

Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation

**WTO NEGOTIATIONS ON TRADE FACILITATION
COMPILATION OF MEMBERS' PROPOSALS**

Revision

This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and without prejudice to the positions of Members and to their rights and obligations under the WTO

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This fifth revision of the Secretariat's compilation document incorporates new proposals on how to improve the relevant GATT Articles¹, with additions also being made to the cross-cutting section². Reference is further made to an additional national experience paper.³

II. STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

2. The document maintains the factual approach of its predecessors, highlighting the proposals' main elements, built-in flexibilities and envisaged mode of operation. Reference is also made to relevant S&D components and inputs on the technical assistance and capacity building (TA&CB) side. A second section compiles proposals of a cross-cutting nature, with no direct link to a particular measure.

3. As in the case of the compilation's previous versions, the document keeps the proposals' original formulations to the extent possible. Direct quotations from the referenced texts are marked in italic font.⁴

¹ TN/TF/W/70 from Chile.

² TN/TF/W/73 by Mauritius on behalf of the ACP Group and TN/TF/W/74 from the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Moldova.

³ TN/TF/W/75 by Egypt.

⁴ Minor alterations were applied on occasion to better integrate a section into a broader text.

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Related to GATT Articles V, VIII and X

Main Areas Covered	Groups of Measures Falling Under Those Areas	Sub-Categories of Measures Falling Under Those Groups (Where Applicable)	Main GATT Article(s) Concerned
A. PUBLICATION AND AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION	1. Publication of Trade Regulations (W/6, W/7, W/8, W/26, W/30, W/32, W/45; See also references in W/13, W/14, W/17, W/23 and W/75)		Article X with some proposals also relating to Article VIII
	2. Publication of Penalty Provisions (W/17; See also reference in W/75)		Article X with some proposals also relating to Article VIII
	3. Internet Publication (W/13; W/70; See also reference in W/75)	(a) Internet "publication" of the elements set out in Article X of GATT 1994 (W/13)	Article X
		(b) Internet "publication" of specified information setting forth the procedural sequence and other requirements for importing goods into a Member's territory (W/13)	Article X
	4. Notification of Trade Regulations (W/7, W/8; See also W/24)		Article X with some proposals also relating to Article VIII
	5. Establishment of Enquiry Points /SNFP/ Information Centers (W/6; W/7, W/8, W/10, W/26, W/30, W/45 and W/70; See also reference in W/75)		Article X
	6. Other Measures to Enhance the Availability of Information (W/40, W/70)		Article X
B. TIME PERIODS BETWEEN PUBLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION	1. Interval between Publication and Entry into Force (W/6, W/7, W/8, W/26, W/30; See also references in W/23 and W/75)		Article X with some proposals also relating to Article VIII
C. CONSULTATION AND COMMENTING ON NEW AND AMENDED RULES	1. Prior Consultation and Commenting on New and Amended Rules (W/6, W/7, W/8, W/24, W/26, W/32, W/70; See also reference in W/75)		Article X
	2. Information on Policy Objectives Sought (W/6, W/8, W/30)		Article X
D. ADVANCE RULINGS	1. Provision of Advance Rulings (W/8, W/9, W/10, W/12, W/38, W/45, W/70; See also W/66)		Article X
E. APPEAL	1. Right of Appeal (W/6, W/8)		Article X

PROCEDURES	2. Release of Goods in Event of Appeal (W/6; See also references in W/19, W/21 and W/30)		Article X with some proposals also relating to Article VIII
F. OTHER MEASURES TO ENHANCE IMPARTIALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION	1. Uniform Administration of Trade Regulations (W/8)		Article X
	2. Maintenance and Reinforcement of Integrity and Ethical Conduct Among Officials (W/8, W/60)	(a) Establishment of a Code of Conduct (W/8, W/60)	Article X
		(b) Computerized System to Reduce/Eliminate Discretion (W/60)	
		(c) System of Penalties (W/60)	
		(d) Technical Assistance to Create/Build up Capacities to Prevent and Control Customs Offences (W/60)	
		(e) Appointment of Staff for Education and Training (W/8)	
	(f) Coordination and Control Mechanisms (W/60)		
G. FEES AND CHARGES CONNECTED WITH IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION	1. General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation (W/8, W/14, W/17, W/23, W/25, W/30, W/31, W/70; See also reference in W/75)	(a) Specific Parameters for Fees/Charges (W/14, W/23, W/25, W/30, W/70; See also W/75)	Article VIII
		(b) Publication/Notification of Fees/Charges (W/14, W/17, W/70; See also W/75)	Article VIII
		(c) Prohibition of Collection of Unpublished Fees and Charges (W/8, W/17, W/70; See also W/75)	Article VIII with some proposals also relating to Article X
		(d) Periodic Review of Fees/Charges (W/17, W/25, W/31, W/70; See also W/75)	Article VIII
		(e) Automated Payment (W/30)	Article VIII
	2. Reduction/Minimization of the number and Diversity of Fees/Charges (W/23, W/24, W/31)		Article VIII
H. FORMALITIES CONNECTED WITH IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION	1. Disciplines on Formalities/Procedures and Data/Documentation Requirements Connected with Importation and Exportation (W/17, W/18, W/24, W/30, W/31, W/36, W/45, W/46, W/62, W/67 and W/70; See also references in W/20, W/61, W/69 and W/75).	(a) Non-discrimination (W/46)	Article VIII
		(b) Periodic Review of Formalities and Requirements (W/17, W/31, W/46; See also W/75)	Article VIII
		(c) Reduction/Limitation of Formalities and Documentation Requirements (W/17, W/24, W/31, W/36, W/46; See also W/75)	Article VIII
		(d) Use of International Standards (W/17, W/18, W/30, W/36, W/46, W/62, W/70)	Article VIII
		(e) Uniform Customs Code (W/46)	Article VIII
		(f) Acceptance of Commercially Available Information and of Copies (W/17, W/18, W/36, W/45, W/46)	Article VIII
		(g) Automation (W/30, W/45)	Article VIII
		(h) Single Window/One-time Submission (W/17, W/18, W/30, W/45, W/46, W/70; See also references in W/20, W/58 and W/69)	Article VIII
		(i) Elimination of Pre-Shipment Inspection (W/46)	Article VIII
		(j) Phasing out Mandatory Use of Customs Brokers (W/46)	Article VIII
I. CONSULARIZATION	1. Prohibition of Consular Transaction Requirement (W/22, W/23, W/25, W/36)		Article VIII
J. BORDER AGENCY COOPERATION	1. Coordination of activities and requirements of all border agencies (W/20, W/30, W/46; See		Article VIII

	also reference in W/48)		
K. RELEASE AND CLEARANCE OF GOODS	1. Expedited/Simplified Release and Clearance of Goods (W/10, W/15, W/17, W/18, W/19, W/21, W/30, W/45, W/46, W/49, W/70; See also references in W/6, W/61, W/65, W/69 and W/75)	(a) Pre-arrival Clearance (W/10, W/17, W/18, W/30, W/46, W/70); See also W/45, W/53 and W/69.	Article VIII
		(b) Expedited Procedures for Express Shipments (W/10, W/15, W/30, W/44, W/45); See also W/40 and W/65.	Article VIII
		(c) Risk Management/Analysis, Authorized Traders (W/10, W/17, W/18, W/30, W/45, W/46, W/49); See also W/42, W/61 and W/75.	Article VIII
		(d) Post-clearance Audit (W/10, W/18, W/30, W/49); See also W/55 and W/69.	Article VIII
		(e) Separating Release from Clearance Procedures (W/19, W/21, W/30); See also reference in W/6.	Article VIII with some proposals also relating to Article X
		(f) Other Measures to Simplify Customs Release and Clearance (W/46)	Article VIII
	2. Establishment and Publication of Average Release and Clearance Times (W/8, W/18, W/45, W/46; See also reference in W/6)		Article VIII with some proposals also relating to Article X
L. TARIFF CLASSIFICATION	1. Objective Criteria for Tariff Classification (W/24, W/46)		Article VIII with some proposals also relating to Article X
M. MATTERS RELATED TO GOODS TRANSIT	1. Strengthened Non-Discrimination (W/28, W/35, W/64)		Article V
	2. Disciplines on Fees and Charges (W/28, W/35, W/39, W/70; See also references in W/75)	(a) Publication of Fees and Charges and Prohibition of Unpublished ones (W/28, W/35)	Article V
		(b) Periodic Review of Fees and Charges (W/28)	Article V
		(c) More effective Disciplines on Charges for Transit (W/35, W/39, W/70)	Article V
		(d) Periodic Exchange between Neighbouring Authorities (W/28)	Article V
	3. Disciplines on Transit Formalities and Documentation Requirements (W/28, W/30, W/34, W/35, W/39, W/47; See also references in W/75)	(a) Periodic Review (W/28, W/34)	Article V
		(b) Reduction/Simplification (W/28, W/30, W/35, W/39)	Article V
		(c) Harmonization/Standardization (W/28, W/30, W/39; See also W/35)	Article V
		(d) Promotion of Regional Transit Arrangements (W/35, W/39, W/47)	Article V
		(e) Simplified and Preferential Clearance for Certain Goods (W/28, W/34, W/39, W/47)	Article V
		(f) Limitation of Inspections and Controls (W/39; See also W/75)	Article V
		(g) Sealing (W/39; See also W/75)	Article V
	4. Improved Coordination and Cooperation (W/28, W/35, W/39, W/70; See also references in W/75)	(h) Cooperation and Coordination on Document Requirements (W/28)	Article V
		(i) Monitoring (W/39)	Article V
		(j) Bonded Transport Regime/Guarantees (W/28, W/35, W/39; See also W/75)	Article V
5. Operationalization and Clarification of Terms (W/35, W/47, W/70)	(a) Amongst Authorities (W/28, W/35, W/39, W/70)	Article V	
	(b) Between Authorities and the Private Sector (W/28)	Article V	
			Article V

Related to cooperation between customs and other authorities on TF and Customs Compliance

Main Areas Covered	Groups of Measures Falling Under Those Areas	Sub-Categories of Measures Falling Under Those Groups (Where Applicable)
EXCHANGE AND HANDLING OF INFORMATION	1. Multilateral Mechanism for the Exchange and Handling of Information (W/57, W/68)	

V. PROPOSALS COMPILED

Related to Articles V, VIII and X of the GATT

A. PUBLICATION AND AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

1. Publication of Trade Regulations

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Publish:

- (i) "All relevant laws, regulations, administrative guidelines, decisions and rulings of or having general application;" (ii) "Information on customs and other border-related agency processes (including port, airport and other entry-point procedures and relevant forms and documents)"; (iii) "Conditions for different forms of customs treatment;" (iv) "Appeal procedures (including standard times and conditions for appeal)"; (v) "All fees and charges applicable to import, export and transit procedures and requirements;" (vi) "Agreements with any other country or countries relating to the above issues;" (vii) "Customs' and other government agencies' management plans relating to implementation of WTO commitments. This could include standard processing times or relevant reform and modernisation programmes;" (viii) "All significant amendments to the above" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6). The EC also proposes a requirement to make this information "easily available". See also a related EC-Australia proposal in TN/TF/W/23 as reflected in section G:2.
- " ... the laws, regulations, judicial decisions, administrative rulings as defined in Article X.1 of the GATT, and advance rulings of general application and a binding nature, as well as any agreements with other Member or Members relating to the relevant regulations or laws;" including the requirement "to make any exceptions, derogations or changes" to those items "readily available" (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- (i) "All trade-related laws and regulations (including trade-related treaties and agreements)"; (ii) "Procedures and administrative rules of border agencies (including documentation formats)"; (iii) "Applied tariffs rates"; (iv) "Decisions and examples of customs classification", (v) "Fees and charges imposed on or in connection with importation or exportation"; (vi) "Details of preshipment inspection activities"; (vii) "Details of export inspection for safety standards, etc.;" (viii) "Standard processing period for major trade procedures"; with relevant governments and traders also being able to obtain information from the competent authorities on the "legitimate purpose or objective" for "imposing trade-related restrictions" as well as the "reasons for any delay in cases where trade-related procedures take longer than the standard processing period" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8 and Corr.1). See also the proposals' input on publishing decisions against appeals contained in section E:1.
- "... all laws, regulations and other measures of general application pertaining to or affecting trade in goods, and other information concerning relevant procedures, fees, and charges to border-crossing trade". (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- "... all relevant legislation [and other information] on customs procedures relating to the various customs regimes ...", including "the legal basis for administrative decisions" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)

- *"All measures referred to in paragraph 1 of Article X of GATT 1994 (...)"* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)
- Trade regulations listed in paragraph 1 of Article X. When determining the scope of trade regulations to publish, *"not only Article X itself but also proposals in documents TN/TF/W/8 and TN/TF/W/6 may be useful."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- See also references to US proposals TN/TF/W/13 in section A:3 and TN/TF/W/14 in section G:1:b, first bullet.
- See also input in TN/TF/W/17 as reflected in section G:1:b and references in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"... make easily available, on a non-discriminatory basis.... " (...) "there should be an officially designated medium, and where feasible and possible, access to the information on-line. Information should be presented in a simple and accessible manner"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6). See also the EC proposal on enquiry points in section A:5.
- *".... information should be widely available and in a non-discriminatory fashion, at no cost or cost,⁵ through widely accessible means⁶;"* with Members also being *"required to make any exceptions, derogations, or changes (...) readily available, non-discriminately at no cost or cost. Notice of changes must be given in advance to allow other Members and interested parties to take notice."* Members should further *"notify the WTO Secretariat of the media through which the aforementioned measures and their amendment are published"*, with the Secretariat then *"disseminat[ing] this notice to other Members as well as interested parties "* (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- (i) *"Notices in government gazettes"*; (ii) *"Publication on the official website of any competent government or governmental agency"*; (iii) *"Publication of a summary (complete translation if possible) of trade regulations in at least one of the official WTO languages on the website ..."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8 and Corr.1)
- *"... via the media officially designated and easily accessible, including gazettes, journals and Internet; (...) Internet shall be the first option utilized by Members with requisite technical and personnel resources."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"Establishment of mechanisms ensuring the publication and availability of information on customs procedures to all Members in readily and promptly accessibly official media (including, where possible, in electronic form"* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"(a) ... in a clear and consistent manner, through a readily accessible and widely available medium, at no cost or at a charge commensurate with the cost of services rendered, and in as much advance as possible" "(b)(i) In addition to (a) above, any information to be published under proposal (a) should be made available by the publishing Member for access by any interested parties through electronic means at no cost or at a charge commensurate with the cost of services rendered. (ii) Each Member should notify the other Members through the Secretariat*

