

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/876
8 December 2008

(08-6050)

REPORT (2008) OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

In accordance with the "Procedures for an Annual Overview of WTO Activities and for Reporting under the WTO" (WT/L/105), the Council for Trade in Goods is to report each year to the General Council on the activities in the Council as well as in the subsidiary bodies. The reports are to be "factual in nature, containing an indication of actions and decisions taken, with cross references to reports of subordinate bodies and could follow the model of the GATT 1947 Council reports to the CONTRACTING PARTIES".

Since the CTG 2007 annual report (G/L/845) was issued, the Council for Trade in Goods has met four times in formal session on the following dates: 11 March 2008 (G/C/M/92); 22 May 2008 (G/C/M/93); 1 July 2008 (G/C/M/94); and 18 November 2008 (G/C/M/951¹).

The subject matters which were raised and/or acted upon in the Council are as follows:

1. Election of Chairperson
2. Appointment of officers
3. Matters of the Committee on Market Access
4. Waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement
5. EC enlargement
6. Notification of regional trade agreements
7. Issues related to trade in textiles
8. Notifications
9. Transitional Review under Paragraph 18 of the Protocol on the Accession of the People's Republic of China
10. Consideration of annual reports of subsidiary bodies

1. Election of Chairperson for the Council for Trade in Goods

At its meeting of 11 March the Council elected H.E. Ambassador Karen Tan (Singapore) as its Chairman for 2008.

2. Appointment of Officers for the subsidiary bodies of the Council

At its meeting of 11 March, the Council agreed on the nominations of the following persons for election as Chairpersons of its subsidiary bodies:

Committee on Market Access	Mr. Mohammad SAEED (Pakistan)
Committee on Agriculture	Ms. Valeria CSUKASI (Uruguay)
Committee on Sanitary & Phytosanitary Measures	Mr. Marinus HUIGE (Netherlands)
Committee on Anti-Dumping Practices	Mr. Jorge HUERTA GOLDMAN (Mexico)

¹ To be issued.

Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures	Mr. Jun KAZEKI (Japan)
Committee on Safeguards	Mr. Robert KASPER (United States)
Committee on Import Licensing	Mr. Marco J. KASSAJA (Tanzania)
Committee on Rules of Origin	Ms. Vera THORSTENSEN (Brazil)
Committee on Customs Valuation	Ms. Octavia CERCHEZ (Romania)
Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade	Ms. Xueyan GUO (China)
Committee on TRIMS	Mr. Henry LIU (Chinese Taipei)
Committee on State Trading Enterprises	Ms. Virág DANI (Hungary)
Committee of Participants on the Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products (ITA Committee)	Mr. Khalid EMARA (Egypt)

At the same meeting, the Council agreed to proceed on the understanding that as concerns Vice-Chairpersons, it would be for the subsidiary bodies to decide if they needed a Vice-Chairperson in cases where the option existed under the respective Agreement and/or rules of procedure, and for the respective Chairperson to hold the necessary consultations.

3. Matters of the Committee on Market Access

At its meetings on 22 May and 18 November the Council took note of the periodic reports (in documents G/MA/198 and G/MA/216) of the Committee on Market Access.

4. Waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement

- (a) Introduction of Harmonized System 1996 changes into WTO Schedules of tariff concessions
Requests for extensions of waiver (Argentina – G/C/W/596; Panama – G/C/W/595)

At its meeting on 22 May, the Council considered requests from Argentina and Panama for extensions of waivers in connection with the introduction of HS96 changes to their Schedules of concessions. The Council approved the waiver requests and recommended that the draft decisions contained in the cited G/C/W/- documents be forwarded to the General Council for adoption.

- (b) Introduction of Harmonized System 2002 changes into WTO Schedules of tariff concessions
– Requests for a waiver (G/C/W/601/Rev.1)

At its meeting on 18 November, the Council considered a collective request for an extension of the waiver in connection with the introduction of HS2002 changes to the Schedules of concessions. The Council approved the waiver request and recommended that the draft decision contained in the cited G/C/W/- document be forwarded to the General Council for adoption.

- (c) Introduction of Harmonized System 2007 changes into WTO Schedules of tariff concessions
– Requests for a waiver (G/C/W/602)

At its meeting on 18 November, the Council considered a collective request for a waiver in connection with the introduction of HS 2007 changes to the Schedules of concessions. The Council approved the waiver request and recommended that the draft decision contained in the cited G/C/W/- document be forwarded to the General Council for adoption.

