



15 October 2021

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**REPORT (2021) OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING  
TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS**

1. The Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures (hereinafter "the Agreement") which entered into force on 1 January 1995, establishes disciplines on users of import licensing systems with the principal objective of ensuring that the procedures applied for granting import licences do not in themselves restrict trade. It aims to simplify, clarify and minimize the administrative requirements necessary to obtain import licences.
2. The Committee on Import Licensing was established to afford Members the opportunity of consulting on any matter relating to the operation of the Agreement or the furtherance of its objectives. The Committee's Rules of Procedure, which were approved by the Council for Trade in Goods, are contained in document G/L/147.
3. All Members of the WTO are *ipso facto* members of the Committee. Observer governments in the General Council of the WTO have Observer status in the Committee. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and UNCTAD have regular observer status in the Committee.
4. The focus of this report is on the period since the Committee's last annual report (G/L/1369), namely 10 October 2020 – 8 October 2021 (hereinafter "the reporting period"). In 2021, the Committee held two formal meetings, on 21 April 2021 (G/LIC/M/52), under the chairpersonship of Ms Stephanía Aquilina (Malta), and on 8 October 2021 (G/LIC/M/53 to be issued), under the chairpersonship of Mr. Hsin-lung Hung (Chinese Taipei). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions of in-person activities, the Committee meeting of 21 April 2021 took place in virtual mode only, while the Committee meeting of 8 October 2021 took place in hybrid mode with in-person and remote attendance. The Committee also held one informal meeting, which took place in hybrid mode, on 20 September 2021, under the chairpersonship of Mr. Hsin-lung Hung (Chinese Taipei). On 2 August 2021, through written procedures, the Committee elected Mr. Hsin-lung Hung (Chinese Taipei) by acclamation as Chairperson of the Committee for 2021.<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to the Committee's Rules of Procedure, the officers shall hold office until the end of the first meeting of the following year.
5. Pursuant to Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b) of the Agreement and procedures agreed by the Committee, all Members are required to notify their laws, regulations, and administrative procedures relevant to import licensing and to submit copies of any relevant publications or laws and regulations upon becoming a WTO Member. Any subsequent changes to these laws, regulations, and administrative procedures are also required to be published and notified. Pursuant to subparagraphs 1-4 of Article 5, Members are also required to notify the institution of new import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures to the Committee within 60 days of publication. To streamline notification procedures, a notification form, circulated in document G/LIC/28, was adopted by the Committee, at its formal meeting on 4 April 2019, to be used by Members on a voluntary basis for notifications under Article 5.1-5.4, Article 1.4(a), and Article 8.2(b) of the Agreement. These notifications can be found in document series G/LIC/N/2/-.
6. During the reporting period, the Committee reviewed 81 notifications under these three provisions (Annex I) from the following 16 Members: Argentina; Kingdom of Bahrain; Ecuador;

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<sup>1</sup> Lorena Rivera (Colombia) was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Committee through written procedures by acclamation on 22 September.

European Union; Hong Kong, China; India; Israel; Republic of Korea; Macao, China; Myanmar; Philippines; Chinese Taipei; Tonga; Ukraine; United Kingdom; and United States.<sup>2</sup>

7. Article 5.5 of the Agreement allows Members to submit reverse notifications, where a Member considers that another Member has not notified the institution of a licensing procedure or changes in the procedures. However, no such reverse notifications have been received within the reporting period.

8. Article 7.3 of the Agreement requires all Members to provide replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures<sup>3</sup> by 30 September each year. During the reporting period, the Committee reviewed 35 notifications (Annex II) from the following 29 Members: Albania; Argentina; Australia; Botswana; Canada; Colombia; European Union; Guatemala; Guinea; Honduras; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Israel; Kazakhstan; Republic of Korea; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mali; Mexico; New Zealand; Norway; Panama; Philippines; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Turkey; Ukraine; and United States.<sup>4</sup> These notifications can be found in document series G/LIC/N/3/-.