⁵ *"If any fees are charged for providing information (including revised information or any relevant exception to the information), such cost should be minimal and commensurate with the cost of service rendered."*

⁶ *"Widely accessible refers to, for example, official gazette or an internet website".*

the means to access the information published electronically." The proposal "does not preclude the use of multiple media." It "does not require the disclosure of confidential information which would impede law enforcement or otherwise be contrary to the public interest or would prejudice the legitimate commercial interests of particular enterprises, public or private." (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)

- *"These regulations should be published in an easily accessible medium from which it should be practical to reach the contact person who would be capable of providing additional and detailed information. Thus, the best address would be official websites of national trade enquiry points." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)*

Addressee(s)/Beneficiaries

- *"... any interested parties" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6, and Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)*
- *"... other Members as well as interested parties" (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)*
- *"... all Members" (Peru TN/TF/W/30)*

Built-in Exceptions/Flexibility

- *On-line access to the information "where feasible and possible". (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)*
- *Complete translation of summary of trade regulations to be published only "if possible" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)*
- *Publication and availability of information in electronic form only "where possible" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"In addition to providing assistance, the EC believes it would be quite reasonable to provide time for developing countries to implement such proposal as a means to make special and differential treatment precise, effective and operational. The EC recognizes that LDCs, according to paragraph 3 of the 1 August 2004 mandate, shall only be required to undertake commitments to the extent consistent with their individual development, financial and trade needs or their administrative and institutional capacities. The EC hopes nonetheless that LDCs, particularly if provided with assistance, will recognise the benefits and savings of the proposals made above and commit themselves to such transparency and good practice – in fact we believe the majority do so already." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)*
- *".. more favourable treatment should be given to developing countries. In particular, upon request, more flexibility in implementing the suggestions in this document could be provided to developing countries, for instance: longer time period (...) for: (i) fulfilling the requirement of notification and prior commenting period on core measures and their amendment; (ii) notification of core measures and their amendment, if any, to the Secretariat; (iii) establishing the SNFP; and (iv) delivery of the information requested via the SNFP". (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)*
- *For the publication of a summary of trade regulations in at least one of the official WTO languages on the web "a transition period would be permitted for Members whose mother tongue*

is not one of WTO official languages" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8 and Corr.1)

- *"... a longer implementation period should be provided for developing Members"* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"In addition to technical assistance, a longer implementation period can be considered"* for proposal (b) (also applicable to the other proposal listed in section C:1) (Hong Kong China, TN/TF/W/32)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"In some cases, technical and other trade-related assistance may be needed for developing countries, especially LDCs, if they lack the resources to implement the proposals. In particular, technical assistance may be needed for individual LDCs to publish rules and procedures, establish enquiry points, or provide for advance rulings and administrative appeals. The EC would be prepared to consider favourably requests for technical assistance in these areas made by developing-country partners, in the framework of the EC's development assistance."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"Technical assistance and capacity building tailored to the specific needs of each individual developing Member would be very helpful ..."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"Technical and financial assistance and cooperation must seek to develop the technical and infrastructural capabilities of each Member as well as to build such capabilities in areas where they are lacking."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Technical assistance should be provided to Members in need to implement"* proposal (b) (also applicable to the other proposal listed in section C:1) (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)

2. Publication of Penalty Provisions

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Clearly stating and publicizing penalty provisions against breaches of import and export formalities in relevant laws and regulations. Prohibiting the imposition of unpublished penalties. Explaining why the authority rejects the submitted documents at the application desk."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru in section G:1:b.

3. Internet Publication

(a) Internet Publication of Trade Regulations

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Internet 'publication' of the elements set out in Article X of GATT 1994*" (United States, TN/TF/W/13)
- "*... publication of regulations, procedures, documents, formats and rulings issued by Customs on classification, value, and origin on an official web page and the establishment of a national coordination point to enable agencies dealing with international trade to communicate more efficiently. This would make it possible inter alia to respond more efficiently to enquiries concerning trade-related matters.*" (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Special and Differential Treatment

- "*The unique situation of each individual Member regarding implementation of the proposed commitment could be addressed early in the negotiations through the use of diagnostic tools providing an assessment of specific needs, which can lead to appropriate and workable transition periods combined with assistance targeted at individual situations.*"⁷ (United States, TN/TF/W/13)
- "*Special and differential treatment, as established in the negotiating mandate, is a key aspect that should be appropriately addressed under each element of the proposal.*" (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)

Technical Assistance and Support for Capacity Building

- "*It would be useful if (...) Members and, as appropriate, International Organizations would provide information on experiences and available resources specifically related to this particular proposal*"⁸ (United States, TN/TF/W/13)

(b) Internet Publication of Specified Information

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Internet 'publication' of specified information setting forth the procedural sequence and other requirements for importing goods into a Member's territory.*" (United States, TN/TF/W/13)

⁷ Applies also to section A:3:b.

⁸ Applies also to section A:3:b.

4. Notification of Trade Regulations

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- When introducing or amending "*core measures*" that may have a significant effect on the trade of other Members, notify interested parties and the WTO Secretariat of the proposed introduction or amendment at the earliest possible stage (with the Secretariat then disseminating the information to interested parties) before finalizing the proposed measures. (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- "... notification to the WTO of each Member's trade regulations in one of the WTO official languages" with a "Publication of notification on the WTO website." (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- See also the input by New Zealand in TN/TF/W/24 as reflected in section H:1:c.

Suggested Approach/Means

- "at the earliest possible stage." (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- "in one of the WTO official languages"; "Establishment of a committee in the WTO to process the notification." (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

Addresses(s)/Beneficiaries

- "Interested parties" and the WTO Secretariat. (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- The WTO Secretariat (with the information then being generally available through the WTO website); (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to Korea's input on S&D in section A:1.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- "The WTO Secretariat or other international organizations (UNCTAD, ITC etc.) could provide translation services, especially for LDs that have difficulties in publicizing their trade regulations on their websites." (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

5. Establishment of Enquiry Points/Single National Focal Points/Information Centers

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Establish enquiry points or trade desks, providing information on all (...) measures and information [proposed by the EC for publication in section A:2:1 of document TN/TF/W/6]"* *"Such provisions could be based on provisions on enquiry points in certain WTO Agreements such as TBT and SPS."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- Establishment of a Single National Focal Point as a centre for communication with other domestic competent authorities to more efficiently respond to inquiries. *"The SNFP should, within a reasonable period of time, supply not only the information requested but also any other pertinent information, which the SNFP considers the interested parties should be aware. In addition, the contact information relating to the SNFP should be notified to the WTO Secretariat. The Secretariat should make such information available to the other Members and interested parties."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- *"Establishment of inquiry points responsible for providing relevant information or documents related to trade procedures to the traders (including co-ordination among existing inquiry points of each border authority."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- Set up information centers or inquiry points with competent officers to provide responses to inquiries. (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- *"Each Member shall, in accordance with their real situations, establish or designate one or more trade policy enquiry points where, upon request of any individual, enterprise or WTO Member, all information relating to the above-mentioned laws⁹, regulations and measures may be obtained."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"Establishment of enquiry points facilitating access to trade-related information, for example, the creation of a National Enquiry Point operating a free-of-charge 24-hour service or an informative website providing a broad range of customs information with links to other relevant sites."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- Establish *"national trade enquiry points (...) "*. A *"parallel work may be effected at the WTO through a trade portal. The system suggested (...) is similar to the system provided at the "International Portal on Food Safety, Animal & Plant Health" (www.ipfsah.org) (...)"*. (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- *"... establishment of a national coordination point to enable agencies dealing with international trade to communicate more efficiently. This would make it possible inter alia to respond more efficiently to enquiries concerning trade-related matters".* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"... on a non-discriminatory basis"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6, and Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- *"... information centers or inquiry points be set up first with competent officers on duty so as to provide instant responses to inquiries."* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)

⁹ *"... laws, regulations and other measures of general application pertaining to or affecting trade in goods, and other information concerning relevant procedures, fees, and charges related to border crossing trade."*

- Establishment of enquiry points *"in accordance with [each Member's] real situations."* (...) *"Replies to requests for information shall generally be provided within 30 days after receipt of a request. (...) Replies to WTO Members shall be complete and shall represent the authoritative view of the Member government. Accurate and reliable information shall be provided to individuals, enterprises and WTO Members."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"... free-of charge 24-hour service or an informative website..."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Developed countries may publish all regulations/legislation in one of the WTO official languages. However, (...) [r]equesting the same from developing and least-developed countries would be demanding too much and would be unfair. Requesting the summaries of all relevant regulations in one of the WTO languages may be one approach. These kinds of summaries are useful if [one knows] what [one is] looking for (...). In other cases, "covering different provisions on different areas, a simple summary might not be helpful and (...) may be more difficult than translating the regulation completely. (...) A useful approach may be the preparation of a format, which will include: the country name, the name of legislation, responsible authority, a short summary if so wished, and keywords. (...) "... the establishment of a list of keywords to be adopted by all WTO Members (...) would [be useful] (...). A comprehensive keywords-list may include some general words such as "customs", "duty", "restriction", "inspection" "processing", "export", "import", or sector specific words such as "textiles", "machinery" etc., and any trader looking for information on a country's inspection policy may reach the relevant documents by accessing this country's national enquiry point's website and searching for regulations by these keywords. Once the traders reach the relevant regulation they can seek the assistance of different references, namely national or international business organizations, their own national authorities or official trade representatives, for the translation. In addition, when developed countries translate regulations for their own need, they may provide these unofficial translations for general use."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

Addressee(s)/Beneficiaries

- *"...for use of governments and traders"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W6)
- WTO Members and interested parties (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- *"individuals, enterprises and WTO Members"* (China, TN/TF/W26)

Built-in Exceptions/Flexibility

- *"In exceptional cases, replies may be provided within 45 days after receipt of a request."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by the EC; Korea; and China in section A:1, as well as to input by Chile in section A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the EC; China; and Peru in section A:1.

6. Other Measures to Enhance the Availability of Information

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*(...) creation on the official WTO web page of a 'trade facilitation' link listing all of the Member countries, and providing further links to relevant national websites in the different areas. Members also need to have a 'list or inventory' that could contain the facilitation measure applied and the bodies involved in its implementation. This could be supplemented by an e-mail account (...) with the address of the Member concerned. At the national level, each Member would identify an address or trade office that could answer any queries within a reasonable period of time to be determined.*" (Argentina, TN/TF/W/40)
- "*The creation of an official WTO web page on trade facilitation, with links to Members' official pages, containing relevant information on the subject would be an appropriate step*". (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- "*... establishment of a register which should clearly specify the circumstances under which each Member's legislation establishes a partial or complete ban on disclosure or publication of a trade-related regulation, including executive summaries that enable interested parties to understand the core elements of a specific trade regulation.*" (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)

Suggested Approach/Means

- "*Each Member should provide the Secretariat with a list of websites containing detailed (and updated) information under Article X of the GATT 1994.*" (Argentina, TN/TF/W/40)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by Chile in section A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- "*Members that do not have a computerized database can request the technical assistance and capacity-building support needed to fulfil this requirement within a time-limit to be determined. (...) In the case of developing countries and LDCs whose language is not one of the three official WTO languages, the possibility of requesting the necessary technical assistance (from the developed countries, from the WTO, and/or from other bodies offering their services) should be envisaged so that the regulations can be translated into at least one of the official languages of the WTO. A timetable should be established to that end. The WTO Secretariat, or the entity offering technical assistance, could also act as a focal point in the consultations among Members with respect to information provided for under Article X of the GATT 1994 from Members that have requested assistance and are therefore involved in a capacity-building and technical assistance programme. This type of assistance would serve the dual purpose of helping developing country and LDC Members both internally, by providing them with technical assistance in computerizing and translating the regulations and decisions referred to in Article X through the multilateral system of which the country is a member, and externally, by facilitating trade flows with those countries.*" (Argentina, TN/TF/W/40)

B. TIME PERIOD BETWEEN PUBLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Interval between Publication and Entry into Force

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Allow for "*an adequate time period between the publication of rules and their implementation*" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6). See also a related EC-Australia proposal in TN/TF/W/23 as reflected in section G:2, first bullet.
- "... *allow a reasonable amount of time between publication of new or amended measures and their entry into force; if desirable, Members may even go further to specify the time period*" (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- "*Publication of laws and regulations (or final draft regulations) before their implementation*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- "*There should be a reasonable interval (e.g., at least 30 days) between the publication of regulations and their implementation or enforcement*" (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- "*Establishment of minimum time periods before the entry into force of new regulations*" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- No interval required where "*advanced notice is precluded or not practical...*". (...) "*in case of extraordinary circumstances, for instance, imminent threats to national security and health, such time interval may be reduced or omitted*" (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- No interval required "*for those laws, regulations and measures involving national security, specific measures setting foreign exchange rates or monetary policy and other measures the publication of which would impede law enforcement*" (China, TN/TF/W/26)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by the EC, Korea and China in section A:1.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the EC; China; and Peru in section A:1.

