



19 November 2020

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REPORT (2020) OF THE COMMITTEE ON MARKET ACCESS TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS¹

1. Since the last review², the Committee on Market Access has held two formal meetings (8 June 2020 and 12 & 16 November 2020) and four informal meetings (28 February, 20 May, 10 July and 16 October 2020). The minutes of the formal meetings are contained in documents G/MA/M/72 and G/MA/M/73 (to be issued).
2. On 10 December 2019, the Secretariat informed Members that the Chairperson, Mr. Fernando ESCOBAR (Bolivia), had relinquished his post in Geneva. Accordingly, as set out in Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of the Committee on Market Access (G/L/148), the vice-Chairperson, Mr. Christopher O'TOOLE (Canada), became the Chairperson effective from that date.
3. At its formal meeting of 8 June 2020, the Committee took note that the consultations in the Council for Trade in Goods concerning the Chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies remained ongoing, and agreed that, once the issue had been resolved, the Secretariat would send a communication with the proposed candidate and set a deadline for objections. On 27 July 2020, the Secretariat informed Members that Mr Anatoly CHAPLIN (Russian Federation) had been nominated, and on 30 July 2020 a second communication confirmed that he had been elected. At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee elected Mrs Elisa Maria OLMEDA DE ALEJANDRO (Mexico) as Vice-Chairperson.

1 WAIVERS

4. At its formal meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee approved the extension of the HS2002 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/782), the HS2007 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/783), the HS2012 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/784), and the HS2017 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/785). The Committee agreed to forward the draft waiver decisions to the General Council, through the Council for Trade in Goods, for appropriate action.

2 INTRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED SYSTEM CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

5. At the meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee took note of a revised report by the Secretariat (G/MA/W/158/Rev.1) which provides a broad overview of all HS transposition exercises.

2.1 Introduction of Harmonized System 1996 (HS1996) changes to schedules of concessions

6. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction HS96 changes to schedules of concessions. The Chairperson informed that the Schedules of concessions of all the 64 Members that were listed in the Annex of the Decision of 27 May 2009 (WT/L/756) had been successfully transposed into HS96 and certified. Technical work under the previous transposition procedures (GATT document L/6905) remained pending for one Member.

¹ As agreed by the Committee on 16 November 2020, a draft report was sent to Members which included a deadline for objections (i.e. close of business of 18 November 2020). Since no objection was received, the report was approved on 18 December 2020.

² G/L/1338, dated 15 November 2019.

2.2 Introduction of Harmonized System 2002 (HS2002) Changes to schedules of concessions

7. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2002 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/605 and WT/L/807), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2002 changes of Members had been examined. At the formal meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Chairperson announced that 116 Schedules of concessions had been transposed into HS2002 and circulated for certification. Technical work remained pending for one Member.

2.3 Introduction of Harmonized System 2007 (HS2007) changes to schedules of concessions

8. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2007 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/673 and WT/L/830), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2007 changes of Members had been examined. At the formal meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Chairperson announced that 109 Schedules of concessions had been transposed into HS2007 and circulated for certification.

2.4 Introduction of Harmonized System 2012 (HS2012) changes to schedules of concessions

9. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2012 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/831), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2012 changes of Members had been examined. At the formal meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Chairperson announced that 99 Schedules of concessions had been transposed into HS2012 and circulated for certification.

2.5 Introduction of Harmonized System 2017 (HS2017) changes to schedules of concessions

10. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2017 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/995), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2017 changes of Members had been examined. At the formal meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Chairperson announced that 39 Schedules of concessions had been transposed into HS2017 and circulated for certification.

2.6 Introduction of Harmonized System 2022 (HS2022) changes to schedules of concessions

11. At the meeting of 8 June 2012, a representative of the World Customs Organization made a presentation to introduce the main changes that will result from the introduction of the HS2022 amendment.³ At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee heard a presentation by the World Customs Organization on the HS2022 correlation tables⁴, and requested the Secretariat to prepare a draft Decision for the HS2022 Transposition based on the "Procedure for the Introduction of Harmonized System 2017 changes to Schedules of Concessions using the Consolidated Tariff Schedules (CTS) database", document WT/L/995.

