

# WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/656  
4 November 2003

(03-5896)

## REPORT (2003) OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF ORIGIN TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

1. This report is being submitted to the CTG in accordance with Article 6.1 of the Agreement on Rules of Origin (the Agreement), which provides as follows:

"The Committee shall review annually the implementation and operation of **Parts II and III** of this Agreement having regard to its objectives (emphasis added). The Committee shall annually inform the Council for Trade in Goods of developments during the period covered by such reviews."

2. Since its regular report to the CTG adopted on 15 November 2002 (G/L/593), the Committee on Rules of Origin (CRO) held one meeting on 3 October 2003 (G/RO/M/43). The CRO elected Mr. Syed Habib Ahmed (Pakistan) as Chairman for 2003. Observer governments in the General Council of the WTO have observer status in the CRO. In addition, representatives of the ACP, EFTA, IADB, IMF, ITCB, OECD, UNCTAD, WCO and the World Bank attend meetings of the CRO in the capacity of observers.

3. With regard to ***the work under Part II*** of the Agreement, the CRO discussed the issue "transitional review under paragraph 18 of the Protocol of Accession of the People's Republic of China".

4. With regard to ***the work under Part III*** of the Agreement, the CRO, took note of the notifications under Article 5 and paragraph 4 of Annex II of the Agreement. To date 84 Members have made notifications of non-preferential rules of origin and 89 Members have made notifications of preferential rules of origin. The Chairman expressed concern that a number of Members had not yet complied with the notification requirements. He urged Members who had not yet notified to do so as early as possible.

5. Apart from the above-summarized implementation and operation of **Parts II and III** of the Agreement, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the CRO, at the request of the Chairman of the General Council, have conducted intense consultations with Members in order to resolve the 94 core policy issues with regard to the Harmonization Work Programme under **Part IV** of the Agreement. The CRO, in July 2002, forwarded 93 core policy issues as well as the implications issue to the General Council for discussion and decision at that level (G/RO/52; WT/GC/M/75); since then the matter has been in the hands of the General Council. The General Council, at its meeting on 24-25 July 2003, extended the deadline for completion of the 94 core policy issues to July 2004. The General Council also agreed that following resolution of these core policy issues, the CRO would complete its remaining technical work by 31 December 2004.