C. CONSULTATION AND COMMENTING ON NEW AND AMENDED RULES

1. Prior Consultation and Commenting on New and Amended Rules

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"A provision requiring consultation between interested parties, notably governments and the private sector, on proposed new rules and procedures applied to import and export administration and goods in transit"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- Provide interested parties with an opportunity to submit comments in writing on proposed new *"core measures"* or amendments to the same, followed by Members *"giving due consideration to these comments"* before finalizing the proposed measures (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- Provide *"opportunities for interested parties including the private sector to comment on prospective trade-related laws and regulations"* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- Give *"Members and traders (...) the right to comment on proposed customs rules, procedures, and policy with commercial effects and either amend the proposed rule or procedure, or as the case may be, provide an explanation to traders and other WTO members as to why their comments have not been taken into account."* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- *"Members should, without discrimination, allow reasonable time for other Members to make comments in writing, and take these written comments into consideration after such laws, regulations and measures are publicized while before implemented or enforced"* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"(i) Each Member should establish effective mechanisms for exchanges with traders, whose views should be duly taken into account, concerning the administration of measures referred to in paragraph 1 of Article X of GATT 1994. (ii) When formulating, implementing and reviewing any measures referred to in paragraph 1 of Article X of GATT 1994, opportunities should be provided for consultation with traders if substantial trade interests or major changes to the existing measures are involved."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)
- *"... establishment of contact points and consultation mechanisms laying down procedures and timeframes for response, including the use of web pages. The advantage of implementing such measures is to provide interested parties with a forum to share their comments and views on decisions of general application issued by Customs."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Such a consultation requirement could include the establishment of a regular consultative mechanism on rules and procedures with representative private sector bodies including importers, exporters, carriers, chambers of commerce, etc."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"There should be adequate time periods for comment on proposed rules and procedures. A minimum period could be agreed subject to an exception where urgent problems arise or threaten to arise. The consultation should also take place at a stage where comments can be discussed and taken into account."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"....at the earliest possible stage...";* (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- *"....in writing...."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/7, and China, TN/TF/W/26)

- *"Explicitly stating the required trade procedures in the relevant laws and regulations."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- *".. without discrimination..."* (China, TN/TF/W/26)
- *"There can be a single mechanism or multiple ones, taking different forms for different Members, depending on the circumstances of individual Members. For example, it can be a customer liaison group, an advisory body, or a consultative council, with the participation of the business sector, consumer organizations, academics or professional bodies, and any other interested parties, as a Member deems appropriate. (...) It is noted that the definitions of "substantial trade interests" and "major changes" may cause concern. However, it is not possible to provide a hard and fast rule and to set precise definitions due to varying circumstances. Each Member may draw up broad and reasonable guidelines to suit its own domestic situation and examine each case accordingly".* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)

Addresses(s)/Beneficiaries

- Interested parties, notably governments and the private sector (including importers, exporters, carriers, chambers of commerce etc.) (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"interested parties"* (Korea, TN/TF/W/7)
- *"... interested parties, including the private sector"* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- No need for a minimum time period for comment *"where urgent problems arise or threaten to arise"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"... the proposal does not require the disclosure of confidential information which would impede law enforcement or otherwise be contrary to the public interest or would prejudice the legitimate commercial interest of particular enterprises, public or private."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/32)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by the EC; China; Hong Kong, China; and Korea in section A:1.
- *"If the proposed requirement would be inherently more burdensome for developing countries than for other Members, special and differential treatment to mitigate or manage such burdens would need to be considered."* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- See also references to S&D by Chile in TN/TF/W/70.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the EC; China; Hong Kong China; and Peru in section A:1.

2. Information on Policy Objectives Sought

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Notice of proposed rules and procedures on which comments are invited should be accompanied by a statement of the policy objectives sought, etc.*" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- "*Publication of the legislative purpose of the prospective trade-related laws and regulations*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- Publication of the legal basis for administrative decisions (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by the EC; and Peru in section A:1.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the EC; and Peru in section A:1.

D. ADVANCE RULINGS

1. Provision of Advance Rulings

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measures Proposed

- Establishment and development of an advance rulings system (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- Development of disciplines on the provision of advance rulings on tariff classification (including any applicable rate of duty or tax applicable upon importation (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9)
- Advance rulings on tariff classification (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- "*Make available, upon request of a trader in advance of trade, binding rules in certain specific areas (e.g., tariff classification, customs valuation, duty deferral)*" (United States, TN/TF/W/12)
- Advance rulings on "*... matters such as tariff classification, applicable duties and valuations*" upon written request within a certain time period that "*would be binding on customs authorities for a period of time, provided that the facts and circumstance on which the rulings is based remain unchanged.*" (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)
- Advance rulings covering "*the main elements of import requirements, such as tariff classification and applicable duties and taxes*" and "*tariff preferences*". The provisions on advance rulings in the Agreement on Rules of Origin "*might serve as a model to be applied more generally.*" (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

- *"Establish and make public mechanisms and procedures so that both domestic and foreign trade operators can seek rulings from customs administrations on matters such as the classification, value and origin of imported goods. This would improve the predictability and transparency of trade."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also Australia's input on advance rulings contained in document TN/TF/W/66.

Suggested Approach/Meanings

- *"Advance rulings would be issued at the written request of domestic importers, or foreign exporters or producers. Advance rulings should be issued within a defined period of time after a request is made (subject to submission of sufficient information by interested parties)" (...)* *"Advance rulings should also be binding on customs authorities (or any other competent authority) for a period of time specified in the ruling, provided that the facts or circumstances on which the ruling is based remain unchanged."* (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9)
- *"To the extent possible, and subject to confidentiality requirements, advance rulings should be made publicly available"* (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9)
- *"Prior to importation, importers or parties entrusted may apply to port customs for advance classification of the goods being imported."* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- *"... upon request of a trader"* (United States, TN/TF/W/12)
- *"The advance ruling should be issued within a certain time period upon receipt of all the necessary information and documents from the applicant." The ruling "... would have to be in the form of a written statement issued by Customs. The advance ruling would be effective on the date of issuance or such date as may be specified in the ruling, which is not later than the date of importation of goods. The advance ruling would be applied to importations without regard to the identity of the importer, exporter or producer, provided that the facts and circumstances are identical in all material aspects. The advance ruling would remain in effect for a specific period of time from the date of the issuance if: (i) there is no change in the material facts or circumstances on which it is based; (ii) all of its terms and conditions are complied with; and (iii) it has not been revoked. There [should be] provisions for Customs to provide the applicant, on request, with the reasons for the ruling."* (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)
- *"Customs is required to give notice in writing of any modification or revocation of an advance ruling and of the effective date of the modification or revocation to the person to whom the advance ruling was given. Customs may postpone the effective date of such modification or revocation for a period of time, where the person to whom the ruling was issued has relied in good faith on that ruling. A modification or revocation of an advance ruling would apply to goods that are the subject of the advance ruling and are imported on or after the effective date of the modification or revocation. It would not apply to importations of a good that have occurred prior to the date"* (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)

Addresses(s)/Beneficiaries

- *"... importers and exporters or their agents..."* (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *"There will be identified situations where the customs administration can decline to issue the ruling, such as when the good is already the subject of a review or appeal."* (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9). See also the second sentence in the first bullet of section "Suggested Approach/Means".
- *"... it is recognized that the customs administration would have the option to modify or revoke an advance ruling immediately, should circumstances change, or when inaccurate or false information has been provided."* (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9)
- *"An advance ruling may not be applied if it is determined that imported goods differ materially from the goods which were the subject of the ruling or if the person requesting the ruling has failed to act in accordance with the terms and conditions of the ruling. The advance ruling may be modified or revoked if: (i) the advance ruling is based on an error of fact or law; (ii) there is a change in law; or (iii) there is a change in the material facts or circumstances on which the ruling was based." (...)* *"Customs may decline or postpone the issuance of an advance rulings where the applicant fails to provide the [requested] (...) information within the time stipulated* (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)
- Advance rulings *"should be case-specific and binding only to the extent that the declared data are correct and that the relevant national legislation on which the ruling has been provided remains unchanged."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Appropriate special and differential treatment provisions (e.g., deferred implementation, different time requirements, etc.) could be incorporated within commitments, to reflect the specific circumstances of individual Members."* (Australia and Canada, TN/TF/W/9)
- *"... examine the question of whether appropriate transition mechanisms would be necessary to address particular needs." (...)* *"... consider what other means to implement the proposal, such as resource sharing between Members, 'mutual recognition' of rulings between Members, or other mechanisms to utilize expertise outside the capacity of some Members."* (United States, TN/TF/W/12)
- *"Special and Differential Treatment should therefore be an integral part of any commitment in this area. In this regard, Members may wish to discuss the following: (i) The procedural elements and subjects that should be included in Members' advance rulings programmes. For example, developing countries and least developed countries may initially need to commit only to advance rulings for tariff classifications; (ii) Longer implementation time frames for developing and least developed countries, and other phased-in approaches. (iii) Allowing developing and least developed countries to implement more onerous obligations on a best endeavour basis."* (Singapore, TN/TF/W/38)
- See also reference to input on S&D by Chile in TN/TF/W/70.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"Further technical assistance in this area will enable customs authorities in recipient countries to improve their ability to carry out their duty to enforce legislation...."* (Canada and Australia, TN/TF/W/9)

- *"The United States has experience in providing technical assistance in the establishment of advance binding ruling regimes, assisting in drafting of legislation and regulations, and providing training to subject-matter experts."* (United States, TN/TF/W/12)

E. APPEAL PROCEDURES

1. Right of Appeal

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"For imports, exports and goods in transit, there should be an obligation to provide a non discriminatory, legal right of appeal against customs and other agency rulings and decisions, initially within the same agency or other body, and subsequently to a separate judicial or administrative body. A standard time should be set for resolution of minor appeals at administrative level (...) Companies should have the right to be represented at all stages of appeal procedures by an agent or legal representative.." (...)* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)
- *"Development of legal and administrative appeal systems for lodging objections" "against unfair administration of trade-related procedures"; "Publication of major judicial and administrative decisions against lodged appeals" "Establishment of a complaints desk."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"non discriminatory"; "Procedures for appeal should be easily accessible, including to SME's, and costs should be reasonable and commensurate with costs in providing for appeals."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the EC in section A:1.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the EC in section A:1.

2. Release of Goods in Event of Appeal

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Where a disputed decision is the subject of an appeal, goods should normally be released and the possibility be available in given circumstances for duty payment to be left in abeyance. This should be subject, where required by national legislation, to the provision of a guarantee, such as a surety or deposit."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/6)

- See also proposals listed in section K:1.e.

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the EC in section A:1.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the EC in section A:1.

F. OTHER MEASURES TO ENHANCE IMPARTIALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

1. Uniform Administration of Trade Regulations

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Establishment of a central function within the government which has the primary responsibility to interpret trade regulations such as those relating to customs classification or customs valuation, etc.*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- "*Compilation and distribution of casebooks of cases and examples of customs classification and customs valuation*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- "*Provision of staff training based on casebooks on customs classification and customs valuation*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

2. Maintenance and Reinforcement of Integrity and Ethical Conduct Among Officials

- (a) Establishment of a Code of Conduct

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Development of codes of conduct for staff of border agencies*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- "*Establishment of a code of conduct in the customs services, spelling out the rights and obligations of the public servants*" (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Special and Differential Treatment

- "*... developing countries should be granted sufficient time and other flexibilities for the implementation of any rules that result from these negotiations.*" (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"Members, in particular the developing countries, must identify their difficulties, requirements, and priorities by conducting a self-assessment if they are to effectively implement the programme of measures needed to strengthen the integrity and best practices of their customs administrations. In view of the need for technical assistance and capacity-building support, we must work in a practical manner to help Members to implement the measures put forward in this proposal."* (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

(b) Computerized System to Reduce/Eliminate Discretion

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Introduction of computerized systems to reduce (or eliminate) the discretion exercised by officials and employees with respect to basic customs decisions"* (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

(c) System of Penalties

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Establishment of a system of penalties, to be directly incorporated in the country's customs legislation. Offences by customs officials should be considered as criminal acts"* (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

(d) Technical Assistance to Create/Build up Capacities to Prevent and Control Customs Offences

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Technical assistance to create and build up the country's national capacity to prevent and control customs offences"* (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

(e) Appointment of Staff for Education and Training

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Appointment of officials in charge of providing officials' education and provisions of adequate training to relevant officials"* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)

(f) Coordination and Control Mechanisms

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Establishment of coordination and control mechanisms between customs administrations and the organizations involved in devising ethics policies in customs services."* (Dominican Republic, TN/TF/W/60)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the Dominican Republic in section F:2:a.

G. FEES AND CHARGES CONNECTED WITH IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION

1. **General Disciplines on Fees/Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation**

(a) Specific Parameters for Fees/Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Establish specific parameters for fees charged by Members under Article VIII of GATT 1994."* (United States, TN/TF/W/14)
- *Establish disciplines for GATT Article VIII-related fees and charges applying to "all fees and charges imposed by customs authorities or by any other government body (including tasks undertaken on their behalf) on or in connection with importation or exportation, or as a condition for importation or exportation, to the extent not already covered by other WTO Articles and Agreements."* (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- *Ensure that (i) "the service provided is related to the goods in question (ii) fees and charges refer to the approximate cost of the service provided (iii) fees and charges (...) [are] not (...) calculated on an ad valorem basis; (iv) administrative or operational costs not constituting a service associated with the treatment of imports or exports (...) [are] not (...) imposed on such imports or exports (v) [there is] non-discrimination in the design and application of fees and charges.* (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- *Calculate the approximate cost of services rendered by breaking down costs into (i) direct costs (in the sense of costs directly related to the specific services rendered, including labour, materials, equipment and utilities) and (ii) indirect costs (consisting of costs incurred that are not directly related, but are nonetheless attributable to the specific services rendered (e.g., costs of supporting labour, equipment, and office rent).* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/25)
- *"Establishment of objective criteria for the application of fees and charges by Members to import and export operations."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Services should be directly related to the goods being imported or exported, and fees and charges should be related to the approximate cost of the services rendered. Members should agree to prohibit that such services be calculated on an ad valorem basis. The establishment of a register of all services connected with import and export operations would increase the transparency and predictability of trade. The register would cover the objectives, criteria and administrative costs of such services and be subject to periodic review."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"A table for analyzing relevant costs would be helpful."* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/25)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Examine the question of whether appropriate transition mechanism would be necessary to address particular needs."* (United States, TN/TF/W/14)
- See reference to input on S&D by Chile in section A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"To the extent that least-developed countries and possibly other Members would seek advice on the design and implementation of new fee structures, the EC would be prepared to consider favourably such requests for assistance. Furthermore, international organizations and Members have relevant experience that could be used."* (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1.

(b) Publication/Notification of Fees/Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Publish [Article VIII-related] fees on the Internet and notify the WTO within a specified number of days in advance of implementation."* (United States, TN/TF/W/14)
- *"Publication of fees and charges imposed on or in connection with importation or exportation..."* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- *"Publication of fees connected with importation and exportation increases the transparency and predictability of trade. Members should publish on the Internet and notify to the WTO all import- and export-related fees..."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the US in section G:1:a, and by Chile in A:3:a.
- *"... granting a transition period in accordance with developing Members' implementation capacity or support/assistance based on coordination among relevant international organizations (IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WCO and World Bank) may be taken into consideration. In addition, providing opportunities to consult the implementation capacities of developing Members together with experts from relevant international organizations may be useful measures for Members to consider."* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)

(c) Prohibition of Collection of Unpublished Fees and Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "... *ban the collection of the unpublicized fees and charges...*" (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- "... *prohibiting the collection of unpublished fees and charges*" (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- Members should "*prohibit the use of [all import- and export-related fees] that have not been duly published and notified*" (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru in section G:1:b.

