



**REPORT (2017) OF THE COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE EXPANSION
OF TRADE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS**

1.1. The Committee of Participants on the Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee", was established pursuant to the provisions of the Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products (WT/MIN(96)/16), hereinafter referred to as "the Ministerial Declaration", and the provisions for the Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products (G/L/160), in order to carry out the provisions of paragraphs 3, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annex to the Declaration.

1.2. The Committee has held two formal meetings in 2017: on 28 June and 6 November. The minutes of these meetings are contained in documents G/IT/M/66 and G/IT/M/67. Ms Zsolia Tvarusko (Hungary) was elected Chairperson of the Committee for 2017.

1.3. The total number of WTO Members that are participants to the Ministerial Declaration is 82. The Committee's rules of procedure provide for observer status in the Committee for WTO Members that are not participants to the Ministerial Declaration, and governments that are observers to the Council for Trade in Goods. Requests for observer status by international intergovernmental organizations are considered on a case-by-case basis. The International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have been granted observer status, and the World Customs Organization (WCO) has been granted observer status to meetings where issues of HS classification and HS amendments are included in the agenda.

1.4. The Committee continued its deliberations on the Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) Work Programme in 2017. With regard to its work on the EMC/EMI Pilot Project, the Committee took note that, among the 53 participants, 37 had provided survey responses and the Committee encouraged those that had not yet done so to provide the information without any further delay. In considering ways to advance and expand its work on NTBs other than EMC/EMI, the Committee continued its discussions on the follow-up to the workshop held on 7 May 2015 on NTBs affecting trade in IT products. The main issues raised at the workshop by industry representatives were: transparency; standards for recognition of test results; e-labelling; and energy efficiency. A factual report on the workshop was circulated in document G/IT/28. At the request of the Committee, the Chairperson undertook informal consultations with interested delegations to examine the recommendations and avenues that were suggested by industry representatives at the NTB workshop, and such consultations will continue in 2018.

1.5. On classification divergences, with regard to the Committee's Decision (G/IT/27) concerning the endorsement of the 18 List I-A items for Attachment B (G/IT/W/34), the Secretariat has been approached by five ITA Participants for technical assistance. For the remaining 37 Attachment B items, the Committee, at its meeting of 18 April 2016, agreed on a Decision (G/IT/29) for the HS2007 classification of 15 additional "Attachment B" products. The Secretariat's comments on the remaining 22 items and comments received from 21 delegations were compiled in document G/IT/W/40 and its Addenda and Supplements. At its meeting of 6 November 2017, the Committee agreed on a new Decision (G/IT/30) for the HS2007 classification of three additional "Attachment B" products.

1.6. The Committee has consistently reviewed the status of implementation, a summary of which is provided in document G/IT/1 and its revisions. The document details that most participants had submitted the formal documentation for rectification and modification of their WTO schedules in order to incorporate the commitments arising from the Ministerial Declaration, and most had been certified by the Director-General.

1.7. At the meetings of 28 June and 6 November 2017, the Committee took note of the plurilateral negotiations and the result of an agreement on product expansion among some participants (WT/L/956 and WT/MIN(15)/25), and its implementation. The Committee agreed to revert to this matter at its future meetings.

1.8. As agreed at the Committee meeting on 1 November 2016, an ITA Symposium was organized on 27-28 June 2017 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the ITA and with the participation of the private sector. The purpose of the Symposium was to have an overview of the trade liberalization under the ITA and the evolution of global trade in ICT products over the past 20 years; to examine how ICT, as a development tool, can help developing countries and SMEs in promoting connectivity and achieving sustainable development goals, and can enable diversification, technology upgrading, and innovation; and to discuss what is next for the ITA and the ICT sector. The statements and presentations of all speakers as well as the facilitator's closing remarks are available on the WTO website.
