



29 October 2015

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REPORT (2015) OF THE COMMITTEE ON MARKET ACCESS TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

1. Since the last review¹, the Committee on Market Access has held two formal meetings (4 June and 29 September 2015) and four informal meetings (9 March, 23 April, 7 July, and 28 September 2015). The minutes of the formal meetings are contained in documents G/MA/M/61 and G/MA/M/62 (to be issued).
2. At its meeting of 4 June, the Committee took note of the nomination of Ms. Krizia Matthews (Panama) as Chairperson of the Committee for the current year and elected her by acclamation. At its meeting of 22 October, the Committee elected Ms. Katarzyna Stecz (Poland) as Vice-Chairperson.

1 WAIVERS

3. At its meeting of 29 September 2015, the Committee approved the extension of the HS2002 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/715), the HS2007 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/716) and the HS2012 "collective" waiver (G/C/W/717). The Committee agreed to forward the draft waiver decisions to the Council for Trade in Goods for appropriate action.

2 INTRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED SYSTEM 1996 (HS1996) CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

4. At its meetings in 2015, the Committee took note of the status of the HS1996 transposition work undertaken pursuant to the procedures contained in L/6905 and WT/L/756.

3 INTRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED SYSTEM 2002 (HS2002) CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

5. At its meetings in 2015, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2002 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/605 and WT/L/807), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2002 changes of Members were examined.

4 INTRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED SYSTEM 2007 (HS2007) CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

6. At its meetings in 2014, the Committee took note of the status of work concerning the introduction of HS2007 changes to schedules of concessions using the CTS database (WT/L/673 and WT/L/830), as well as the outcomes of the informal dedicated sessions of the Committee during which the files containing the HS2007 changes of Members were examined.

5 INTRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED SYSTEM 2012 (HS2012) CHANGES TO SCHEDULES OF CONCESSIONS

7. At its meetings of 15 May, the Committee took note that the Secretariat had not commenced the transposition work as the focus was on moving ahead with the HS2007 exercise. At its meeting of 29 September, the Committee took note that two HS2012 submissions had been received:

¹ G/L/1084, dated 4 November 2014.

United States (3 October 2012) and New Zealand (4 September 2015). The Committee also took note that the Secretariat has started the technical work for the HS2012 transposition exercise.

6 DECISION ON NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ("QR DECISION")

8. During its meetings in 2015, the Committee examined the quantitative restriction notifications submitted by several Members and took note of the document prepared by the Secretariat (G/MA/QR/3), which reflected the status of such notifications. At its formal meeting of 4 June, the Committee took note of a report by the Secretariat entitled "Quantitative Restrictions: Factual Information on Notifications Received" (G/MA/W/114), and agreed to a proposal by the European Union to organize a dedicated session on QR notifications during the workshop on Import Licensing notifications that Members had agreed to hold in October back-to-back with the Import Licensing Committee meeting.²

7 DATABASES

9. At its formal meetings in 2015, the Secretariat reported on the status of work concerning the Integrated Data Base (IDB) and the Consolidated Tariff Schedules (CTS) database. The reports provided information on *inter alia* the use of information in the databases, the status of software development and technical assistance. The Committee also took note of the documents which reflected the status of submissions to the IDB (G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.41 and G/MA/IDB/2/Rev.42).

8 DERESTRICTION OF NEGOTIATING MATERIAL OF EARLIER GATT ROUNDS

10. At its formal meeting of 4 June, the Committee considered a draft Decision (G/MA/W/115) which had been elaborated pursuant to the procedures contained in G/MA/287 and that proposed to derestrict the negotiating material of the Tokyo Round. The Committee approved the Decision on an *ad referendum* basis with a view to giving additional time to one delegation. In a letter dated 7 September 2015, the delegation concerned informed the Secretariat that its internal review had been concluded, and that it did not object to the derestriction of the documents covered by the draft Decision in G/MA/W/115. Therefore, the Committee agreed on that date to transmit the draft Decision through the Council for Trade in Goods to the General Council for adoption. The Secretariat issued a revised draft in document G/MA/W/115/Rev.1.

9 OTHER ACTIVITIES

11. At its meetings in June, the Committee took note of the Secretariat document entitled "Situation of Schedules of WTO Members" (G/MA/W/23/Rev.11 and G/MA/W/23/Rev.11/Corr.1), which compiled in one place the legal instruments relating to each Member's schedule.

12. At its June and September meetings, the Committee took note of the following specific concerns:

- European Union (Argentina – Tax discrimination against imported vehicles);
 - European Union (Pakistan – discriminatory taxes);
 - Switzerland (Kingdom of Bahrain – customs duties on cigarettes); and
 - The United States and the European Union (Colombia - excise taxes on alcoholic beverages).
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² Consultations are still ongoing in the Committee on Import Licensing concerning this workshop.