- (d) United States – Request for waiver for the African Growth and Opportunity Act, the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, as amended and the ANDEAN Trade Promotion Act, as amended (G/C/W/508/Rev.1; G/C/W/509/Rev.1; G/C/W/510/Rev.1)

The Council continued its consideration of these requests and their accompanying draft decisions at its meetings on 11 March, 22 May, 1 July, and 18 November.

- (e) Senegal – Request for an extension of the waiver for continued use of minimum values for customs valuation purposes (G/C/W/581; G/C/W/582 and Add.1; G/C/W/594)

At its meeting on 11 March and 22 May the Council considered a request from Senegal for an extension of its existing waiver allowing the use of minimum values for customs valuation purposes. At its meeting on 22 May, the Council approved the waiver request and recommended that the draft decision contained in G/C/W/594 be forwarded to the General Council for adoption.

- (f) European Communities – Request for a waiver for the Application of the European Union Autonomous Preferential Treatment to Moldova (G/C/W/592)

At its meetings of 11 March the Council considered a request from the European Communities for a waiver for the application of the European Union Autonomous Preferential Treatment to Moldova. At this meeting, the Council approved the waiver request on an ad referendum basis. If no comments were received from Members in ten days, the draft decision contained in G/C/W/592 would be forwarded to the General Council for adoption. No comments were received.

5. EC enlargement (G/L/695/Add.4; G/L/695/Add.5; G/L/695/Add.6; G/L/695/Add.7; G/L/695/Add.8; G/L/821; G/L/821/Add.1; G/L/821/Add.2; G/L/821/Add.3)

At its meetings on 22 May and 18 November, the Council agreed on the extension of the deadlines set out in the communications from the EC (G/L/695/Add.7; G/L/821/Add.2 and G/L/695/Add.8; G/L/821/Add.3, respectively).

6. Notification of Regional Trade Agreements

At its meetings on 11 March, 22 May, and 18 November, the Council was informed of the following notifications of regional trade agreements :

- A. Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related matters between the European Communities and Montenegro in document WT/REG236/N/1
- B. Free Trade Agreement between Pakistan and China in document WT/REG237/N/1
- C. Free Trade Agreement between Chile and Panama in document WT/REG239/N/1;
- D. Free Trade Agreement between Turkey and Albania in document WT/REG240/N/1
- E. Agreement between Japan and Indonesia for an Economic Partnership in document WT/REG241/N/1;
- F. Free Trade Agreement between the European Communities and Bosnia and Herzegovina in document WT/REG242/N/1;
- G. Free Trade Agreement between Iceland and the Faroe Islands in document WT/REG243/N/1;
- H. Agreement between Brunei Darussalam and Japan for an Economic Partnership in document WT/REG244/N/1;

- I. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Azerbaijan in document WT/REG245/N/1;
- J. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Belarus in document WT/REG246/N/1;
- K. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Kazakhstan (WT/REG247/N/1);
- L. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and the Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia in document WT/REG248/N/1;
- M. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Moldova in document WT/REG249/N/1;
- N. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Russian Federation in document WT/REG250/N/1;
- O. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Tajikistan in document WT/REG251/N/1;
- P. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Turkmenistan in document WT/REG252/N/1;
- Q. Free Trade Agreement between Ukraine and Uzbekistan in document WT/REG253/N/1;
- R. Common Economic Zone in document WT/REG254/N/1;
- S. Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Communities and the CARIFORUM States in document WT/REG255/N/1; and
- T. Free Trade Agreement between the EFTA States and the SACU States in document WT/REG256/N/1.

7. Issues Related to Trade in Textiles (G/C/W/522; G/C/W/549; G/C/W/573 and Corr.1; G/C/W/599)

At its meeting on 11 March, the Council continued its discussion of the proposals contained in documents G/C/W/549; G/C/W/573 and Corr.1. At the meeting on 22 May, in addition to the previous documents, the Council received a new submission from Turkey in document G/C/W/599. At its meetings on 1 July and 18 November the Council continued its consideration of the proposal in document G/C/W/599.

8. Notifications

Status of notifications under the provisions of the Agreements in Annex 1A of the WTO Agreement

At its meeting on 11 March, the Council took note of the latest revision of the status of notifications contained in document G/L/223/Rev.15.

9. Transitional Review under paragraph 18 of the Protocol on the Accession of the People's Republic of China

At its meeting on 18 November, the Council took note of the reports of the CTG subsidiary bodies which had carried out their reviews, and carried out the CTG-specific review with respect to the information requirements stipulated in Annex 1A of the Protocol of Accession. The Council agreed to send the report (G/L/875), together with the reports of the subsidiary bodies, to the General Council.

10. Consideration of annual reports of subsidiary bodies of the CTG

At its meeting on 18 November, the Council took note of the annual reports of its subsidiary bodies.