(d) Periodic Review of Fees/Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Periodic review of the appropriateness of the amount and the number of fees and charges imposed on or in connection with importation and exportation*" (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17). See also section H:1:b, first bullet.
- "*Periodical reviews of the levels of fees and charges imposed on or in connection with import and export should also be conducted, for example, at least once every three years*". (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/25)
- "*Each Member should review its fees, charges, formalities and requirements at reasonable and regular intervals.*" (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31) See also section H:1:b, second bullet.
- See also the proposal by Chile listed in section G:1:a.
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- "*In such a review, the concerned Member should take into account relevant new information, new business practices, and adoption of modern techniques and new technology.*" (...) "*It is not possible to define a rigid standard period of time for the intervals, having regard to different circumstances of different Members and measures.*" (...) "*... the proposed review mechanism does not affect Members' rights and obligations under the existing paragraph 2 of Article VIII.*" (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru in section G:1:b.
- See also reference to input on S&D by Hong Kong, China in section H:1:b, second bullet.

(e) Automated Payment

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Automated payment of duties and other fees and charges.*" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1.

2. Reduction/Minimization of the Number and Diversity of Fees and Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*A requirement for Members to review, and if necessary, consolidate or reduce the number and diversity of their fees and charges. All remaining fees and charges must be notified or made publicly and easily available, together with the justification for them. There should be an adequate time period between the publication of new or amended fees or charges and their entry into force.*" (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- "*A requirement to establish a list of permissible fees and charges*" (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- "*... Members could (...) look at practical ways to minimize fees and formalities*" based on the notification of the documentation and entry systems they currently implement or have in preparation. (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- "*Any fees, charges, formalities or requirements referred to in Article VIII of GATT 1994 should not be maintained if the circumstances or objectives giving rise to their adoption no longer exist or if the circumstances or objectives can be addressed in a less trade restrictive manner.*" (Hong Kong China, TN/TF/W/31) See also section H:1:b, third bullet.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Consolidation and reduction of the number of diversity of fees and charges "*if necessary*". (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the EC and Australia in section G:1.

H. FORMALITIES CONNECTED WITH IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION

1. Disciplines on Formalities/Procedures and Data/Documentation Requirements Connected with Importation and Exportation

- (a) Non-discrimination

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Non-discrimination in the design, application and effect of export and import procedures and formalities imposed on the goods of all Members. (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46). Applies also to section K (release and clearance of goods).*
- *"A commitment to non-discrimination in terms of requirements and procedures applicable to like products irrespective of their modes of transportation." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *"The principle of non-discrimination should not of course interfere with Members' rights to treat consignments differently according to objective risk assessment criteria." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *Commitments implying resources, notably those regarding "simplified procedures that are easiest to apply via automated systems, as well as those proposals that presuppose broader customs reform should not apply until such time as the Member in question is in a position to implement them, a principle recognized in the negotiating modalities. It is therefore proposed that least-developed countries be exempted from such provisions until such time as they are able to implement them, and that in the meantime technical assistance should be directed to helping them build up the necessary domestic capacities. Developed-country Members and intergovernmental organizations should commit to the provision of such technical assistance in the manner set out below. Some of the commitments suggested in this paper will take time to implement. For example, reviewing legislation or aligning documents and data requirements to international norms can in some cases be a lengthy process. Introducing simplified procedures for goods release presupposes some re-formulation of customs processes and training of officials. Introducing an authorized trader system also needs time as Members have to determine what system best suits their trade patterns and then prepare the necessary rules. In many cases these reforms, and therefore potentially assistance, need to go ahead in tandem. Transitional periods should be available to enable developing countries to implement specific commitments in a progressive or staged manner. These could be based on each Member's individual needs and situation, or generalized, but should be linked to any reform or modernization programme under way in a Member as well as to technical assistance programming. More general commitments on transparency, non-discrimination, the avoidance of unnecessary barriers, and any other*

commitments that do not imply many resources, should however be implemented immediately."
(European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- Improved provision and coordination of assistance based on the following arrangements:
"Members should signal readiness to increase the level and quality of technical assistance for trade facilitation. Where competing requests for assistance are made, priority should be given to those countries whose needs are objectively the greatest and which have demonstrated clear commitment to carrying out simplification measures. Where a Member, as part of its development aid, is providing trade-related technical assistance to another Member it should, if requested by that other Member, as far as possible include in such assistance trade facilitation support. (...) The WTO and other organizations (the World Bank, WCO, UNCTAD, and others) should, well in advance of the implementation of the results of the negotiations, establish and operate jointly a platform for international cooperation and coordination of technical assistance in the field of trade facilitation, bringing together donor Members and recipient Members, regional groupings, as well as other intergovernmental organizations with a role to play (e.g., OECD, UN regional economic commissions etc.). (...) A role could be provided too for national and international trade federations in such transparency and coordination efforts (...) The platform should not duplicate the activities of existing coordination mechanisms, such as the WTO/OECD DAC database on technical assistance, but coordinate with them and use such instruments to help it fulfil its functions. The platform must also not detract from but support coordination and cooperation on the ground in recipient countries (...). This platform should be set up once the scope of the future trade facilitation provisions is clearer. The first and most important task of the platform could be to take stock of individual Members' trade facilitation needs in relation to the provisions emerging, making full use of existing diagnostic tools and assessments, and then help to identify, with donors, what kind of technical assistance, if any, would be needed to support implementation, and within what kind of timeframes. It would also be important early on to develop a common understanding on the appropriate sequencing of assistance for implementation, given that some trade facilitation measures – e.g., review and simplification of regulations – needs to take place before other measures. On this basis individual developing-country members would then be in a better position to determine what kind of transitional periods may be necessary in order to implement the results of the negotiations".
(European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

(b) Periodic Review of Formalities/Procedures and Requirements

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Periodically review import and export formalities and import/export documentation requirements, based on comments from the private sectors and other parties."* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- *"Each Member should review its fees, charges, formalities and requirements at reasonable and regular intervals. In such a review, the concerned Member should take into account relevant new information, new business practices, and adoption of modern techniques and new technology."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)

- *"Periodic Review. A provision whereby Members should no longer maintain a procedure or requirement if the circumstances giving rise to its introduction no longer exist or if the changed circumstances or objectives can be addressed in a less trade restrictive manner."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46). Applies also to section K (release and clearance of goods).
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Mean

- *"It is not possible to define a rigid standard period of time for the intervals, having regard to different circumstances of different Members and measures." (...) "...the proposed review mechanism does not affect Members' rights and obligations under the existing paragraph 2 of Article VIII."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Some Members may not be able to review all of their formalities and requirements instantly (...) A reasonable period of time may be provided to enable Members to complete the first review."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)
- See also references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei in section G:1:b, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

(c) Reduction/Limitation of Formalities/Procedures and Data/Documentation Requirements

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Limit import and export formalities and import/export documentation requirements to the least trade restrictiveness level"* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- *"... agree to more precise, operationally effective provisions on minimizing excessive documentation"* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- *"(i) Members should minimise the incidence and complexity of import and export formalities and decrease and simplify import and export documentation requirements to ensure that such formalities and requirements are no more administratively burdensome or trade restrictive than absolutely necessary to achieve their legitimate objectives and are applied in an efficient manner". "(ii) Any fees, charges, formalities or requirements referred to in Article VIII of GATT 1994 should not be maintained if the circumstances or objectives giving rise to their adoption no longer exist or if the circumstances or objectives can be addressed in a less trade restrictive manner."* (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)
- *"... simplifying and reducing the documentation and data requirements to the necessary minimum, consistent with the need to enforce legitimate policy objectives". (...) "... the contents of the*

requirements for goods declarations should (...) be set out in national legislation". (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W36). See also their related proposal in section I:1.

- *"Avoidance of unnecessary barriers to trade in the design, application and effect of import and export procedures, and in particular to ensure that such procedures do not unduly slow down the movement or release of goods. This would be done by ensuring that import and export procedures shall not be more trade restrictive than necessary to fulfil legitimate objectives." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46). Applies also to section K (release and clearance of goods).*
- *"Commitment by Members to simplify and reduce documentation and data requirements to the absolute minimum (...)" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*
- See also reference in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Conduct examination and inspection after receiving application without delay as well as take other relevant actions including returning necessary documents to traders without delay, with a view to further expedite the movement of goods." (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)*
- *" ... notify the documentation and entry systems currently implemented or in preparation. Based on this information, Members could then look at practical ways to minimize fees and formalities." "... it might be appropriate to consider a menu of various steps to reduce excessive documentation requirements". (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)*
- *"The first benchmark comprises a necessity test (in terms of administrative burden brought by, and trade restrictiveness of, the measures) and a balance against reasonableness (having regard to the need for measures to achieve certain legitimate objectives, e.g. implementation of international conventions, other than those falling within exceptions already provided for under GATT) with regard to the objectives of applying the formalities and requirements. The second benchmark is to ensure that measures are applied efficiently so as to reduce transaction costs and processing time for traders, if not for the authorities." Institution of a necessity test for those fees and formalities. " Clearly, if the circumstances or objectives giving rise to the adoption of a measure no longer exist, the measure should not be continued. Even if such circumstances or objectives still exist, the measure should not be continued if the circumstances or objectives can be addressed in a less trade restrictive manner. In this latter case, the measure may simply be abolished, or a simplified or more trade facilitating measure may be more suitable." (Hong Kong, China, TN/TF/W/31)*

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Simplification and reduction of documentation and data requirements to the necessary minimum *"consistent with the need to enforce legitimate policy objectives", with "Such objectives include[ing], inter alia, the assessment and collection of duties and taxes, the compilation of statistics, ensuring conformity with SPS and TBT requirements, and the application of Customs law." (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)*
- Simplification and reduction of data and documentation requirements *"consistent with the need to enforce legitimate policies..." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"The idea of a menu of options is specifically designed to provide flexibility for members given the variation in their capacity to implement. In addition, developing-country Members could be given additional time to implement such measures."* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- See also references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei in section G:1:b, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"This proposal is designed to allow a better assessment of Members' current ability to implement new requirements for minimizing documentation. Depending on the detail of any menu of steps, in some cases technical assistance and capacity building may be necessary to help individual developing country Members to introduce such measures"*. (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- *"Technical assistance may be required both from international and regional agencies (...) as well as on a bilateral level"*. (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(d) Use of International Standards

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Use of international standards to the extent possible, where other international organizations already have set up international standards, with a view to minimizing the incidence and complexity of import and export formalities"* and to *"decreasing and simplifying import and export documentation requirements."* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- Harmonizing and standardizing document formats, using *'aligned documents'* with the same size paper and common items of information set out in the same relative position in each form, such as the UN Layout Key for Trade Documents (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"Recommendation to accede to the conventions administered by the World Customs Organization (WCO) which seek to harmonize and simplify customs procedures, in particular the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Kyoto Convention), the Convention on Temporary Admission (Istanbul Convention) and the Brussels Convention on Nomenclature for the Classification of Goods in Customs Tariffs, inter alia, which include mechanisms for the progressive adoption of commitments, selectivity as regards the inclusion of regulations and the possibility of reservations"*. (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"... use of international standards as a basis for documentation and data requirements (...). The development or use of already existing standardized formats on documentation should be considered". "Whenever possible the number of documents required should be reduced to a level that is the "least restrictive" to trade "* (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)
- *" (...) development and adoption of common international trade requirements and procedures. (...) In order to reach a set of common forms and electronic documents, the harmonization of*

import documents and the data required for release of goods using existing international standards under the WTO Customs Valuation Agreement, the HS Convention, the UN Layout Key Guidelines and the WCO Kyoto Convention etc., is essential. The United Nations Layout Key (...) and UneDocs (...) would be most convenient since substantial progress has been achieved on them. While standardizing customs procedures, defining the work process is essential for eliminating the unnecessary and repetitive procedures. (...)" (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

- *"Use of relevant International Standards and Instruments. Members should agree to use international standards and instruments as the basis for their import and export procedures and requirements (...)"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46). Applies also to section K (release and clearance of goods).
- *"... use international standards as a basis for documentation and data requirements (both for format and content of documents and data)."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- *"Progressive implementation of simplified and standardized import and export procedures, based on international standards and instruments, including the WCO Kyoto Convention."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- *"(...) Encourage the use of international standards, guidelines, or recommendations by all Members."* (TN/TF/W/62)
- *"(...) alternative options for approaching th[e] issue [of use of standardized documents] [are]: (i) Reference to relevant international organizations that have developed standardized documents, for example, WCO and UN including UNCTAD. (ii) An obligation to use documents that are aligned with the UN Layout Key.¹⁰ (iii) Reference to a bank of standard documents run by a relevant international organization which Members must draw from. (iv) A list of standard documents that must be used."* (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/67)
- *"... standardize and reduce the amount of documentation and information required for import and export operations."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)

Suggested Approach/Mean

- *"It is important to take due account of the relevant work of other relevant international organizations"* in that area (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- To standardize the format and layout of documents, *"first there should be a standard list of data which are collected by governments; and standardized classifications and names for these data. The WCO Customs Data Model can serve such function"*. (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- An example of existing standardized formats on documentation suggested for use is the UN Layout Key for Trade Documents, which is the basis for trade documents such as *"the European Union's Single Administrative Document, the Dangerous Goods Declaration (UNECE), GSP (General System of Preference) Certificates (UNCTAD), Certificate of Origin (revised Kyoto Convention), Goods Declaration for Export (revised Kyoto Convention), Standard Bill of Lading (International Chamber of Shipping), etc. Where the information already exists in such a standard document, there should be no need to require additional documentation containing the same information."* (New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)

¹⁰ The UN Layout Key is by far the most widespread basis for standard documents. Since 1985 the UN Layout Key has become an ISO standard (6422).

