

Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Held in the Centre William Rappard
on 5-6 October 2005

Chairman: Mr. Muhamad Noor Yacob (Malaysia)

Corrigendum

Page 19 - Intervention by the representative of Honduras

The intervention by the representative of Honduras should be corrected with the addition of the following text and all subsequent paragraphs should be renumbered accordingly:

143. The representative of Honduras wished to offer some comments on various aspects of the proposals, starting with the element of Article X.

144. In the case of Honduras, all laws, decrees or regulations were published in the official gazette ("La Gaceta") after their approval and entered into force after being published in that gazette. Each public entity made a collection of the laws, decrees or regulations of interest to them and made them available to the public.

145. The Fiscal Code, as well as the other fiscal and customs laws, and the fees collected at importation could be found on the webpage of the "Dirección Ejecutiva de Ingresos" (www.dei.gob.hn) as well as on the webpage of the Finance Secretariat (www.sefin.gob.hn).

146. The Secretariat of Industry and Trade was in charge of publishing, through the same means, commercial treaties negotiated with other countries that had been ratified by the National Congress. All provisions affecting trade in services and goods were published as well (www.sic.gob.hn).

147. All of those publications were a service rendered by the different institutions to the public, but there was no systematic procedure nor an obligation to provide that information. That called for the need to harmonize all this information and to establish coordination mechanisms to offer the user unified and complete information on the entire process involved in trade, transit and customs clearance of goods.

148. Honduras agreed that the publication and making available of information related to importation and exportation to traders contributed to improving a country's trading environment. However, Honduras asked up to what level of specificity all Members wanted to make commitments in this area.

149. In relation to Article VIII, and particularly with respect to the Single Window, it was Honduras' understanding that the idea was to provide the importer or exporter the opportunity to carry

out all the necessary procedures in one single office. Currently, there was one Single Window for exportation in the country located in the Secretariat of Industry and Trade, where there were representatives of the institutions involved in the procedures of exporting goods, the clearance of which must be carried out at the respective customs. In the case of importations, the Executive Directory of Income (Dirección Ejecutiva de Ingresos) was the entity where the majority of the procedures took place, with representatives of animal and plant health dealing with matters under their own responsibility. There was no Single Window for importation and exportation. This was an area where there was much work to do and where cooperation of the corresponding entities in the country was required for its application. It was also an issue which required technical assistance and capacity building.

150. With respect to risk management, in Honduras, the Executive Directorate of Income (Dirección Ejecutiva de Ingresos), was in charge by the law on customs procedures, and this entity maintained a unit of Risk Management and Analysis. This unit was in charge of analyzing and establishing parameters to determine the risk level of selected imports and for establishing the procedures to be followed, which in turn were sent to the different customs offices for their compliance. That unit lacked expert personnel with capacities in the area and Honduras considered this to be an area for which a lot of technical assistance and capacity building was required.

151. As for the withdrawal of goods, it had been proposed for the merchandise to be withdrawn with promptness, including before paying customs fees and charges, if a guarantee had been provided, which could be done either by paying cash, by a certified cheque, or by posting a government bond or a private agency bond. In the case of Honduras, there would not be any difficulty accepting the proposal TN/TF/W/21. Therefore, Honduras could support that proposal.

152. With respect to consular rights and proceedings and the proposal to eliminate them, Honduras could support that initiative. The maintaining of that requirement could lend itself to acts of corruption in some embassies and consulates. Honduras agreed that consularization led to a loss of time and affected traders, delaying the movement of goods.