3 DECISION ON NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ("QR DECISION")

12. At its meetings in 2020, the Committee examined new QR notifications which had been submitted by 35 Members: Albania; Australia; Brazil; Bangladesh; Canada; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Egypt; the European Union; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; Israel; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea, Republic of; Kyrgyz Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mauritius; Moldova; Montenegro; North Macedonia; Norway; Paraguay; Peru; Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Switzerland; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; Turkey;

³ Room documents RD/MA/67 and RD/MA/70.

⁴ Room document RD/MA/74.

Ukraine; the United States; Uruguay; and Viet Nam. The Committee also continued reviewing notifications which had been previously submitted by other Members. At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee took note of a report by the Secretariat with the status of QR notifications (G/MA/QR/9).

13. At the informal meeting of 16 October 2020, the Secretariat informed Members that a revised version of the Quantitative Restrictions Database had been finalized⁵ and asked Members to provide comments before it was released to the public.

4 DATABASES

14. At its formal meetings in 2020, the Secretariat reported on the status of work concerning the Integrated Data Base (IDB) and the Consolidated Tariff Schedules (CTS) database. The reports provided information on *inter alia* the use of information in the databases, the status of software development and technical assistance. The Committee also took note of the documents which reflected the status of submissions to the IDB (G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.51, and G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.52).

15. At its meetings of 2020, the Committee took note of a report prepared by the Secretariat pursuant to paragraph 16 of the "Decision on Modalities and Operation of the Integrated Database (IDB)"⁶, which requires it to maintain a list of official websites in which tariff information or import data are publicly available (G/MA/IDB/W/13/Rev.1, G/MA/IDB/W/13/Rev.2, G/MA/IDB/W/13/Rev.3).

5 OTHER ACTIVITIES

16. At its meeting of 8 June 2020, the Committee took note of a report by the Secretariat listing all notifications which had been submitted by Members to the Committee on Market Access relating to COVID-19 (G/MA/W/157), and discussed 11 communications by Members with information on unilateral measures to facilitate trade in certain products: Australia (G/MA/W/152), Bangladesh (G/MA/W/156), Canada (G/MA/W/145 and G/MA/W/153), Chile (G/MA/W/148 and G/MA/W/148/Add.1), Colombia (G/MA/W/146 and G/MA/W/146/Corr.1⁷), Costa Rica (G/MA/W/155), Dominican Republic (G/MA/W/149 and G/MA/W/149/Add.1), Korea (G/MA/W/147), New Zealand (G/MA/W/150), Singapore (G/MA/W/151) and Switzerland (G/MA/W/154). It also took note of a presentation by a representative of the WCO concerning the work undertaken by the WCO Secretariat concerning the disaster response phase of the Pandemic⁸. At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, the Committee took note of a revised list of COVID-19 related communications (G/MA/W/157/Rev.1), and discussed three additional communications: Australia (G/MA/W/152/Add.1); Bangladesh (G/MA/W/159); and Colombia (G/MA/W/146/Add.1). The Committee requested the Secretariat to include additional factual information in future versions of the report, based on these communications and notifications. Finally, a representative of the WCO Secretariat described the work undertaken in the disaster response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic (G/MA/W/162).

17. At the request of the Committee, the Secretariats of the World Trade Organization and the World Customs Organization organized a Capacity Building Workshop on the Harmonized System Convention, which took place on 3 September 2020. More than 300 Geneva and capital-based official participated virtually in the workshop.

