



**Council for Trade in Goods
Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures**

WTO RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

**REPORT TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS
BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE ON SUBSIDIES AND COUNTERVAILING MEASURES**

The following report is being submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM Committee), Ms Sally Bardayán Rivera, at the request of the Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Goods¹, and was prepared with the assistance of the Secretariat.

1 INFORMATION FOR THE CTG REPORT ON COVID-19 RELATED ACTIONS

1.1 Committee work

As a result of the pandemic-related lockdown, the SCM 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 SCM Committee, together with the Chairpersons of the Committees on Anti-Dumping Practices and Safeguards 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 backlog 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 autumn 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 SCM 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.

1.2 Transparency

In accordance with Article 32.6 of the Agreement, four Members submitted legislative notifications illustrating the procedural adaptations they undertook in their trade remedies investigations as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

In accordance with Article 25.1 of the Agreement and Article XVI of GATT 1994, all Members were required to submit new and full notifications of subsidies by 30 June 2021. As of 9 November 2022, nine Members submitted subsidy notifications which contain references to pandemic related measures.³

1.3 Dedicated COVID-19 related activities or discussions in the Committee

Over the past two years, the Committee has neither undertaken any specific activities in the context of the pandemic nor had dedicated discussions about measures taken by Members to address the pandemic.

³ In total, 38 Members have notified measures and 10 Members have notified that they did not maintain any notifiable subsidies (the European Union is counted as one member).