

**Council for Trade-Related Aspects
of Intellectual Property Rights
Special Session**

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRIPS

Report by the Chairman, Ambassador Manzoor Ahmad,
to the Trade Negotiations Committee

1. This report on the negotiations on the establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications for wines and spirits is submitted on my own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of delegations. This report covers the work since my last report of 26 July 2006 (TN/IP/16), during which period I have had open-ended informal meetings and consultations in a variety of formats.
2. No new proposals have been made and the three proposals set out side by side in document TN/IP/W/12 of September 2005 continue to be those on the table in the Special Session.¹ In the light of consultations that I held in December 2006 and February 2007, an addendum to this document, dated 4 May 2007, has been circulated compiling the points raised and views expressed in the Special Sessions' discussions of these proposals (TN/IP/W/12/Add.1 and Corr.1). This is intended to facilitate the further consideration by participants of the issues under negotiation by setting out in one place the issues raised and views expressed.
3. While there is little to report in regard to work of a formal nature, the last few months have seen more sign than had been evident earlier of consultations among certain delegations aimed at ensuring a proper understanding of each other's positions and concerns and exploring possible ways forward. I consider this to be a positive development. Nonetheless, it is my understanding that the major differences dividing delegations remain essentially unchanged, in particular in regard to the questions of the legal effects of a registration of a geographical indication and participation. The negotiations on the register are of course affected by the overall state of the negotiations in the Round as a whole and the linkages that some delegations are making, as well as by the existence of other initiatives regarding the protection of geographical indications.
4. I believe that the considerable amount of technical work that has been done so far and the mutual understanding of each other's positions and concerns that has been generated will stand the negotiators in good stead in making progress once the necessary conditions are met. I intend to keep in close contact with delegations with a view to resuming work aimed at bridging the main differences as soon as possible. In order to make progress towards establishing a common basis for the final negotiating phase, it will be necessary for all delegations to be creative in finding new flexibility, in particular with regard to the issues of legal effects and participation.

¹ Proposal by Hong Kong, China in TN/IP/W/8; "Joint Proposal" by Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Chinese Taipei and the United States in TN/IP/W/10, Add.1, 2 and 3; and proposal by the European Communities in TN/IP/W/11.