

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/203

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(97-4876)

Committee on Import Licensing

REPORT (1997) OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING

1. The Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures (the Agreement) establishes disciplines on users of import licensing systems with the principal objective of ensuring that the procedures applied for granting import licences do not in themselves restrict trade. It aims to simplify, clarify and minimize the administrative requirements necessary to obtain import licences.
2. The Committee on Import Licensing (the Committee) was established to afford Members the opportunity of consulting on any matters relating to the operation of the Agreement or the furtherance of its objectives.
3. All Members of the WTO are *ipso facto* members of the Committee. Observer governments in the General Council of the WTO have observer status in the Committee. In addition, representatives of the IMF, UNCTAD and the World Bank attend meetings of the Committee in an observer capacity.
4. The Committee held two meetings on 22 April and 15 October 1997 (G/LIC/M/5 and 6). The Committee at its meeting in April 1997 elected Mr. Tomasz Jodko (Poland) as Chairman and Mr. Rossman Ithnain (Singapore) as Vice-Chairman for 1997. Pursuant to the Committee's Rules of Procedure, they took office at the end of that meeting.
5. Pursuant to Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b) of the Agreement, all Members are required to notify their laws, regulations and administrative procedures relevant to import licensing. During the period covered by this report, the Committee received notifications from Australia; Bahrain; Benin; Bolivia; Bulgaria; Burkina Faso; European Communities; Fiji; Honduras; Hong Kong, China; Hungary; India; Japan; Korea; Liechtenstein; Mauritius; Norway; Singapore; Slovenia; Switzerland; Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates. Since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, 44 Members (the European Communities and its member States counted as one) have notified their legislation and/or publications under these provisions. These notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/1/-.
6. Article 7.3 of the Agreement requires all Members to provide replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures¹ by 30 September each year. Since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, 45 Members (the European Communities and its member States counted as one) have made notifications under this provision. This includes replies to the Questionnaire from 11 Members in 1995, 22 Members in 1996 and 21 Members in 1997. During the period covered by this report, the Committee received notifications from Australia; Bolivia; Brunei Darussalam; Bulgaria; Burkina Faso; Canada; Chile; Colombia; European Communities; Fiji; Gambia; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Korea; Liechtenstein; Mali; Namibia; New Zealand; Norway; Philippines; Poland; Senegal; Singapore; Slovenia; South Africa; Switzerland; Tunisia and Uganda. These notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/3/-.

¹Annexed to document G/LIC/3.

7. The Committee also received pursuant to Article 5 of the Agreement notifications relating to the institution of new import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures from Argentina; European Communities; Hong Kong, China; Liechtenstein; South Africa and Switzerland. These notifications may be found in document series G/LIC/N/2/-.

8. The Committee has provided a regular forum for the discussion of specific notifications submitted by Members and of concerns regarding notifications. It should be noted that the mandatory notification requirements under Articles 1.4(a), 8.2(b) and 7.3 are complied with only by about half of WTO Members. The Annex reflects the current status of notifications. In light of this situation, the Committee, recognizing the importance of notifications for the effective implementation and functioning of the Agreement, urges Members to fulfil their notification obligations.

ANNEX

- (i) Notifications of legislation and/or publications (Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b)) received from:
(44) (G/LIC/N/1/- series)

Argentina	Fiji	Pakistan
Australia	Honduras	Peru
Bahrain	Hong Kong, China	Romania
Barbados	Hungary	Singapore
Benin	India	Slovenia
Bolivia	Jamaica	Swaziland
Bulgaria	Japan	Switzerland
Burkina Faso	Korea	Tunisia
Canada	Liechtenstein	Turkey
Chile	Malta	Uganda
Colombia	Mauritius	United Arab Emirates
Costa Rica	Morocco	United States
Cuba	New Zealand	Uruguay
Cyprus	Nicaragua	Zimbabwe
EC	Norway	

- (ii) Replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures (Article 7.3) received from:
(45) (G/LIC/N/3/- series) The date of latest communication is indicated within brackets.

Argentina (24.1.96)	Gambia (31.10.97)	Peru (27.8.96)
Australia (28.4.97)	Hong Kong, China (25.9.97)	Philippines (25.10.96)
Barbados (15.9.95)	Hungary (8.10.96)	Poland (7.10.97)
Bolivia (28.10.96)	India (29.11.95)	Romania (4.9.96)
Brunei Dar. (4.3.97)	Japan (21.10.96)	Senegal (20.1.97)
Bulgaria (20.3.97)	Korea (24.10.96)	Singapore (21.10.96)
Burkina Faso(8.1.97)	Liechtenstein (18.4.97)	Slovenia (6.6.97)
Canada (2.10.97)	Mali (9.5.97)	South Africa (13.5.97)
Chile (9.9.97)	Malta (15.5.95)	Switzerland (14.4.97)
Colombia (29.11.96)	Mauritius (2.11.95)	Trinidad & Tobago (17.1.96)
Costa Rica(21.11.95)	Morocco (3.7.96)	Tunisia (31.10.96)
Cyprus (29.4.96)	Namibia (28.2.97)	Turkey (20.5.96)
Ecuador (1.8.95)	New Zealand (25.10.96)	Uganda (17.6.97)
EC (29.7.97)	Nigeria (17.7.96)	United States (29.9.95)
Fiji (1.4.97)	Norway (3.11.97)	Uruguay (4.9.96)

- (iii) Notifications of institution of import licensing procedures or changes therein (Article 5) received from: (11) (G/LIC/N/2/- series)

Argentina	Nigeria
EC	Pakistan
Hong Kong, China	Romania
Japan	South Africa
Liechtenstein	Switzerland
Malaysia	

- (iv) Developing countries which have invoked the two-year delayed application provisions (footnote 5 to Article 2.2): (24) (G/LIC/1 and Adds. 1-3)

Bangladesh (as from 1.1.95)	Dominican Republic (9.3.95)	Myanmar (1.1.95)
Bolivia (13.9.95)	El Salvador (7.5.95)	Sri Lanka (1.1.95)
Brazil (1.1.95)	Gabon (1.1.95)	Thailand (1.1.95)
Burkina Faso (3.6.95)	Guatemala (21.7.95)	Tunisia (29.3.95)
Cameroon (13.12.95)	Honduras (1.1.95)	Turkey (26.3.95)
Colombia (30.4.95)	Indonesia (1.1.95)	United Arab Emirates (10.4.96)
Costa Rica (1.1.95)	Kenya (1.1.95)	Uruguay (1.1.95)
Côte d'Ivoire (1.1.95)	Malaysia (1.1.95)	Venezuela (1.1.95)