



CHINA WTO ACCESSION INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ALUMNI STORY

please tell us...



Where are you from, and what have you studied before joining the China Programme?

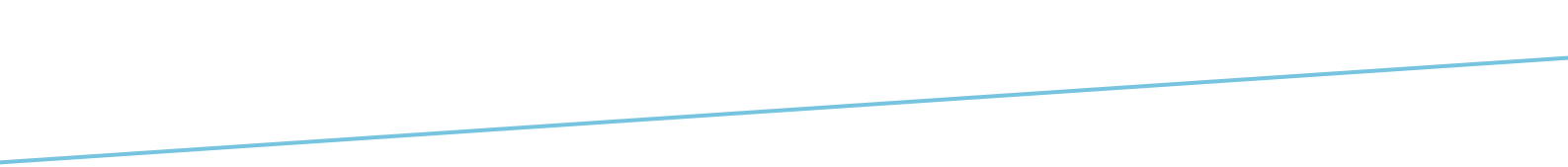
I am from Lebanon. I studied Economics and Industrial Engineering at the American University of Beirut, before completing an MSc in Economic Policy for International Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Moving from engineering to economics and then development policy gave me different ways of looking at economic and policy questions, which I was keen to explore further through practical experience.

Why did you apply?

Coming from Lebanon, I became interested in how countries navigate economic and political challenges and what it takes to create opportunities for recovery and development. I wanted to understand how these questions connect to the wider international system, beyond what can be studied in a classroom. The WTO offered an opportunity to explore this through the accession process, where technical work and negotiations come together with broader questions about a country's economic future. Through the China Programme, I hoped to see this process up close and better understand how the work of the Organization unfolds in practice.

What kind of work were you assigned to during your internship?

My work covered several accession processes, including preparing and reviewing accession-related documents, research and briefing materials, and supporting technical discussions and mission-related work. I also contributed to broader projects across the Division, including research and figures for the Director-General's Annual Report, preparations for the China Round Table, and work connected to activities around MC14. These projects involved coordinating with colleagues across different parts of the Secretariat and gave me a wider view of the work behind the Organization's activities.

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Alongside this, I contributed to the Trade for Peace Programme, helping prepare an event in collaboration with LSE's Department of International Development and supporting outreach and engagement with external stakeholders. I enjoyed moving between the detailed technical work on accessions and projects that brought together different colleagues and partners to explore the links between trade and peacebuilding.

Looking back, what do you think of your work experience at the WTO, and as participant of the China Programme?

What stayed with me most was seeing how much happens behind the scenes of the multilateral trading system. Studying economics and development had given me a foundation for understanding trade policy and international institutions, but working at the WTO showed me how these ideas translate into practice: the research and technical preparation, the discussions between governments, and the coordination needed to move work forward when different priorities are involved. I also gained a better appreciation of the Secretariat's role in supporting members and acceding governments throughout this process.

I valued the opportunity to contribute to different areas of the Division's work and learn from colleagues across the Secretariat. I am grateful to the China Programme and the colleagues who supported me throughout the internship. I would also like to thank the Government of China for supporting this initiative and making opportunities like this available to young professionals from developing countries. I left with a much clearer understanding of the work, collaboration, and people behind the WTO's efforts to advance the multilateral trading system.

What have you done since?

Since completing the China Programme, I have been exploring opportunities to continue working in international trade and development. I hope to build on my experience at the WTO and keep exploring the connections between trade policy, economic development, and international cooperation.

Thank you!