

REPORT (2006) OF THE COMMITTEE ON MARKET ACCESS

1. Since the last review¹, the Committee on Market Access has held five formal meetings (4 April 2006, 4 October, a resumed meeting on 16 October, and both a resumed and a formal meeting on 3 November 2006), and five informal dedicated sessions (25 January, 23 May, 27 July, 16 October and 3 November 2006). The minutes of the formal meetings are contained in documents G/MA/M/41, G/MA/M/42, G/MA/M/42/Add.1, G/MA/M/42/Add.2 and G/MA/M/43. In addition, two periodic reports giving an overview of the issues discussed in the Committee and providing factual information on the requests for waivers and waiver extensions related to the Harmonized System are contained in documents G/MA/191 and G/MA/193.

2. At its meeting of 4 April 2006, the Committee took note of the nomination of Dr. Mohammad Saeed (Pakistan) as Chairman of the Committee for the current year and elected him by acclamation. At that meeting, it was agreed that informal consultations would be carried out in order to elect a Vice-Chair for the current year. At its meeting of 4 October 2006, the Committee elected Mr. Fakhry Hazimeh (Jordan) as its Vice-Chair.

A. INTRODUCTION OF HS96 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

3. At its formal meetings in 2006, the Committee examined the situation related to the submission of HS96 documentation set out in documents G/MA/TAR/2/Rev.37-38.

B. INTRODUCTION OF HS2002 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

4. At its meetings in 2006, the Secretariat reported on the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2002 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database as well as on the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee in which the HS02 Files of Members were examined (JOB(06)/8/Rev.1-3). It was noted that the files of 36 Members had been approved, but could not be certified because the approval from the Member concerned was still pending. It was also noted that the HS02 files of 5 Members could be forwarded for certification. At its meeting of 4 October 2006, the Committee considered the extension of the HS2002 "collective" waiver (G/MA/W/80 and G/MA/W/80/Add.1) and agreed to include Macao, China in the annex. A revised version of the waiver was subsequently circulated in document G/MA/W/80/Rev.1.

C. INTRODUCTION OF HS2007 CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

5. At its meeting of 4 April 2006, the Committee took note of the correlation tables between HS2002 and HS2007 which had been submitted by the WCO (G/MA/W/76). The Committee also agreed that the Secretariat should elaborate procedures to incorporate HS2007 changes to schedules using as a basis the HS2002 procedures which were adopted by the General Council in 2005 (WT/L/605). It was noted that any decision on procedures for the HS2007 exercise would be subject to funding being available to undertake this work, and the Secretariat would look into it. It was also

¹ G/L/748 (dated 18 October 2005).

agreed that at its next meeting, the Committee would consider a draft HS2007 "collective" waiver decision to be elaborated by the Secretariat which would be based on the existing HS2002 "collective" waiver decision.

6. At its meeting of 4 October 2006, the Committee suspended the consideration of the draft procedures to incorporate HS2007 changes to schedules and the draft HS2007 "collective" waiver decision. At its resumed meeting of 16 October 2006, the Committee considered the draft HS2007 waiver decision (G/MA/W/82) and agreed to forward a modified version to the CTG. The revised version was circulated in document G/MA/W/82/Rev.1. At its resumed meeting of 3 November 2006, the Committee considered the draft procedures to incorporate HS2007 changes to schedules (G/MA/W/81/Rev.1) and agreed to forward them to the CTG.

D. DATABASES

7. With reference to the modalities and operation of the Integrated Data Base (IDB), the Committee, at its formal meetings in 2006, examined the status of IDB submissions on the basis of documents G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.23-24. At these meetings, the Secretariat reported on the status of IDB dissemination, use of IDB information, IDB technical assistance, status of submissions, and the status of software development (IDB reporting tools and internet analysis facility). Also during these meetings, the Committee took note of the Secretariat reports on the work undertaken on the Consolidated Tariff Schedules Database.

8. In 2006, the Committee approved the request for access to the IDB and CTS database from the European Free Trade Association (G/MA/W/73), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (G/MA/W/75) and the African Union (G/MA/W/84).

E. PARAGRAPH 18 OF THE PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA – CHINA'S TRANSITIONAL REVIEW MECHANISM

9. The review took place at the meeting of 4 October 2006. Questions and/or comments were circulated by the European Communities (G/MA/W/79), Japan (G/MA/W/77) and the United States (G/MA/W/78). China submitted the information required by Annex 1 of its Protocol of Accession in document G/MA/W/83. The Committee completed its review and agreed to forward its report in G/MA/194 to the Council for Trade in Goods.

F. OTHER ACTIVITIES

10. In 2006, the Committee took note of the status of notifications under the Decision on Notification Procedures for Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) (G/L/59) on the basis of a Secretariat document (G/MA/NTM/QR/1Add.10). It also took note that no new notifications pursuant to the Decision on Reverse Notification of Non Tariff Measures (G/L/60) had been made since the Secretariat document G/MA/NTM/W/3/Rev.1 was prepared in 2001.

11. The Committee noted the Secretariat document which provided details on the most recent information available in the tariff library and the website addresses where more recent national tariffs could be found (G/MA/TAR/3/Rev.10 and Corr.1). In addition, the Committee noted that certain tariff commitments, as described in JOB(05)/167 and Corr.1, that were approved at the end of the Uruguay Round, but which had not entered into force due to legal technicalities, had now been certified (see JOB(05)/167/Add.1).
