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REPORT (2014) OF THE COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE EXPANSION OF TRADE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS

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.
2. The Committee has held three formal meetings in 2014: on 17 March, 26 June, and 31 October. The minutes of these meetings are contained in documents G/IT/M/59, G/IT/M/60, and G/IT/M/61. Mr Frederic Payot (Switzerland) was elected Chairman of the Committee for 2014.
3. The total number of participants to the Ministerial Declaration is 80. Since the last report, Afghanistan joined the ITA on 17 March 2014, and the Seychelles on 17 October 2014. Both ITA commitments will be implemented upon accession to the WTO. 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.
4. The Committee continued its deliberations on the Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) Work Programme in 2014. With regard to its work on the EMC/EMI Pilot Project, the Committee took note that, among the 50 participants¹, 29 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 NTMs other than EMC/EMI, the Committee decided to hold an industry-driven workshop further to discuss NTMs in IT sectors. This workshop is scheduled on 7 May 2015.
5. On classification divergences, with regard to the Committee's Decision (G/IT/27) concerning the endorsement of the 18 List I-A items (G/IT/W/34), the Secretariat has been approached by four ITA Participants for technical assistance. For the 37 remaining items as listed in Attachment B or as for Attachment B in section 2 of Attachment A, the Committee discussed a Swiss proposal (JOB/IT/12) and adopted the three steps procedure as outlined in the Swiss proposal.
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 noted 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. One participant still had not yet submitted the necessary documentation.

¹ This number excludes Afghanistan and the Seychelles, and counts the European Union as one.

7. At the meetings of 17 March, 26 June, and 31 October 2014, Participants reported on the bilateral and plurilateral technical consultations initiated by some delegations on product expansion. They also agreed to revert to this matter at future meetings.