9. The Committee has provided a regular forum for exchanging views on notifications submitted by Members. Written comments and questions concerning notifications submitted to the Committee and/or on import licensing procedures maintained by Members, and replies thereto, may be found in the document series G/LIC/Q/- . During the review period, Australia posed questions to Indonesia (G/LIC/Q/IDN/44); Canada posed questions to India (G/LIC/Q/IND/28); the European Union posed questions to Egypt (G/LIC/Q/EGY/4 and G/LIC/Q/EGY/7), India (G/LIC/Q/IND/27), and Indonesia (G/LIC/Q/IDN/43); Japan posed questions to Indonesia (G/LIC/Q/IDN/45) and the United States posed follow-up questions to Argentina (G/LIC/Q/ARG/20), the Philippines (G/LIC/Q/PHL/4 and G/LIC/Q/PHL/6), and Tanzania (G/LIC/Q/TZA/1). The following Members provided written responses to comments and questions: Argentina to the United States (G/LIC/Q/ARG/19 and G/LIC/Q/ARG/21); Brazil to the European Union (G/LIC/Q/BRA/26); Egypt to the European Union (G/LIC/Q/EGY/6 and G/LIC/Q/EGY/8) and the United States (G/LIC/Q/EGY/5); Indonesia to Japan (G/LIC/Q/IDN/42); the Philippines to the United States (G/LIC/Q/PHL/5) and the United Kingdom to the Russian Federation (G/LIC/Q/GBR/1). At the Committee's meeting, Members exchanged views on the issues raised.

10. In addition, the following Members requested to include in the agenda specific issues regarding other Members' import licensing regimes and measures. At the Committee meeting(s) held during the review period, the European Union made an oral statement on Angola's import licensing requirements; on Egypt's import licensing requirements for certain agricultural and processed products and importation of ceramics; on India's importation of pneumatic tyres; and on Thailand's importation of feed wheat. In addition, Japan and the European Union made oral statements on Indonesia's (i) import licensing regime for certain textiles products, (ii) compulsory registration by importers of steel products and (iii) import restriction on air conditioners. The United States made oral statements on China's changes to import licensing for certain recoverable materials; on India's import licensing requirement for boric acid, and on Indonesia's import licensing regime for cellphones, handheld computers, and tablets. Indonesia made oral statements on India's import licensing regime on tyres and Sri Lanka's import ban on palm oil; and Australia made an oral statement on Indonesia's import licensing restricting policies and practices. Canada, Australia and the European Union made oral statements on India's quantitative restrictions on certain pulses. Members whose licensing measures had been questioned responded at the meeting and other interested Members also made comments.

11. At the informal meeting held on 20 September 2021, the Chairperson sought Members' views on introducing an e-agenda for the Committee, on online notifications via the Website and on improving and updating the Article 7.3 notification format. The Secretariat made presentations to

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<sup>2</sup> New notifications under Article 5.1-5.4 were received from the European Union (G/LIC/N/2/EU/15 and G/LIC/N/2/EU/16) after the agenda for the 8 October meeting had closed. These notifications will be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting.

<sup>3</sup> Annexed to document G/LIC/3.

<sup>4</sup> New notifications under Article 7.3 were received from Cuba (G/LIC/N/3/CUB/11), Hong Kong, China (G/LIC/N/3/HKG/25), Switzerland (G/LIC/N/3/CHE/17) and the United Kingdom (G/LIC/N/3/GBR/1) after the agenda for the 8 October meeting had closed. These notifications will be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting.

Members on the Import Licensing Website, on an e-learning course on Import Licensing Procedures, on possible online notifications via the Import Licensing Website and on the e-agenda.

12. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no on-the-ground technical assistance activities had been held since March 2020. Nevertheless, from October 2020 to October 2021, the Secretariat organized and participated to several virtual activities focusing on import licensing issues. On-line presentations and interactive workshops were delivered to government officials as part of the e-RTPCs for: (1) Arab and Middle Eastern Members and Observers (in English); (2) Latin American Members (in Spanish); (3) English Speaking African Members (in English). After a pause in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariat resumed its annual workshop on Import Licensing Notifications for Government Officials from WTO Members and Acceding Governments eligible for technical cooperation activities (in English). This activity was held on the Zoom platform and for the first time in virtual mode on 4 to 6 October 2021.

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**ANNEX I: NOTIFICATIONS REVIEWED DURING THE REPORT PERIOD PURSUANT TO  
ARTICLE 1.4(A) AND/OR 8.2(B), ARTICLE 5.1-5.4 OF THE AGREEMENT<sup>1</sup>**