- " (...) it will be helpful if Members define their customs work process with a flow chart in the official website of their customs authorities (...). The flow charts could then be used "to design software that will require a step-by-step approach to finalize the customs procedures." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- "... The data set developed within the WCO data model, UN EDIFACT (UN Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport) and the UN Layout Key could be identified as basic reference points/standards [for using international standards as a basis for documentation and data requirements] (...), and WTO Members may wish to identify others." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- " (...) consider establishing a long-term mechanism, in the form of either a committee, a working group, a task force, annual periodic meeting or any other appropriate structure, or even recourse to an existing mechanism..." whose functions "might include, but would not be limited to" the encouragement for all Members to use international standards, guidelines, or recommendations. (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/62)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Use of international standards "... to the extent possible..." (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)
- Reduction of the required documents to the least-trade restrictive level "whenever possible" (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)
- "... except where such international standards would be an ineffective or inappropriate means to fulfil the legitimate objectives sought." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- "(...) the use of standardized documents should, of course, not stop Members from enforcing legitimate policy objectives. In fact, the range of existing standardized documents that are available already provide for significant flexibility for Members to achieve these legitimate objectives." (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/67)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru in section G:1:b, by the European Communities in section H:1:a, and by Chile in A:3:a..

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- "... may require Members to review their current documentation requirements and customs procedures. (...) In these cases, assistance by relevant international agencies, such as the WCO and the World Bank, especially those of the least-developed countries, may be warranted". (Korea TN/TF/W18)
- "We recognize that for [certain] developing countries technical assistance could be needed" (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/67)
- See also references to input on TA&CB by New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland in section H:1:c, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(e) Uniform Customs Code

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Introduction by each WTO Member, or customs union (between two or more Members), of a uniform customs code or aligned customs legislation, as well as a single import and export declaration, administrative message or data set."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(f) Acceptance of Commercially Available Information and of Copies

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Acceptance of required documents in copies to the extent possible (...) especially in cases where multiple authorities are involved or where documents are required to conduct other procedures."* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)
- *"Except for some justifiable cases, customs authorities should be able to forego certain documentation requirements whenever the relevant information (e.g., name of the buyer, seller, country of origin, quantity and description of the goods, and their estimated value) is already available in the context of the commercial transaction. Especially, if customs authorities operate electronic information exchange systems, the acceptance of commercially available information may significantly reduce traders' documentation burden without making additional demands on customs resources. Commercially available information includes information, which is included in business-to-business transactions such as bills of lading or commercial invoices. Accepting copies of documents in lieu of originals for import and export can also greatly streamline the customs process. Customs can, if necessary, always request the original documents at a later time".* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"If or when automatization is put in place, in cases where physical documentation are required under manual procedures, the Customs should normally accept copies and not only accept/request originals of documents, except in clearly defined circumstances. With automated transmission of documents it is always difficult, if not impossible, to identify an original document if it is printed out or a photocopy is made".* (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)
- *"... acceptance of copies of certain documents used in import and export formalities..."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

- "... identify cases in which copies and not originals of documents are accepted. Simplification could also be served by permitting the acceptance routinely of relevant-commercially available information." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Suggested Approach/Means

- "Electronic documents which are authenticated by electronic signatures or other electronic means will help to identify and verify documents presented electronically". (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- "...to the extent possible..." (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)
- "... except in some justifiable cases..." (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- "... except in clearly defined circumstances" (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru in section G:1:b, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(g) Automation

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "Automation of customs and other agency import/export procedures, with the possibility of electronic submission of customs and other declarations, and automated payment of duties and other fees and charges" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- "Automated and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) based electronic systems should be introduced to replace paper-based procedures across customs and ultimately all other agencies involved in import and export administration." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1.

(h) Single Window/One-Time Submission

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Introduction of procedures for allowing one-time submission of import or export documentation to one authority (...) (including coordinating the timing and place of physical inspections among the relevant authorities to the extent possible)". (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)*
- *"Acceptance of single documentary submission of import or export documentation requirements in cases of repeated transactions of same products; Exemption of documentary submissions for each importation or exportation should be permitted". (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)*
- *"... Members should establish a 'single window', which would act as a clearinghouse for all documents and data submission" so that traders would need "to submit data only once on the basis of streamlined document formats" with the 'single window' agency administrating all information on the document" (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)*
- *"Recommendation to establish a single-window mechanism at borders or ports with efficient computer back-up" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)*
- *"... efforts toward the one-stop service clearance/release facilities through inter-agency coordination, plus remote filing and local clearance facilitates, are crucial." (...) "... should consider whether rules could be developed to ensure that the activities and requirements of all agencies present at borders are coordinated in a manner designed to facilitate trade." (...) "An agreement on trade facilitation may cover provisions on a Single Window approach whereby Members gradually undertake necessary measures." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)*
- *"Progressive implementation of the principle of a single, one-time presentation to one agency, normally the customs, of all documentation and data requirements for export or import, subject to any exceptions to be identified." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*
- *"The use by Members of an electronic "single window" for submitting, once only and to a single authority, all documentation and data relating to import/export procedures is highly important for the smooth running of trade, since it increases inter-agency coordination, allows more efficient use of public and private resources, and enhances the performance of government agencies." (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)*
- See also references to input by Canada in TN/TF/W/20 (as reflected in section J:1), by Singapore (TN/TF/W/58), by Thailand (TN/TF/W/61), and by Egypt (TN/TF/W/69)

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Goods could then be released from the border and customs control as quickly as possible on the basis of presentation and acceptance of appropriate documents and data. Also, making maximum use of a data set, across various border agencies of a country, would be useful. This approach also lends itself readily to electronic technology by setting up a computer system interface with other agencies." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)*

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Coordination of physical inspections among relevant agencies " ... to the extent possible... " (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)

- *"Exemption of documentary submissions for each importation or exportation should be permitted".* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru, TN/TF/W/17)
- Goods released from border and customs control *"as quickly as possible"...* . Single Window approach whereby Members *"gradually"* undertake necessary measures. (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- *"Progressive"* implementation of the principle of a single, one-time presentation of documentation and data to one agency *"subject to any exceptions to be identified."* *"This should be a best endeavour provision and the commitment would be to making progressive efforts, rather than to any fixed deadline."* *"Flexibility will be needed – especially for some developing countries..."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"...developing countries may require a longer period of time to institute these measures."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- See references to input on S&D by Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei and Peru in section G:1:b, by the European Communities in section H:1:a, and by Chile in A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"... the operation of a 'single window' (...) may require training of their officials. International organizations may hold training sessions for officials from the less experienced Members. These training sessions should include short seminars to familiarize officials with key concepts; and appropriate apprenticeships where officials from less experienced Members can work at the agencies of the more experienced Members and gain practical experience. As the deepening of human capital requires time, developing countries may require a longer period of time to institute these measures. Individual Members may have roles to play in the aforesaid training sessions as well."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- See also references to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1, and by the EC in section H:1:a.

(i) Elimination of Pre-Shipment Inspection

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Elimination of Pre-Shipment Inspection Arrangements."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Members set a deadline for the elimination of PSI where it substitutes for functioning customs services, and use the time available to ensure that the domestic customs administrations become more fully functional and PSI progressively phased out. The EC also suggests that during the transition period Members commit not to introduce new PSI arrangements."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

(j) Phasing Out Mandatory Use of Customs Brokers

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Non-discriminatory rules should apply in respect of licensing of customs brokers, together with an undertaking to phase out over time any requirements for the mandatory use of customs brokers."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

I. CONSULARIZATION

1. Prohibition of Consular Transaction Requirement

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Prohibition of requiring consular transactions, including consularization-related fees and charges, in connection with the importation of goods."* (Uganda and the United States, TN/TF/W/22)
- *"Practices such as the levying of "consular fees" or "consular invoices" and the like should be discontinued."* (European Communities and Australia, TN/TF/W/23)
- *" we often hear complaints from traders about high fees for consular invoices and certificates charged by importing Members."* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/25)
- *"Members could also agree to abolish documentation requirements such as demands for consular invoices (...)." (New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/36)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Examination could take place on whether appropriate transition mechanisms would be necessary for addressing particular individual need associated with an existing consularization requirement."* (Uganda and the United States, TF/TF/W/22)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- An assessment should be made *"whether implementation of the proposal would require technical assistance"*. (Uganda and United States, TN/TF/W/22)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland in section H:1:c.

J. BORDER AGENCY COORDINATION

1. Coordination of Activities and Requirements of all Border Agencies

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Measures could focus on the following objectives: (I) the compatibility or standardization of import/export data requirements of various agencies so as to allow importers and exporters to present all required data to only one border agency (...); (II) the coordination of procedures and formalities, including agreements (across borders if necessary) that (i) ensure cooperation between customs authorities and other interested agencies on coordinating border controls and (ii) establish technical and operational measures to regulate the functioning of integrated border controls (e.g., controls through a single, shared physical infrastructure in which the neighbouring countries' customs services operate side by side)." (Canada, TN/TF/W/20)*
- *"Establishment of border control cooperation and coordination mechanisms between the various authorities at Members' entry and exit points"*. (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Convergence of official controls in a "one-stop shop". Where documentary or physical verification of consignments by more than one agency is necessary this should be carried out at a single place and one time only, to the extent possible, and at hours that meet the needs of traders."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- See also Norway's input on border agency cooperation contained in document TN/TF/W/48.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- One stop-shop *"to the extent possible"*. (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Special and differential treatment provisions reflecting the specific circumstances of individual Members could be incorporated within commitments, for example through provisions for progressive implementation."* (Canada, TN/TF/W/20)

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"Technical assistance efforts in training and administration of Customs can include elements focusing on ways to improve coordination and reduce duplication among border agencies...."* (Canada, TN/TF/W/20)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

K. RELEASE AND CLEARANCE OF GOODS

1. Expedited/Simplified Release and Clearance of Goods

(a) Pre-Arrival Clearance

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Clearance in advance of arrival enable[ing] importers to file their entries prior to the arrival of merchandise at the port of entry. Importers may claim their goods immediately after importation, so long as they are not selected for document review or physical examination".* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- *"Introduction of procedures for accepting and examining documents prior to the arrival of goods..."* (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17). For further elaboration on this proposal see TN/TF/W/53 (Japan).
- Introduce and utilize pre-arrival processing (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"Establishment of disciplines on (...) pre-clearance (...) of goods."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"A commitment by each member to introduce simplified customs release and clearance procedures including the possibility of: pre-arrival processing of documentation...."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- *"Advance processing of customs declarations increases the fluidity of trade by making goods ready for release on arrival in the country of destination and avoiding unnecessary delays or lengthy storage in customs warehouses. The understanding is that there will be a pre-clearance procedure based on risk assessment and other factors which will determine whether incoming goods are subject to thorough, limited or no border control."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also reference to pre-arrival systems in Turkey' submission TN/TF/W/45, page 4; and to pre-arrival release in document TN/TF/W/69 by Egypt.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- "... adopt these measures as soon as they are feasible for each Member". (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities in section H:1:a, and by Chile in A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See references to input on TA&CB by Korea in section H:1:d., by Peru in section A:1, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(b) Expedited Procedures for Express Shipments

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"The handling of express consignments can be simplified by using as a reference the WCO Customs Guidelines for Express Consignments" (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10, further elaborated and explained in TN/TF/W/44, recommending (a) "De minimis threshold values: Consignments may be divided into four categories for the purpose of granting immediate release: (i) correspondence and documents without commercial value; (ii) low value consignments for which no duties and taxes are collected; (iii) low value dutiable consignments, and (iv) high value consignments; (b) Simplified declaration of low-value shipments: A simplified goods declaration containing the necessary information required by Customs should be allowed, especially for low value consignments. (c) Risk management: Customs are encouraged to examine suspicious consignments based on risk management techniques. (d) Periodic declaration: Customs may set up special procedures for authorized persons, such as periodic goods declaration, in order to further facilitate the release/clearance of high value consignments. (e) Financial guarantees: Customs may institute expeditious release/clearance procedures without payment of customs duties, provided operators conform to relevant Customs requirements and provide financial guarantees. (f) Flexible customs hours of operation: Customs may allow the release/clearance of consignments to take place outside Customs offices' normal business hours if the level of business so justifies.")*
- *"Provide specific expedited procedures for express shipments" (United States, TN/TF/W/15)*
- *"Establishment of specific procedures applicable to express shipments in order to facilitate trade in these goods without interfering with customs control" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)*
- *"... an agreement on trade facilitation should promote the widespread implementation of the procedures of the WCO on Express Consignments" as the "international standard procedures for clearance of express goods." (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)*
- See also Guatemala's input on express shipments contained in TN/TF/W/65.

Suggested Approach/Means

- "... commitment to provide separate expedited procedures, including individual elements such as providing for import data being submitted in advance of arrival of goods, an absence of weight or value restrictions on what is considered "express", the availability under normal circumstances to secure rapid release, and the availability of "de minimis" procedures for low value shipments." (United States, TN/TF/W/15)

Special and Differential Treatment

- ".. assess appropriate needs for transition periods and develop time lines setting out elements needed for full implementation. (...) establish appropriate transition mechanisms to address particular needs." (United States, TN/TF/W/15)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- "... promising for private sector participation in technical assistance efforts." (United States, TN/TF/W/15)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1.

(c) Risk Management/Analysis, Authorized Traders

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Apply risk management techniques, minimizing customs interventions in the flow of legitimate goods (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- "Conduct examination and inspection based on risk management." "... introduce simplified import and export formalities for authorized traders which have high level of compliance with trade related laws and regulations." (Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/17)
- Introduce and use risk assessment and management procedures (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- "Establishment of disciplines on the application of risk assessment criteria ... "(Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- "... use of risk management techniques in customs clearance..." (Turkey, TN/TF/W45)
- "Use of risk analysis methods based, as appropriate, on relevant international standards and practices. (...) In addition, it would be useful if Members were to make a commitment to introduce systems of authorized traders (...)" (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- Use risk management and risk analysis as defined in the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention Guidelines. "Establishment of a risk management platform by adopting advanced information technology." Classify enterprises "into different risk levels upon their compliance records with customs" and treat them "differently in terms of providing customs facilitation." (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)

- See further Chile's proposal in section K:1:a.
- See also input on risk management contained in TN/TF/W/42 (Japan).

