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Page: 1/2

**Council for Trade in Goods
Committee on Safeguards**

WTO RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**REPORT TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS
BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON SAFEGUARDS**

The following report is being submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee on Safeguards ("the SG Committee"), Ms Maryam Abdulaziz Aldoseri, at the request of the Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Goods¹, and was prepared with the assistance of the Secretariat.

INFORMATION FOR THE CTG REPORT ON COVID-19 RELATED ACTIONS

Committee work

As a result of the pandemic-related lockdown, the SG Committee meeting scheduled for the week of 27 April 2020 was cancelled.² At the 17 April 2020 meeting of the Heads of Delegations, the DG urged Chairs to consult with Members on how to proceed with the work of the regular Committees.

Upon the call by the DG, the Chairperson of the SG Committee, together with the Chairpersons of the Committee on Antidumping Practices and the Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, initiated informal consultations with Members. During these consultations the Chairs (i) explained that they were reaching out to see how to proceed with the work of the Committees, noting that there was a back log of different meetings that had not happened, and it was not certain when the meetings would be held; and (ii) informed Members what was on the agendas for the April 2020 meetings and asked whether it would be agreeable to have virtual meetings to discuss any/some/all of these items or a written process for certain agenda items.

On 13 May 2020, the Chairs of the three Committees informed Members that no consensus could be reached about holding the meetings remotely, or having a written exchange of questions and answers, or a combination of both.

On 5 June 2020, the Chairs of the three Committees sent another communication to the Membership reminding delegations of the Committees' decisions on having the regular meetings in the last weeks of April and October. This reminder was sent to Members in order to set the dates of the fall meetings of the Committees. In this communication, the Chairs also asked Members to contact them if any Member had any objections to holding the meetings in the week of 26 October 2020.

As no objection was raised by the deadline set by the Chairs, the Secretariat circulated the so-called "deadlines document" containing the specific dates by which Members should submit the various documentation in conjunction with the October 2020 meetings of the three Committees.

Since October 2020, the SG Committee meetings have taken place in hybrid mode, with some delegates attending in person and others joining via a virtual platform.

¹ JOB/CTG/18.

² Communication sent by the DG to the Heads of Delegations dated 14 March 2020.

Transparency

In accordance with Article 12.6 of the Agreement, a Member submitted several legislative notifications illustrating the procedural adaptations it undertook in its trade remedies investigations as a result of COVID-19.

Dedicated COVID-19 related activities or discussions in the Committee

Two Members requested to place an item on the agenda of the October 2020 meeting pertaining to Members' safeguards investigation procedures during the pandemic. Members explored, in an informal mode, whether competent authorities had made any adjustments to their laws, practices or procedures as they continued to operate during the pandemic period and the different approaches followed by Members in this respect.
