

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Council for Trade in Goods

COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

Report to the General Council on the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce

1. In paragraph 34 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, Ministers agreed to continue the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, and instructed the General Council to consider the most appropriate institutional arrangements for handling the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce and to report on further progress to the Fifth Session of the Ministerial Conference. Pursuant to this mandate, the General Council agreed at its meeting on 15 October 2002 to maintain, for the duration of the work until the Fifth Ministerial Conference, the current institutional arrangements for handling the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce, namely that the Councils for Trade in Services, Trade in Goods, and TRIPS, and the Committee on Trade and Development would examine and report on aspects of electronic commerce relevant to their respective areas of competence, and that the General Council would play a central role in the entire process, would keep the Work Programme under continuous review and would consider any trade-related issue of a cross-cutting nature.

2. Since the Doha Ministerial Conference, the Council for Trade in Goods (CTG) had not undertaken any discussion under the Work Programme on Electronic Commerce due to the fact that the horizontal issues remained under discussion in the General Council. At its meeting on 12 June 2003, the Committee took note of the Chairman's statement that the CTG had gone as far as it could on the technical goods matters given the unresolved horizontal issues, most importantly the classification issue, that were under consideration in the dedicated discussions on cross-cutting issues under the auspices of the General Council.