Suggested Approach/Mean

- *"Risk analysis procedures should not be used as, or have the effect of creating, disguised obstacles to trade. They should be objective and applied for legitimate purposes." (...)* Systems of authorized traders should use *"transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria. Such systems should not exclude the participation of small- and medium-sized enterprises."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W46)
- *"Primary customs data including classification, valuation, origin of the goods, incorporated with selected data from other border agencies or trade authorities, can be gathered into the platform system. The information can be shared not only by Customs officers involved in risk management but also by those in relevant border agencies and trade authorities." (...)* *"Based upon the collection of clearance data and other relevant information, Customs officers at the risk management unit should analyze the available data and arrange for the appropriate customs operation accordingly. With the purpose of expediting Customs clearance, different treatments should be granted to commodities and traders classified at different risk levels."* (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *".... adopt these measures as soon as they are feasible for each Member"* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *" ... risk management techniques should strike a balance between trade facilitation and border control requirements."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- Risk analysis methods based on relevant international standards and practices *"as appropriate"* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)
- The categorization of enterprises into different risk levels *"may be adjusted according to their future compliance of customs laws and regulations."* (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Considering the difficulties that developing Members may confront in implementing risk management, longer period and other necessary flexibilities should be granted to these developing Members in the implementation of the relevant rules that may result from the negotiations."* (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)
- See also references to input S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"..with the proper technical assistance and capacity building support, developing and east-developed countries will be able to enjoy the benefits from such measures."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"Members, especially developing and least-developed Members, should identify their difficulties, requirements and priorities in implementing risk management through self-assessment. Developed Members and relevant international organizations should work out practical ways to*

assist these Members in this process and help develop their risk management projects. Members should share their useful experience accumulated in implementing risk management techniques. Developed Members should make special contribution in this regard." (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)

- See also references to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1, and by the European Communities in section H:1:a.

(d) Post-Clearance Audit

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main measure(s) proposed

- *"Under the post-clearance audit system, Customs may first release most of the consignments, and then conduct a thorough review of the documents of selected consignments after release".* (Chinese Taipei, TN/TF/W/10)
- Introduce and use post-entry auditing (Korea, TN/TF/W/18). For more information on post-clearance audit in Korea, see TN/TF/W/55.
- *"Establishment of disciplines on the application of (...) post-clearance control of goods. Members will be required to grant sufficient authority to customs administration support institutions to safeguard the audit function and effective post-clearance control of goods."* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Customs should carry out necessary post-clearance audit on the account books, vouchers, commercial documents, customs declaration forms and other trade-related information of enterprises upon the risk analysis results. The outcome of post-clearance audit should be fed back timely to relevant Customs officers involved in clearance procedures to take further action in order to ensure effective customs control."* (China and Korea, TN/TF/W/49)
- See also reference to post-arrival customs procedures by Egypt in TN/TF/W/69.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *".... adopt these measures as soon as they are feasible for each Member".* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by China and Korea in section K:1:c.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See also references to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1, and by China and Korea in section K:1:c.

(e) Separating Release from Clearance Procedures

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"... WTO Members consider commitments on the release of goods from Customs prior to payment of duties in cases where a trader provides sufficient guarantees in the form of collateral security or some other appropriate instrument with respect to the ultimate payment of duties and taxes, under circumstances such as the following: (i) where delays are encountered in completion of final clearance procedures (as in cases awaiting a decision on the correct tariff classification); (ii) where goods are imported to fulfil a specific purpose and subsequently duty-paid or exported after use (as in cases where there is authorization to import goods for "inward processing" without payment of duties and taxes, providing the finished goods are subsequently exported)."* (Australia and Canada, TN/TF/W/19)
- *"Maintain a system by which goods may be released from the custody of customs before final payment of duties or resolution of customs matters (such as classification or customs valuation), utilizing as necessary a guarantee as a surety, bond, or deposit".* (United States, TN/TF/W/21)
- *"Possibility of establishing an enhanced customs clearance system with provisions on the security (bonds, financial guarantees, etc.) or other forms of collateral required to ensure that the obligations of importers, warehouse operators or international goods carriers towards the customs authorities are properly discharged".* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- See also reference to the EC's input on release upon posting of a guarantee in section E:2.

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"A trader who wishes to ask for the release of a given good prior to payment must post a security instrument with the Customs authorities. A security can be in the following forms: cash, a certified cheque, a transferable bond issued by the Government or an approved financial institution, or a surety bond issued by an approved issuer. Upon final determination of the amount of duty or charges payable, the Customs authorities seek payment from the trader. If the trader cannot and will not fulfil its obligations, the Customs authorities can obtain payment from the security instrument. Bonds could be limited to a single transaction or cover several transactions, including importations across the customs territory (continuous bonds). Bonds may also be employed for an expanded range of uses to meet a variety of import circumstances. As an example, surety bonds may include such uses as immediate clearance/delivery in the case of express shipments".* (Australia and Canada, TN/TF/W/19)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Special and differential treatment provisions reflecting the specific circumstances and capacity to deliver collateral security services in individual Members could be incorporated within commitments, for example through provisions for deferred implementation"* (Australia and Canada, TN/TF/W/19)
- *"Diagnostic tools should be utilized to assess the unique situation of each individual Member regarding implementation of the proposed commitment. Such an undertaking can identify needs*

and priorities, and lead to appropriate and workable transition periods combined with assistance targeted at individual situations". (United States, TN/TF/W/21)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"Technical assistance efforts in training and administration of Customs can include elements focusing on ways to improve revenue collection and enforcement of Customs laws, including through systems allowing for collateral or monetary securities". (Australia and Canada, TN/TF/W/19)*
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by Peru in section A:1.

(f) Other Measures to Simplify Customs Release and Clearance

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article VIII

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"... rapid release procedures based, for example, on the submission of a simplified document and mechanism for post-release reconciliation of documentation and duties payable; the possibility of customs clearance or relevant export control at an importer's or exporter's premises; and the possibility of periodical audit and duty payment rather than duty payment on the basis of individual transactions." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

2. Establishment and Publication of Average Release and Clearance Times

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Publication of *"standard processing period for major trade procedures"* (Japan, Mongolia, Chinese Taipei, Pakistan and Peru, TN/TF/W/8)
- *"Members establish and make publicly available the average time taken for clearing and releasing of goods"* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"Establishment of a time limit for customs release..."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)
- *"... each Member would establish and agree progressively to reduce its domestic standard processing times for goods release and clearance, based on a common standard such as the WCO Time Release Study. (...) Publication of standard processing times would ensure that such*

times are in the first place established, and then efforts made to reduce them." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

- See also the reference to EC proposal TN/TF/W/6 in section A.1., first bullet, element (vii).

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Through the WCO Time Release Study: Guide to Measure the Time Required for the Release of Goods, the WCO has guidelines in place to help (...) measure the time required for releasing and clearing of goods. (...) WTO Members may agree to make such measurements public. (...) Members may agree to a provision that, in cases where the release takes longer than the average time, traders would have the right to ask the customs authority the reason why the processing time for their goods is longer."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"... the WCO Time Release Study can be utilized."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *"If there are irregularities in shipment or exceptional circumstances occur, Members would still retain the right to delay clearing of goods".* (Korea, TN/TF/W/18)
- *"... the variable durations of conformity assessment tests and special conditions at the border, which pose outstanding security risks, should be taken into consideration in declaring release time standards."* (Turkey, TN/TF/W/45)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a.

L. TARIFF CLASSIFICATION

1. Objective Criteria for Tariff Classification

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Articles VIII and X

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Require objective criteria for the tariff classification of goods. (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- *"Requirement to apply objective criteria for tariff classification of goods."* (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"... requiring the use of objective tests, and (...) requiring Members to adopt the World Customs Organization's Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System ('the*

HS Convention') "... establish criteria that classification decisions and any necessary tests should satisfy, such as objectivity, scientific basis, wide acceptance and impartiality." (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)

- *"This could be achieved through the use for all trade by all Members of the WCO HS Convention (...)." (European Communities, TN/TF/W/46)*

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Application of an objective test only *"where it is otherwise not possible to accurately determine the classification of a product."* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"For those Members implementing [the HS Convention] for the first time, especially LDCs, some technical assistance may be needed."* (New Zealand, TN/TF/W/24)
- See also reference to input on TA&CB by the European Communities listed in section H:1:a

M. MATTERS RELATING TO GOODS TRANSIT

1. Strengthened Non-Discrimination

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Ensuring non-discrimination between modes of transport used for transit of goods, the origin or destination of goods in transit, carriers of goods in transit, the route chosen and the particulars of the goods themselves. This is without prejudice to the commitments in force involving landlocked Members. Transit Members are encouraged to provide landlocked developing Members with national treatment."* (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- *"Ensure non-discrimination between means of transport, between carriers and between types of consignment in relation to transit procedures, including with regard to fixed installations which themselves are capable of moving goods, such as pipelines."* (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- *"The objective of the proposal is to strengthen the principle of non-discrimination stated in Article V, in order to prevent the application of trade laws that limit the free transit of goods and means of transport among Members due to non-commercial reasons. Nowadays, this sensibly affects the trade of many WTO Members. (...) In light of the above, Cuba considers that, even when paragraph 2 of Article V of the GATT is clear regarding the obligation of non-discrimination in the freedom of transit, this provision should be strengthened by adding a new paragraph with the following text: "The Contracting Parties shall not apply discriminatory measures to goods in transit, as well as vessels or other means of transport of other contracting*

parties for non-commercial reasons. This does not exclude the right to recourse to the exceptions already established in the WTO agreements." (Cuba, TN/TF/W64)

Suggested Approach/Mean

- *"Any restrictions, controls or requirements must pursue a legitimate public policy objective, be proportionate and be applied uniformly". (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)*

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- *"(...) Members must preserve their right to implement appropriately and justifiably the exceptions included in Articles XXX and XXI of the GATT, but they cannot appeal to them without justified reason." (Cuba, TN/TF/W/64)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"... granting a transition period in accordance with developing Members' implementation capacity or support/assistance based on the coordination among relevant international organizations (IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WCO and World Bank) may be taken into consideration. In addition, enabling developing Members to consult the implementation capacities together with experts from relevant international organizations may be useful measures for Members to consider". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)¹¹*
- *"..... take fully into account the principle of special and differential treatment in the results of the negotiations and to make such treatment precise, effective and operational." (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)¹²*

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"...the following suggestions could be taken into account, based on the collaborative efforts among relevant international organizations, including the IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WCO and the World Bank: (i) Improving measures to ensure impartial implementation of provisions and procedures in force; (ii) Improving border operations and cooperating to fight against illicit trade;(iii) Exchanging experiences on techniques to improve the control of bulk cargoes; (iv) Conducting studies on transit related conditions with the aim of finding a way to minimize transit costs; and (iv) Transferring technology and information to reduce the costs. (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)¹³*
- *"The provision of technical assistance and support for capacity building is likely to be necessary for some developing countries to implement some of the above proposed commitments" (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)¹⁴*

¹¹ This reference to S&D treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and is only listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

¹² This reference to S&D treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and is only listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

¹³ This reference to TA&CB treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and will only be listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

¹⁴ This reference to TA&CB treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and is only listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

2. Disciplines on Fees and Charges

(a) Publication of Fees and Charges and Prohibition of Unpublished ones

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "... publication and broad diffusion of fees and charges imposed in respect of transit and prohibiting the collection of fees and charges with no legal basis". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- "A number of proposals already submitted (...), including with regard to the publication of information and requirements for predictability (....) are relevant and should apply to transit." (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)

Suggested Approach/Means

- "Officials in charge must exhibit the legal instrument by which these fees and charges are imposed, when requested by a user." (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

(b) Periodic Review of Fees and Charges

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "Periodic self-review of the appropriateness of the amount and the number of fees and charges imposed in connection with transit." (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

Suggested Approach/Means

- "For this purpose, a permanent review mechanism, such as a commission formed by representatives of the sectors involved, could be encouraged". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

(c) More Effective Disciplines on Charges for Transit

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "Agree on more effective GATT Article V disciplines on charges for transit. Proposals already submitted to the Negotiating Group in relation to GATT Article VIII rules on fees and charges could be a basis for elaborating parallel provisions on charges for transit. Members could

consider how to ensure that all charges for transit are effectively covered." (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)

- *"... the objective remains the elimination of transit fees and charges, where it cannot be associated to services rendered. (...)"* Ensure, *"through appropriate measures that rules regarding transit and connected activities are executed in accordance with the mandate. This is particularly accurate in relation with the levy of unpublished new or modified fees and charges pertaining to transit."* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, listed in the "Common Features" section of their proposal)
- *"Transit should not be subject to fees or charges that are not strictly related to transport costs or services rendered. Any fee or charge that is not related to the above could constitute a disguised barrier to trade. Trade will become more predictable and transparent if Members agree to implement a public register of all administrative costs and transport charges involved in transit and fees for services rendered. Service fees should not be established on a ad valorem basis."* (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Coordination platforms also play an important role in ensuring through appropriate measures that rules regarding transit and connected activities are executed in accordance with the mandate".* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"The extent and the timing of entering into commitments shall be related to the implementation capacities of developing and least-developed Members."¹⁵* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39)
- See also reference on S&D by Chile in section A:3:a.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"The implementation of these proposals will, in many cases require that technical and financial assistance be extended to developing countries, most especially the least developed of them..."* (...) *"... Switzerland will make every effort to ensure support and assistance directly related to the nature and the scope of the commitments on order to allow implementation. (...)"* *The modalities and funding for such technical assistance needs to be further explored."¹⁶* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39.)

(d) Periodic Exchange Between Neighbouring Authorities

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

¹⁵ This reference to S&D treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and is only listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

¹⁶ This reference to TA&CB treatment is meant to apply to all transit-related measures proposed by those countries and is only listed here to avoid unnecessary repetition.

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Periodic meeting of neighbouring authorities with the aim to discuss new fees and charges imposed in connection with transit as well as their modification, prior to their entering into force."* (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

3. Disciplines on Transit Formalities and Documentation Requirements

- (a) Periodic Review

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Periodically self-review transit formalities [and] transit documentation requirements based on comments from the private sector and other parties."* (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- Members *"be obliged to review their transit procedures to ensure that border requirements for goods in transit are minimized as much as possible"* (Korea, TN/TF/W/34)

Suggested Approach/Mean

- *"... Members may consider reducing documentary and data requirements for goods in transit. In particular, Members may use a commercial or transport document (e.g., commercial invoice, packing list, etc.) as the descriptive part of the goods declaration. The commercial or transport document may even be accepted as the goods declaration for the consignment concerned. Such usage of commercial or transport document is recommended in the Revised Kyoto Convention".* (Korea, TN/TF/W/34)

Build-In Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Minimize border requirements for transiting goods *"as much as possible"* (Korea, TN/TF/W/34)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- To allow for the required review of documentary requirements and fees for transiting goods, *"assistance from appropriate international organizations, notably the WCO, could be helpful and appropriate, and such organizations may also present best practices that developing countries can easily adopt and introduce."* (Korea, TN/TF/W/34).