18. On 5 June 2020, the Secretariat informed Members that the Goods Schedules e-Library, which is an online platform that facilitates access to the legal instruments that embody the WTO Schedules of concessions, had been finalized.⁹ Following the receipt of comments from Members, it was released to the public on 17 September 2020.¹⁰

19. At its meeting of 8 June 2020, the Committee took note of the Secretariat document entitled "Situation of Schedules of WTO Members" (G/MA/W/23/Rev.16), which lists all legal instruments relating to each Member's Schedule of concessions. It also took note of the Secretariat document entitled "Factual Report on the Status of Renegotiations under Article XXVIII of the GATT 1994"

⁵ <https://OR.wto.org/>.

⁶ Decision of 28 May 2019, G/MA/367.

⁷ The corrigendum is in Spanish only.

⁸ Room document RD/MA/68.

⁹ <https://goods-schedules.wto.org/>.

¹⁰ https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/mark_17sep20_e.htm.

(G/MA/W/123/Rev.6). At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, it took note of an updated version of the latter (G/MA/W/123/Rev.7).

20. At its meeting of 8 June and 12 & 16 November 2020 the Committee discussed a document by the Russian Federation on "Enhancing Transparency in Applied Tariffs" (JOB/MA/138). At its meeting of 12 & 16 November 2020, it also discussed a document by Australia, Brazil and Canada entitled "Transparency in Tariff Rate Changes, and the Treatment of Shipments *en route*: Members Practices and Perspectives" (G/MA/W/160).

21. At its meeting of 8 June 2020, the Committee took note of a document by the Secretariat entitled "Trade in Pharmaceutical Products: Consolidated List of products covered by the Sectoral Pharma Agreement" (JOB/MA/142), and of a presentation on the same topic.¹¹

22. At the informal meeting of 16 October 2020, the Committee requested the Secretariat to develop a pilot project to test the possibility of adopting an e-agenda system. It also considered the possibility of derestricting the Uruguay Round negotiating materials and agreed to hold consultations on the issue.

23. At its 8 June and 12 & 16 November 2020 meetings, the Committee took note of the following specific trade concerns:

Issue ¹²	Raised by ¹³ :
1. Angola – Import Restriction Practices	Russian Federation and the United States
2. China - Customs Duties on Certain Integrated Circuits	European Union, Japan, and Chinese Taipei
3. European Union - Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (The European Green Deal of December 2019)	China and the Russian Federation
4. Enlargement of the European Union to include Croatia - Negotiations under Article XXIV:6 of the GATT 1994	Russian Federation
5. European Union – Renegotiation of Tariff Rate Quotas under Article XXVIII of the GATT 1994	Russian Federation
6. India – Customs Duties on Telecommunication and Other Products	China and Chinese Taipei
7. India - Import Policies on Tyres, Television Sets, and Air Conditioners	European Union and Thailand
8. India – Quantitative Restrictions on Imports of Certain Pulses	Australia, Canada, the European Union, Russian Federation, and the United States
9. Indonesia - Customs Duties on Certain Telecommunication Products	United States
10. Mongolia – Quantitative Restrictions on the Importation of Certain Agricultural Products	Russian Federation
11. Nepal's Import Ban on Energy Drinks	Thailand
12. <u>Panama – Import Restrictive Practices</u>	<u>Costa Rica</u>
13. Russian Federation - Draft Decree Restricting Imports by Certain Entities	European Union
14. Russian Federation – Import Restrictions on Refined Fuel Products	European Union
15. Russian Federation - Track and Trace Regime	United States
16. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates – Selective Tax on Certain Imported Products	European Union, Switzerland, and the United States
17. Sri Lanka – Import Ban on Various Products	European Union
18. United Kingdom - Rectifications and Modifications of Schedule XIX	Russian Federation
19. United Kingdom - Renegotiation of Tariff Rate Quotas under Article XXVIII of the GATT 1994	Russian Federation

¹¹ Room document RD/MA/69.

¹² Includes items raised under "other business".

¹³ The column lists the Member(s) that raised the issue in any or all the formal meetings that are covered by this report.