

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/839
12 November 2007

(07-4881)

REPORT (2007) OF THE COMMITTEE ON MARKET ACCESS

1. Since the last review¹, the Committee on Market Access has held two formal meetings (4 April 2007 and 15 October 2007), and three informal dedicated sessions of the Committee (19 January, 24 April and 30 July 2007). The minutes of the formal meetings are contained in documents G/MA/M/44 and G/MA/M/45. In addition, two periodic reports giving an overview of the issues discussed in the Committee and providing factual information on the requests for waivers and waiver extensions related to the Harmonized System are contained in documents G/MA/195 and G/MA/197.
2. At its meeting of 4 April 2007, the Committee took note of the nomination of Dr. Mohammad Saeed (Pakistan) as Chairman of the Committee for the current year and elected him by acclamation. At its meeting of 15 October 2007, the Committee elected Mr. David Riley (United Kingdom) as the Vice-Chairman.

A. INTRODUCTION OF HS96 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

3. At its formal meetings in 2007, the Committee examined the situation related to the submission of HS96 documentation set out in documents G/MA/TAR/2/Rev.39-40. The Committee noted that several Members (see JOB(05)/124/Add.2) had yet to follow the legal procedures contained in GATT document L/6905 to introduce HS96 changes to their schedules. The Committee agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting when Members would have had more time to reflect on how to address the situation.

B. INTRODUCTION OF HS2002 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

4. At its meetings in 2007, the Secretariat reported on the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2002 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database as well as on the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee in which the HS02 files of Members were examined. The Committee was informed that the number of files that had passed the multilateral review had almost reached 80% of the membership. The Chairman reported on his activities to obtain approvals from those Members whose files had been approved by all other delegations except their own. At its meeting of 15 October 2007, the Committee approved the extension of the HS2002 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/585). It was noted that not all Members currently listed in the annex would need to be covered by the waiver as *inter alia* they had already completed the HS02 exercise. Finally, the Committee took note of information provided by the Chairman on a question which had been raised about the legal implications of certifying a tariff line which was unaffected by an HS02 change but whose binding level had been increased.

C. INTRODUCTION OF HS2007 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

5. In 2007, the Committee took note of the reports by the Secretariat on the status of work in incorporating HS2007 changes to schedules. Regarding the HS2007 "collective" waiver which

¹ G/L/801 (dated 13 November 2006).

expires on 31 December 2007, the Committee noted that Thailand, Mexico and Pakistan had requested and become covered by that waiver decision. Their communications had been circulated as addenda to the original waiver decision contained in document WT/L/675. At its meeting in October, the Committee approved the extension of the HS2007 "collective" waiver decision (G/C/W/584).

D. DATABASES

6. With reference to the modalities and operation of the Integrated Data Base (IDB), the Committee, at its formal meetings in 2007, examined the status of IDB submissions on the basis of documents G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.25-26. The Secretariat also reported on the status of IDB dissemination, use of IDB information, IDB technical assistance, status of submissions, and the status of software development (IDB reporting tools and internet analysis facility). In this regard, the Committee was informed that the IDB and CTS data had been used, for *inter alia* the calculation of AVEs, responding to requests arising from the negotiations, the preparation of the World Tariff Profiles which had been co-produced with the ITC and UNCTAD and the publication of the HS6-digit summaries. The Secretariat also reported on the work undertaken on the Consolidated Tariff Schedules Database.

7. In 2007, the Committee approved the requests for access to the IDB and CTS database from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (G/MA/W/86), International Coffee Organization (ICO) (G/MA/W/87) and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) (G/MA/W/88).

E. PARAGRAPH 18 OF THE PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA – CHINA'S TRANSITIONAL REVIEW MECHANISM

8. The review took place at the meeting of 15 October 2007. Questions/comments to China were submitted by the European Communities (G/MA/W/91), Japan (G/MA/W/90) and the United States (G/MA/W/89). China submitted the information required by Annex I of its Protocol of Accession in document G/MA/W/92. The Committee's report to the Council for Trade in Goods on the review is contained in G/MA/196 and corr.1.

F. OTHER ACTIVITIES

9. The Committee noted the Secretariat document which provided details on the most recent information available in the tariff library and the website addresses where more recent national tariffs could be found (G/MA/TAR/3/Rev.11). The Committee also took note of the Secretariat document entitled "Situation of Schedules of WTO Members" (G/MA/W/23/Rev.4).
