating environment.

Firms need to assess the actual business channels.

Private-sector input should be specific and evidence-based.

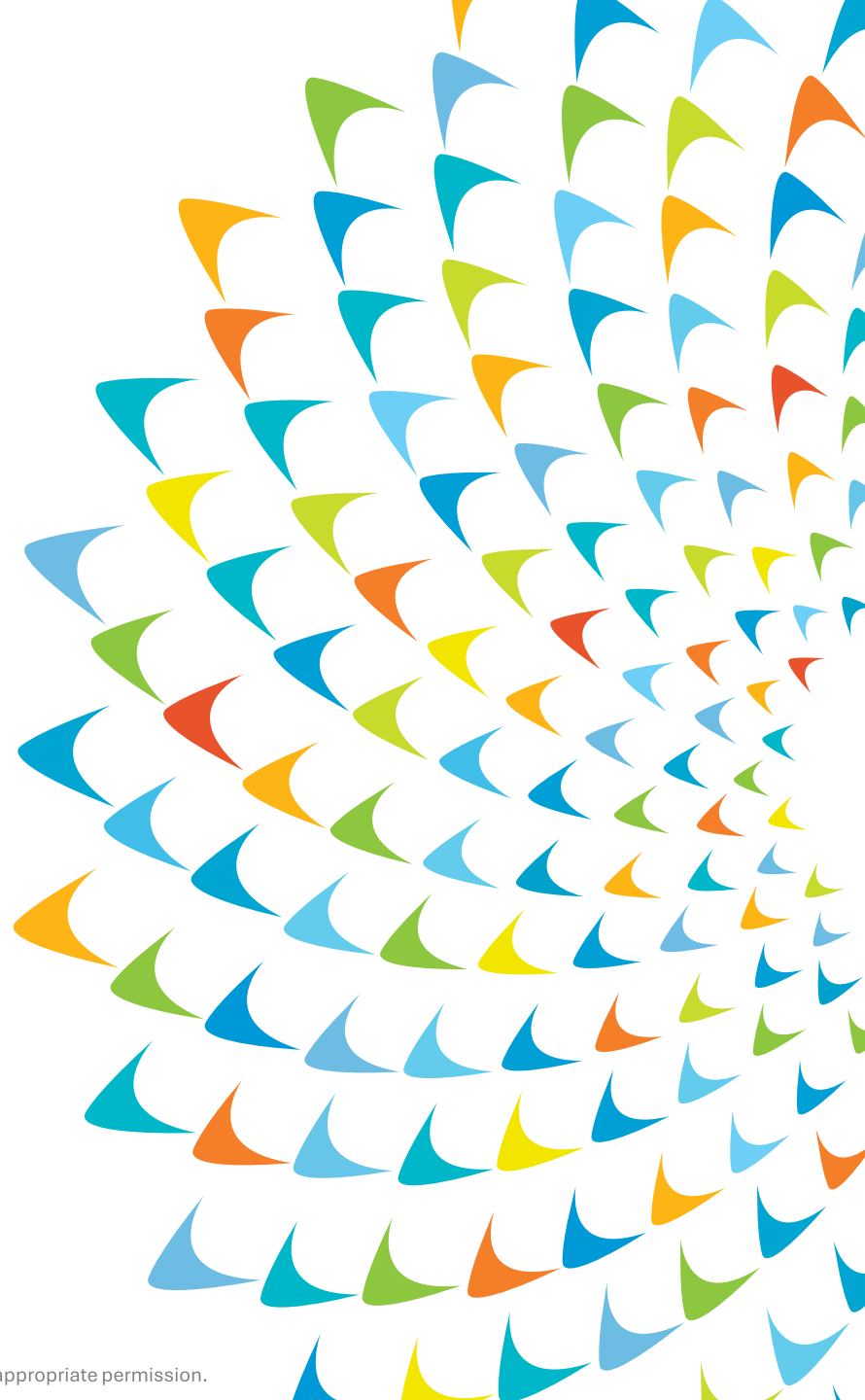
The best outcome is not “more protection” or “more liberalization” in the abstract. It is better information, better preparation, and better choices by firms and government.

Understand → Assess → Act → Engage

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Thank you!



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