- (b) Reduction/Simplification

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Maintain reasonable transit formalities, [and] transit documentation requirements with a view to minimizing unnecessary delays or restrictions on traffic in transit."* (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- *"Simplification of customs formalities and increased use of electronic and interconnection media for the inspection of goods upon entry to, at subsequent stops within, and on exit from a customs territory".* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"Simplify and standardize documentation, data requirements and procedures applied to goods and means of transport in transit. A number of proposals already submitted to the Negotiating Group, notably in relation to GATT Article VIII, are relevant. These include pre-arrival processing of transit documents, the use of commercially available information and data, risk management, authorized trader schemes, the establishment of "single windows", and time release measures."* (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- *"Simplified procedures for authorized traders. (...) Development and implementation of automated and internationally standardized procedures for the receipt and submission of information on goods, means of transport and persons prior to their arrival at the border post to enable in-advance selection and risk assessment by the competent authorities". "Special procedures for transit that consist of separate physical lines for border crossing and simplified border formalities"* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common features" section)

(c) Use of International Standards

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Use of international standards applied in most WTO Members to the extent possible, where other relevant international organizations already have set up international standards, with a view to minimizing unnecessary delays or restrictions on traffic in transit."* (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- *"Promotion of the use of international instruments relating to customs transit, including the possibility of acceding to such instruments, where applicable".* (Peru, TN/TF/W/30)
- *"....give careful consideration to the possibility of acceding to international instruments relating to Customs transit if they are in a position to implement them. If this is not possible, when drawing up bilateral or regional agreements with a view to setting up international Customs transit procedure, they should consider the Standards and Recommended Practices of Annex E of the Revised Kyoto Convention of 1999."* (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39). See also their input under the "Common Features" section of their proposal: *"The contracting parties agree on common customs documentation and procedures of the kind of introducing simplified documents that are aligned to international standards (...)"*. The section also makes reference to *"Harmonisation of vehicle and loading requirements, as well as the recognition by the contracting parties of international or other agreed vehicle insurances ..."*
- See also the related EC proposal in TN/TF/W/35 as reflected in section M:3:b.

Built-in Exceptions/Flexibility

- Use of international standards "*to the extent possible*" (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- Promotion of the use of international instruments relating to transit "*where applicable*" (Peru, TN/TF/W/30).

(d) Promotion of Regional Transit Arrangements

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Consideration could be given to providing guidance on the main elements of regional transit and their proper implementation and improving regional co-operation on transit. WTO Members could also envisage provisions to take account of international standards and instruments, including when drawing up bilateral or regional instruments*" (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- "*... the promotion of regional transit arrangements should be part of the clarification and improvement of GATT Article V.*" (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)
- "*Apart from encouraging Members to cooperate on a regional basis, the Negotiating Group could also consider the possibility of drawing up a non-exhaustive list of elements that Members should endeavour to incorporate when negotiating regional transit agreements. For example, Members could discuss having, to the extent possible, harmonized road traffic regulations with regard to road signs, road transport permits, technical requirements of vehicles, inspection certificates and insurance, etc., (...). In this connection, (...) in TN/TF/W/39, Paraguay et. al. have enumerated a number of common features in certain transit agreements which may be relevant (...)*". (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)

Built-in Exceptions/Flexibility

- Harmonized road traffic regulations "*to the extent possible*" (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)

Special and Differential Treatment

- "*... recognize that least-developed countries and some developing countries may have difficulties implementing some of the proposals relating to Article V. SDT should therefore be an integral part of any commitment in this area. In this connection, we note that the papers submitted on Article V contain specific proposals on SDT. Further to these proposals, Members may also wish to discuss: (i) longer implementation time-frames for developing and least-developed countries; (ii) allowing developing and least-developed countries to implement, on a best-endeavour basis, the more onerous obligations resulting from the Article V negotiations, including in the context of phased-in approaches.*" (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)

(e) Simplified and Preferential Clearance for Certain Goods

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Introduction of a simplified and preferential treatment for perishable goods to be transited in a territory of a Member, in order for these goods to be able to leave customs and control areas as soon as possible". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)*
- *"... accord to goods in transit that do not require transshipment less burdensome treatment than goods in transit that do require transshipment." (Korea, TN/TF/W/34)*
- *"Treatment of goods in transit is adapted to the risk involved and the special characteristics of goods, making a difference between "normal" goods, "dangerous goods", "perishable goods" and "sensitive goods" that show particular risks to fraud (e.g. tobacco and alcohol)." (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)*
- *"Members should employ risk management techniques that enable their authorities to concentrate inspection and monitoring activities on high-risk goods in transit, and facilitate the movement of low-risk goods in transit." (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)*

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"If goods in transit do not involve transshipment, a simple goods declaration and a simple set of service fees are sufficient for transit procedures, for there is only a minimal risk that the goods may be released into the transit country, and the services that the transit country authorities provide would be small. (...) for transit goods that undergo transshipment, there may be a need for additional inspection and security measures to prevent the smuggling of goods into the transit country or other illegal activities. In this regard, it would seem reasonable for the transit countries to require a minimal amount of additional paperwork and service fees for transshipment goods in transit. (...) goods in transit without transshipment should be given more streamlined treatment than goods in transit with transshipment. (...) non-transshipment goods in transit be obliged by only the bare minimum requirements with respect to paperwork and fees. For instance, a Member may choose not to require any documents for goods in transit by sea that do not undergo transshipment, while requiring only a limited set of documents for goods in transit by sea that undergo transshipment such as inbound manifest, declaration form for unloading, and outbound manifest. (...) Reduc[e] the burdens and simplif[y] procedures, such as inspection, data collecting, etc., for transit goods, especially for goods in transit that do not undergo transshipment...". (Korea, TN/TF/W/34)*

Built-in Exceptions/Flexibility

- Introduction of simplified and preferential treatment for perishable goods "as soon as possible" (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input in S&D by Singapore listed in section M:3:d.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- See also reference to input on TA&CB by Korea in section M:3:a.

(f) Limitation of Inspections and Controls

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*... based on mutual trust between governments and federal governments amongst them, but also between the government of departure and its private sector, the parties are limiting their physical inspection where these are warranted by the actual circumstances or risks. Border authorities avoid to carry out inspections and controls more than once over the same shipment, unless it is absolutely necessary. Also, usually no quality control and no veterinary, medicosanitary or phytosanitary inspection are imposed for goods in transit (except in cases where a risk of contamination exists)*". (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)
- See also references in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- No quality control and no veterinary, medicosanitary or phytosanitary inspection for goods in transit "*except in cases where a risk of contamination exists*". (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)

(g) Sealing

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Identification of goods under the transit procedure (...) to stop any fraudulent importation of goods. As a general rule, identification of these goods is ensured by sealing. In addition to this classic function of seals, electronic seals have been developed to provide for the detection and tracking of trucks.*" (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)
- See also references in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Means

- "*Members may wish to consider Annex E, Standard 3 of the Revised Kyoto Convention that enumerates minimum requirements to be met by Customs seals and fastening.*" (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)

(h) Cooperation and Coordination on Documentation Requirements

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Coordination of documentation requirements among all the authorities involved in traffic in transit, within each Member*". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

(i) Monitoring

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- Monitoring of transit arrangements to ensure actual implementation. "*It is also important that the contracting parties do not enforce unilateral rules and regulations affecting goods in transit where common regulations should prevail. It is recommended that all parties incorporate measures relating to transit into their arrangements.*" (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, listed in the "Common Features" section of their proposal)

Suggested Approach/Means

- "... *appointment of national transit coordinators*", introduction of "*performance indicators (e.g., target clearance times)*", setting up of "*public private partnerships to manage and monitor the arrangement.*" The non-enforcement of unilateral rules and regulations affecting goods in transit would "*need to be addressed in regular meetings between transit coordinators, or contracting parties. Coordination platforms also play an important role in ensuring through appropriate measures that rules regarding transit and connected activities are executed in accordance with the mandate*" (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section) See also their related input listed in section M:2:c, second bullet.

(j) Bonded Transport Regime/Guarantees

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Introduction of a bonded transport regime that would allow goods to be transited in a territory of a Member without payment of customs duties, transit duties or other charges, accompanied with a provision of appropriate security*". (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- "*Introduce more effective disciplines on the level, nature and management of guarantees required from transit operators, including rules to ensure that they are not used as an instrument to raise revenue*". (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)

- " ... arrangements foresee the use of an internationally or regionally valid guarantee system in order to avoid provisional taxation while securing revenue in case of inland diversion of goods. Usually, an individual guarantee is provided for each transport movement, covering the full amount of customs duties and other charges, like VAT or excise duties. The amount is based upon the highest rate applicable to the goods in the country of departure. For certain goods, involving greater risks, special rates apply or particular types of collaterals are required. Adopting an efficient guarantee system (...) through the use of a single guarantee in all the transit countries, and where the guarantee is renewable for subsequent consignments once a previous one is proved to have reached its destination." (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, "Common Features" section)
- See also references in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Suggested Approach/Mean

4. Improved Cooperation and Coordination

- (a) Amongst Authorities

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "Establishment of a cross border cooperation scheme that would enable landlocked Members and their neighbouring Members to consult and cooperate on the issue of traffic in transit (including, to the extent possible, the establishment of a common border check point to minimize the possibility of duplicated formalities pertaining to traffic in transit" (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)
- "Improve co-operation and co-ordination between all concerned agencies in each WTO Member and across borders. In many cases solutions to transit problems can only be found through regional collaboration since it is at the regional level that a large part of the problems related to unnecessary hindrances to transit are experienced." (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- "... cooperation and coordination between authorities (...). This cooperation and coordination can take different forms reaching from the simple harmonisation of border crossing procedures and working hours to shared infrastructure (one-stop border posts) and delegated competencies (both exit and entry formalities are handled by the same authority). Under these (...) arrangements, the contracting parties set up communication systems to exchange information and fight crime in the border area". (Paraguay, Rwanda and Switzerland, TN/TF/W/39, Common Features" section)
- "Coordination, cooperation and assistance among Members' authorities – especially Customs – involved with transit are highly relevant for the efficient resolving of transit-related problems. Members should work to conclude international cooperation and assistance agreements as a mechanism for achieving more efficient trade and increasing the ability to control illicit activities." (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- See also references in Egypt's national experience paper TN/TF/W/75.

Built-in Exception(s)/Flexibility

- Establishment of a common border check point "*to the extent possible*" (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to S&D by Chile in section A:3:a.
- (b) Between Authorities and the Private Sector

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Providing opportunities for the private sector to comment on the transit regime, with a view to minimizing unnecessary delays or restrictions on traffic in transit.*" (Bolivia, Moldova, Mongolia, Paraguay, Kyrgyz Republic and Japan, TN/TF/W/28)

5. Operationalization and Clarification of Terms

Main GATT Article(s) Concerned

- Article V

Main Measure(s) Proposed

- "*Operationalize the existing commitment in Article V to grant freedom of transit through the territory of each Member via the 'routes most convenient for international transit', for example by leaving the choice of route and means of transport to the operator.*" (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- "*Transit should not be subject to any unnecessary delays or restrictions. The absence of prescribed routes and periods for transit constitutes a barrier to trade. The establishment by Members of precise routes and periods for transit between an entry and an exit point would therefore increase the predictability and transparency of trade, while improving the ability to control cross-border smuggling.*" (Chile, TN/TF/W/70)
- "*Clarify and improve terminology to reduce perceived uncertainty and avoid loopholes, for example with regard to the definition of "goods (including baggage)" in GATT Article V, paragraph 1.*" (European Communities and Paraguay, TN/TF/W/35)
- Clarify Article V:3's requirement not to impose any "unnecessary delays" on transit traffic by "stipulating [a] time period[s], after which any further retention at the customs house could be deemed to constitute unnecessary delay." (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)
- Clarify the scope of "administrative expenses entailed by transit" by discussing "*whether and under what situations these expenses should be imposed on transit traffic. In this connection, Members could consider drawing up guidelines for the imposition of 'administrative expenses'. For example, Members could clarify that 'administrative expenses' should only relate to costs expended for risk assessment and random inspections. This could be a nominal fee which should*

be applied on a non-discriminatory basis. Members could discuss what other elements to include in these guidelines." (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)

- Clarify the scope of "cost of services rendered" in the sense that "*any charges imposed should only be in respect of the provision of the services necessary to ensure the effective transit of goods. The charges levied must refer to the approximate cost of the service rendered and may not be calculated on an ad valorem basis.*" (Singapore, TN/TF/W/47)

Special and Differential Treatment

- See reference to input on S&D by Singapore listed in section M:3:d, and by Chile in section A:3:a.

