

**LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE HARMONIZATION OF THE LEGISLATION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN IN THE PROCESS OF ACCESSION TO THE WORLD  
TRADE ORGANIZATION: RESULTS OF 2025 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2026**

**REGINA DAVYDOVA**

Head of the Department for Harmonization  
of National Legislation with the Agreements  
of the World Trade Organization  
Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan

**Abstract**

This article examines the legal aspects of the harmonization of the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the course of its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). It analyses the key reform outcomes of 2025 aimed at aligning the national regulatory framework with WTO agreements and identifies the priority areas of legislative activity for 2026. Particular attention is devoted to reforms in the fields of technical regulation, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, customs administration, intellectual property, and trade in services. The article concludes that a systemic model of legal adaptation of national legislation to the requirements of the multilateral trading system has been formed.

**Introduction**

Accession to the WTO entails the assumption of comprehensive obligations arising from the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization (1994) [1]. One of the core conditions for membership is the alignment of national legislation with the multilateral trade agreements [2].

In the context of comprehensive economic reforms, the Republic of Uzbekistan has intensified the harmonization of its legal framework with WTO rules. This process has acquired a systemic character and now extends to virtually all areas of external economic regulation. The reforms undertaken under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan are aimed not only at domestic modernization but also at strengthening the country's position and ensuring its full integration into the international economic system.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the results of legislative harmonization achieved in 2025 and to identify the priority tasks for 2026 in the context of completing the WTO accession negotiations.

**1. Institutionalization of the Harmonization Process**

By Presidential Resolution No. PR-181 of 2 June 2023, a prohibition was introduced on drafting regulatory legal acts inconsistent with WTO rules and requirements [3]. The Ministry of Justice was entrusted with coordinating the harmonization of national legislation with WTO agreements.

This measure marked the transition from fragmented legislative adaptation to an institutionally integrated model of legal transformation. Such an approach corresponds to the practice of states undergoing WTO accession [4].

**2. Results of Legislative Harmonization in 2025**

In 2025, extensive work was carried out to align national legislation with WTO requirements. As a result, 30 regulatory legal acts were adopted, and 61 legal instruments were

brought into conformity with international obligations. Since 2023, the total number of harmonized legal acts has exceeded 170.

The reforms covered the principal areas regulated by WTO agreements.

### **2.1. Intellectual Property and TRIPS**

The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) establishes minimum standards for the protection of intellectual property rights [5].

In 2025, pursuant to Law No. LRU-908 of 15 February 2024, patent fees were unified for residents and non-residents. The law also provides for the harmonization of the national intellectual property system with TRIPS requirements.

Furthermore, three laws were adopted providing for Uzbekistan's accession to the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs, the International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations (Rome Convention), and for the ratification of the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks.

Additionally, Law No. LRU-1080 of 8 August 2025 simplified procedures for the registration of intellectual property objects and strengthened liability for infringements in this field.

### **2.2. Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary Measures**

The WTO Agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) require transparency, non-discrimination and scientific justification of regulatory measures [6].

The abolition of mandatory state registration for high-risk products, the reduction of the list of goods subject to mandatory certification, and the transition to a declaration of conformity system reflect a liberalization of technical regulation.

The transfer of food safety control to a specialized authority and the alignment of regulatory standards with Codex Alimentarius principles are consistent with SPS requirements.

These reforms were implemented through Presidential Decree No. PD-67 of 18 April 2025 and Government Resolutions Nos. 553 and 554 of 2 September 2025. These measures represent a decisive step in harmonizing Uzbekistan's technical regulation system with WTO TBT and SPS agreements.

### **2.3. Customs and Tariff Regulation**

Law No. LRU-1097 of 27 November 2025 abolished the practice of doubling customs duties on goods not benefiting from most-favored-nation treatment or whose origin was undetermined and introduced a differentiated additional customs duty. This reform is consistent with the fundamental most-favored-nation (MFN) principle under WTO law [7].

Presidential Decrees Nos. PD-174 (19 September 2025) and PD-181 (8 October 2025) abolished the practice of establishing minimum export prices for agricultural, textile, leather-footwear and electrical products, thereby promoting free competition in export markets.

Furthermore, Presidential Decree No. PD-47 of 14 March 2025 eliminated export restrictions and introduced export duties subject to a transparent application mechanism, enhancing the predictability of export policy.

These reforms aim to increase transparency in customs policy and reduce discretionary regulation.

### **2.4. Liberalization of Trade in Services**

Under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), WTO Members undertake commitments to ensure transparency and non-discriminatory market access in services sectors [8].

Accordingly, Law No. LRU–908 of 15 February 2024 unified state registration fees for enterprises with foreign investment and domestic enterprises, as well as patent fees for residents and non-residents. As a result, the state registration fee for enterprises with foreign participation was reduced from ten basic calculation units to one.

Government Resolution No. 538 of 26 August 2025 unified the fees payable by Uzbek and foreign individuals and legal entities for the consideration of applications and the issuance of permits in certain services sectors.

Moreover, Government Resolution No. 592 of 18 September 2025 granted telecommunications operators the right, on an experimental basis until 1 January 2030, to establish direct connections to international internet networks for their own commercial purposes.

These measures are aimed at ensuring fair and free competition in the services market in accordance with WTO requirements.

### **3. Negotiation Process and International Context**

In 2025, two meetings of the WTO Working Party on the Accession of Uzbekistan were held. Bilateral negotiations with more than 30 states were concluded.

WTO accession practice demonstrates that the successful completion of negotiations depends directly on the readiness of the national legal system to implement WTO obligations [9].

### **4. Legislative Priorities for 2026**

In 2026, the adoption of laws on trade defense measures (anti-dumping, countervailing and safeguard measures), general product safety and market surveillance, and food safety is planned, along with the updating of regulatory acts in the areas of technical regulation, veterinary control and plant quarantine.

The adoption of trade defense legislation is of particular importance, as such instruments are expressly provided for in WTO agreements and constitute a key mechanism for the protection of domestic producers [10].

### **Conclusion**

The results achieved in 2025 demonstrate the formation of a comprehensive model of legal adaptation of the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the requirements of the multilateral trading system.

Harmonization has acquired an institutional character and encompasses the core areas of trade regulation. At the same time, a final assessment of the effectiveness of these reforms will only be possible after their practical implementation and the completion of the accession process.

The year 2026 will become a decisive stage in establishing a sustainable legal framework for the full membership of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the WTO.

### **References**

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