**FROM 10 OCTOBER 2020 TO 8 OCTOBER 2021**

MEMBER	DOCUMENT	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THE DOCUMENT
Argentina	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/Add.8 G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/Add.9 G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/Add.10	10/11/2020 29/04/2021 28/09/2021
Kingdom of Bahrain	G/LIC/N/2/BHR/1-4 G/LIC/N/2/BHR/4/Corr.1 G/LIC/N/2/BHR/5-14	16/02/2021 25/02/2021 16/02/2021
Ecuador	G/LIC/N/2/ECU/1	25/03/2021
European Union	G/LIC/N/2/EU/14	03/02/2021
Hong Kong, China	G/LIC/N/2/HKG/17	29/04/2021
India	G/LIC/N/2/IND/12-17	28/05/2021
Israel	G/LIC/N/2/ISR/5	25/03/2021
Republic of Korea	G/LIC/N/2/KOR/24-41	27/10/2020
Macao, China	G/LIC/N/2/MAC/2 G/LIC/N/2/MAC/3	21/01/2021 17/09/2021
Myanmar	G/LIC/N/2/MMR/3	04/02/2021
Philippines	G/LIC/N/2/PHL/140	25/02/2021
Chinese Taipei	G/LIC/N/2/TPKM/14-17	11/02/2021
Tonga	G/LIC/N/2/TON/1-4 G/LIC/N/2/TON/5-8	03/08/2021 24/08/2021
Ukraine	G/LIC/N/2/UKR/10 G/LIC/N/2/UKR/11-13	28/01/2021 25/03/2021
United Kingdom	G/LIC/N/1/GBR/1 G/LIC/N/1/GBR/1/Add.1 G/LIC/N/2/GBR/1-2 G/LIC/N/2/GBR/3-8 G/LIC/N/2/GBR/8/Corr.1 G/LIC/N/2/GBR/9-11 G/LIC/N/2/GBR/12	18/02/2021 28/09/2021 18/02/2021 24/02/2021 28/09/2021 24/02/2021 28/09/2021
United States	G/LIC/N/2/USA/4 G/LIC/N/2/USA/5	25/02/2021 03/08/2021

<sup>1</sup> New notifications under Article 5.1-5.4 were received from the European Union (G/LIC/N/2/EU/15 and G/LIC/N/2/EU/16) after the agenda for the 8 October meeting had closed. These notifications will be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting.

**ANNEX II: NOTIFICATIONS REVIEWED DURING THE REPORT PERIOD  
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7.3 OF THE AGREEMENT<sup>1</sup>  
FROM 10 OCTOBER 2020 TO 8 OCTOBER 2021**

MEMBER	DOCUMENT (YEAR NOTIFIED FOR)	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THE DOCUMENT
Albania	G/LIC/N/3/ALB/10	2020
Argentina	G/LIC/N/3/ARG/16	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/ARG/17	2021
Australia	G/LIC/N/3/AUS/13	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/AUS/14	2021
Botswana	G/LIC/N/3/BWA/1	2021
Canada	G/LIC/N/3/CAN/20	2021
Colombia	G/LIC/N/3/COL/14	2020/2021
European Union	G/LIC/N/3/EU/10	2021
Guatemala	G/LIC/N/3/GTM/5	2021
Guinea	G/LIC/N/3/GIN/1	2021
Honduras	G/LIC/N/3/HND/11	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/HND/12	2021
Hong Kong, China	G/LIC/N/3/HKG/24	2020
India	G/LIC/N/3/IND/20	2020
Indonesia	G/LIC/N/3/IDN/12	2020
Israel	G/LIC/N/3/ISR/5	2021
Kazakhstan	G/LIC/N/3/KAZ/5	2020
Republic of Korea	G/LIC/N/3/KOR/13	2020
Macao, China	G/LIC/N/3/MAC/24	2021
Malaysia	G/LIC/N/3/MYS/15	2020
Mali	G/LIC/N/3/MLI/10	2021
Mexico	G/LIC/N/3/MEX/7	2020/2021
New Zealand	G/LIC/N/3/NZL/7	2021
Norway	G/LIC/N/3/NOR/10	2021
Panama	G/LIC/N/3/PAN/12	2021
Philippines	G/LIC/N/3/PHL/13/Corr.1	2019
	G/LIC/N/3/PHL/14	2020/2021
Singapore	G/LIC/N/3/SGP/16	2020
Chinese Taipei	G/LIC/N/3/TPKM/10/Corr.1	2019
	G/LIC/N/3/TPKM/11	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/TPKM/12	2021
	G/LIC/N/3/TPKM/12/Corr.1	2021
Turkey	G/LIC/N/3/TUR/17	2020
Ukraine	G/LIC/N/3/UKR/13	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/UKR/14	2021
United States	G/LIC/N/3/USA/17	2020
	G/LIC/N/3/USA/18	2021

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<sup>1</sup> New notifications under Article 7.3 were received from Cuba (G/LIC/N/3/CUB/11), Hong Kong, China (G/LIC/N/3/HKG/25), Switzerland (G/LIC/N/3/CHE/17) and the United Kingdom (G/LIC/N/3/GBR/1) after the agenda for the 8 October meeting had closed. These notifications will be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting.