

Kazakhstan, Belarus Candidacy Benefits

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GENEVA — Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization will significantly speed up Kazakhstan and Belarus' membership in the organization, the head of the Russian negotiations delegation for WTO accession, Maxim Medvedkov, told journalists in Geneva on Thursday, Interfax reported.

"Since we fully analyzed the entire legal base for the customs union in correlation to WTO norms, Kazakhstan and Belarus don't need to do this. This will also significantly speed up their accession to the WTO," Medvedkov said.

He added that Kazakhstan is now in the final stage of the negotiations process. Negotiations for tariffs and services are practically finished. "It is quite realistic that Kazakhstan might almost join the WTO next year," Medvedkov said.

Medvedkov added that the negotiations process might move forward for Belarus. He said there are already serious reasons for restarting negotiations for Belarus' accession to the WTO and speeding up this process.

Russia agreed to limit the export duties on more than 700 commodity items, according to a

press release from the WTO.

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