Related to Customs Cooperation

INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM

1. Multilateral Mechanism for the Exchange and Handling of InformationMain Measure(s) Proposed

- *"Establish a multilateral mechanism for the exchange and handling of information between Members." (India and the United States, TN/TF/W/57)*
- *"Establish a mechanism to facilitate cooperation between customs authorities by: (i) Exchanging specific information upon request on matters such as customs valuation, HS classification, full and accurate description, quantity, origin of goods in identified cases where there is reason to doubt the truth or accuracy of the declaration filed by the importer or exporter. The request for information would be limited to the data elements contained in the import or export declaration. (ii) In appropriate cases, providing document(s) filed in support of goods declaration to the requesting country for investigative and/or judicial processes". (India, TN/TF/W/68)*

Suggested Approach/Means

- *"Members should establish a mechanism that is practical and effective, involving a commitment pertaining to (1) a defined universe of information, (2) a practical basis for exchange that is efficient and not burdensome, and (3) a structure for information exchange that is forward-looking—both with regard to promoting continuous improvement in cooperation and commonality of information requirements. These objectives also point to an information exchange mechanism that is ultimately built upon implementation of World Customs Organization's Customs Data Model. (...) A critical element of moving this proposal forward would be to address the matter of confidentiality in handling of such information." (India and the United States, TN/TF/W/57)*
- *Cooperation "would be in a limited number of cases where the requesting administration, after carrying out necessary internal verification, has reasons to doubt the truth or accuracy of any element of the import or export declaration or supporting document (s). There will be an inbuilt mechanism to ensure that the requests are not made in a routine manner." (...) "For making such requests, a time limit could be considered to avoid any hardship for retrieving old documents. The nature of information to be requested would be specific details (e.g, description of goods, grade or specification, HS classification, value, quantity, country of origin, etc.) concerning the transaction. Supporting documents, wherever required, would include commercial invoice, packing list, certificate of origin, etc. These documents would be mostly certified or authenticated copies." (...) " (...) exchange of information could be through a nodal agency to be designated by each Customs administration and notified to the WTO" Request for assistance could be made in writing or electronically in one of the three official languages of the WTO. Request for information should include brief details of the case, nature of doubt and reasons for doubt, results of internal verification, and details of information required. "It would be desirable to lay down a reasonable time limit for furnishing information." "... information exchanged should be subject to a confidentiality clause, namely, that the information supplied should not be disclosed except to the extent required in judicial proceedings." Information so obtained be allowed to be used in the judicial proceedings without bringing in the cover of confidentiality. (India, TN/TF/W/68)*

Special and Differential Treatment

- *"Assess needs and priorities of developing countries related to implementation of the proposal and develop a path by which every Member can ultimately achieve full implementation of the mechanism."* (India and the United States, TN/TF/W/57)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- *"Work with relevant international organizations and resource providers to address technical assistance and other issues as appropriate".* (India and the United States, TN/TF/W/57)
- *"Technical assistance needs in this area are not likely to be significant as such cooperation can be effected through the existing administrative set up of the customs administrations. However, this issue can be considered if such need is projected by any Member."* (India, TN/TF/W/68)

VI. CROSS-CUTTING SUBMISSIONS

NEEDS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFICATION

Communication by China and Pakistan (TN/TF/W/29)

- *With reference to the work already done by other international organizations, Members use a general tool to assess their needs and priorities as well as their current levels of trade facilitation. When conducting the assessment, outstanding diversities of levels of regional economic development within individual Members should be taken into full consideration. The result of the assessment should be taken as a basis for establishment of relevant trade facilitation rules, the arrangement of special and differential treatment and the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support.*

- Proposed Next Steps of Work
 - (a) *Based on the Secretariat's document on Technical Assistance and Capacity Building on Trade Facilitation (TN/TF/W/5), the Secretariat should frequently provide updated information to Members, if any, on the work done by other international organizations in assessing trade facilitation needs and priorities.*

 - (b) *Members should study relative tools available and decide on the usage of a general tool. There could be a series of tools already developed by different international organizations with each covering a different area.*

 - (c) *Based upon the general tool agreed, Members may conduct a self assessment and then submit a summary report on the assessment to the Secretariat.*

 - (d) *Based on the summary reports, the Secretariat prepares a document reflecting major areas of interests of Members or a list of needs and priorities of Members within the general scope of GATT Articles V, VIII and X. Future rules on trade facilitation will be developed mainly on the basis of those major areas.*

 - (e) *During the assessment period, a working group made up of international organizations concerned may be set up to ensure the objectivity of the assessment and to give necessary assistance and support to developing and least-developed countries. Those Members who have already had the experience in such assessment are invited to share their experience with other Members.*

 - (f) *For those Members who have huge regional economic level diversities within their territories, their assessment could be based either on the different or on an average level of development within their territories. The unique development situations of these countries shall be taken into full consideration in the implementation of future trade facilitation rules.*

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Communication from the African Group (TN/TF/W/56)

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building In the Course of the Negotiations

1. Identification of Needs and Priorities

Provided for in paragraph 4 of Annex D, the process of identifying Members' trade facilitation needs and priorities *"has been partially addressed by the WCO Self Assessment Checklist for GATT Articles V, VIII and X, and other tools such as the WCO Time Release Study. However, the African Group would like to propose for a revision of the WCO Self Assessment Checklist that would be simpler and in conformity with the scope of the negotiations and that would cover not only Customs issues, but also all formalities and procedures related to importation, exportation and transit in line with GATT Articles V, VIII and X. This will assist Members in identifying their needs and priorities falling within the scope of the negotiations."*

2. Compilation of Needs and Priorities of Individual Members

"(...) The African Group would like to propose that the WTO Secretariat undertakes to compile needs and priority put forward by different Members. The compilation of needs and priorities of individual Members which, should be continually updated as appropriate, would serve as a useful reference by those Members, organizations and other donors willing to provide targeted assistance during and after the negotiations. In this regard, those Members having difficulties in identifying their needs and priorities should be assisted."

3. Support for Clarification and Educative Process Including Training

"The African Group welcomes the support so far extended by the WTO, individual Member countries, and other organizations for clarification and educative process, including training of customs officials, with respect to GATT Articles V, VIII and X. This type of support should be enhanced both at the national and regional level in order to facilitate the participation of developing and least-developed countries in the negotiations. Individual Members and organizations expected to support these activities should come forward and give their indications in order to trigger requests by those member countries in need. Furthermore, clarification and educative process should contribute to the negotiations through factual reporting of the outcome of seminars/workshops by the relevant organization during the meetings of the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation."

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Beyond the Negotiations Phase

1. Implementation of the Outcome

"Annex D of the July 2004 Framework provides a strong commitment by Members, in particular developed countries, to provide technical assistance and capacity building not only during negotiations but also in implementing the obligations resulting from the negotiations. It is also clear from the modalities on Trade Facilitation that developing or least-developed countries shall not be required to implement commitments if they lack implementation capacities and have not received the required technical assistance. Furthermore, international organizations providing assistance within the area of trade facilitation are called upon to collaborate."

2. Coordination Mechanism for Implementing Needs and Priorities as well as Commitments

"The support required to implement trade facilitation commitments goes beyond the traditional technical assistance provided by the WTO Secretariat. For instance some trade facilitation measures require support for infrastructural development.

Coordination among relevant international agencies and donors in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building is therefore important during and after the negotiations. This has also been mentioned in the Note by the WTO Secretariat on Technical Assistance and Capacity Building on Trade Facilitation (TN/TF/W/5).

While the modalities for negotiations on trade facilitation alludes to coherence and a collaborative approach among international organizations providing technical assistance in this area, their specific role with regard to implementation of the needs and priorities of developing and least-developed countries need to be clarified in order to ensure complementarity.

The African Group therefore urges Members to consider the idea of establishing a coordination/collaborative mechanism¹⁷ or building upon any existing mechanism involving various partners engaged in trade facilitation in order to enhance synergies and ensure efficient use of available resources. Such mechanism should ensure that the needs and priorities with respect to trade facilitation identified by developing and least-developed countries are addressed effectively; that available resources will be efficiently used; and that there will be long-term sustainability of technical assistance programmes."

MULTIPLE AREAS

Communication from the African Group (TN/TF/W/33)

Scope of the Negotiations

*(...) The scope of the negotiations conducted under the aegis of the Negotiating Group must in essence remain consistent with the objectives set forth above. The negotiations should be focused solely on clarifying and improving GATT Articles V, VIII, and X. **For the African Group, enhanced Special and Differential treatment, technical assistance, support for capacity building and implementation assistance is a critical component of these negotiations.** The right to select policy options and exercise policy flexibility granted in favour of developing and least-developed countries must remain sacrosanct.*

Supporting Trade Facilitation Needs and Priorities of Africa

The trade facilitation needs and priorities of African countries are enormous. The process of identifying specific trade facilitation needs and setting out the priorities of African countries requires intensive work to be undertaken, both at the national and regional levels, with the assistance of the relevant international organizations. The overarching objective of such an identification process should, as a minimum, aim at providing solutions to the following basic characteristics of Africa's trading environment:

- *How to reduce high transport and communication costs that impact adversely on the competitiveness of African enterprises;*

¹⁷ The WTO Secretariat note TN/TF/W/5 points out how some collaborative mechanisms have worked in the area of trade facilitation.

- *How to enhance the capacities of Customs Administration, including through their automation, in order to dramatically reduce delays at points of entry and exit while maximizing public revenue receipts;*
- *How to improve the integration of African enterprises/economies into the international payments and insurance systems.*

Addressing Cost Implications

The cost implications on developing and least-developed countries of proposals for new commitments on trade facilitation need to be fully assessed and examined. Any findings on the cost implications (especially with respect to the development of necessary public works infrastructure, information and communications technology infrastructure, administrative re-engineering, and human resources) should then be directly linked to the provision of adequate technical and financial assistance and support for capacity building.

It must be emphasised that enhancing technical assistance and support for capacity building is one of the primary objectives of the negotiations. As provided for in Paragraph 6 of Annex D, the implementation of new commitments on trade facilitation by developing and least-developed countries is conditioned on the provision of adequate technical and financial assistance and support for capacity-building in trade facilitation by developed countries. In this respect, the goal of assisting developing countries, especially LDCs, to address such cost implications effectively needs to be treated as priority.

Furthermore, to assist developing and least-developed countries participate effectively in the negotiations on trade facilitation, Paragraph 5 of Annex D needs to be operationalized. In this regard, the African Group would like to propose the establishment of an appropriate mechanism, to be agreed upon not later than the end of July 2005, for the provision by developed countries of technical assistance and support for capacity building during the negotiations.

Among others, such technical assistance and capacity-building support during the negotiations should support:

- *Trade Facilitation negotiations-oriented research and capacity-building projects identified and proposed by developing and least-developed country Members;*
- *The conduct by developing and least-developed countries of participatory and transparent trade facilitation needs assessment and prioritization exercises to assist them in developing their own negotiating positions and priorities; and*
- *Specific travel support for capital-based experts of developing-country Members who are knowledgeable on trade facilitation issues to enable them to participate actively in the NGTF.*

Special and Differential Treatment in Trade Facilitation

Paragraph 2 of Annex D lays down the parameters for the application of the principle of Special and Differential treatment for developing and least-developed countries in the trade facilitation decisions. For the African Group, special and differential treatment goes beyond longer transitional periods. In the context of any new commitments on trade facilitation, Special and Differential treatment should also be reflected in legally binding provisions that:

- *Are precise, effective and operational;*
- *Provide policy space and flexibility for developing and least-developed countries while determining (based on their own assessment of their implementation capacity) when, how, and the extent to which such new commitments on trade facilitation are to be implemented by them; and*
- *Condition the implementation by developing and least-developed countries of such new commitments to the provision by developed countries of effective, adequate, long-term, and sustainable technical and financial assistance and support for capacity-building with respect to national structural or sector-specific trade facilitation-related projects or programmes identified by developing or least-developed countries as being necessary, in their view, to allow them to fully implement such new commitments.*

Inter-Agency Cooperation

A number of international and regional organizations have considerable experience and expertise on the subject of trade facilitation. They can make important contributions to one of the objectives of the negotiations, namely the provision of technical assistance and support for capacity building to developing and least-developed countries. Of particular note is the work of the World Customs Organizations and the ASYCUDA and ACIS programmes of UNCTAD. Further, the work of the Economic Commission for Africa, because of its Africa specificity, will be crucial for the identification of Africa's needs and priorities in this area.

The African Group is of the opinion that the work on trade facilitation provides a unique opportunity for the WTO, IMF and the World Bank to deliver concretely on the coherence mandate. In this regard, we call upon the three institutions to undertake a concrete collaborative effort with a view to, inter alia, addressing the needs and priorities that will be identified by the African Group in the course of the negotiations. (...)"

Communication from a Group of Latin American Countries¹⁸(TF/TF/W/41)

Interrelationship Between the Elements of Annex D¹⁹

"The relationships and synergies between the elements referred to could be reflected in future disciplines as follows:

Relationship between the rules and the needs and priorities of Members

The negotiating process will lead to the adoption of a series of improvements and clarifications designed substantially to enhance the effectiveness of Articles V, VIII and X of the GATT 1994. It is possible that some rules, though beneficial from the standpoint of trade facilitation, may require resources, capacity-building or institutional adjustments for their implementation, and will therefore be temporarily beyond the implementation capacity of certain Members, particularly developing and least developed countries.

¹⁸ Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay

¹⁹ The sponsors stress that the points made in this paper are meant to apply across the board to all negotiating proposals made by Members.

In such cases, compliance with future commitments should be commensurate with the demonstrated implementation capacity of each Member. This would serve to promote gradual implementation in the manner best suited to the capacity, development level and trade needs of each Member.

The identification of the needs and priorities of Members will be a compulsory benchmark, parallel to the identification of future commitments²⁰, within the negotiating process. To that end, a process of self-assessment by each Member – with the necessary technical assistance – would make it possible to diagnose the actual capacity for implementation of future commitments. This diagnosis would serve to determine each Member's real situation in relation to trade facilitation and the distance separating it from the capacity needed to implement obligations to be agreed in the future. It would also serve to define technical assistance and capacity-building requirements for the purpose of narrowing the gap between the rule and the actual capacity for implementation.

With a view to the implementation of the agreed commitments, Members will report on their actual capacity for implementation within a period of time to be determined.

In the case of developing and least developed countries with no proven capacity for immediate implementation of the new commitments, differential transition periods will be established, combined with programmes of technical assistance and capacity-building, and geared to the obligations to be assumed and the analysis of national needs and priorities. Upon completion of those programmes, the Members concerned could be in a position to undertake the new commitments gradually, following a timetable and a procedure adapted to their implementation capacities. Pending achievement of the required capacities, the commitments would not be enforceable.

Technical assistance and capacity-building in the light of Members' needs and priorities and the rules

Compliance with the future trade facilitation disciplines for developing and least developed countries may entail technical assistance and capacity-building, with a resulting need for resources. The experience with the implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements demonstrated the practical difficulties to which commitments undertaken in the WTO framework give rise if resources for their implementation are lacking or if inadequate consideration is given to each country's needs for the implementation of the discipline.

Technical assistance and capacity-building should be directed to the establishment of programmes conducive to implementation of the outcomes of the negotiations. In other words, when rules are considered for possible adoption in the WTO, simultaneous consideration should be given to technical assistance so as to guarantee the viability of their implementation.

An assessment should be made of the desirability of establishing a mechanism to organize and coordinate technical assistance and capacity building in the area of trade facilitation, pooling the efforts of donors, recipients and other international organizations. This mechanism would ensure that technical assistance is adapted to the needs of the recipients, so as to guarantee transparency, coherence and effective assistance to developing and least developed countries in the implementation of commitments in this field.

Special and differential treatment and its relationship with the other elements of Annex D

Special and differential treatment, which must go beyond the customary granting of transition periods for the implementation of commitments, is horizontally related to each of the above-mentioned elements of Annex D. This principle should therefore form an integral part of the clarification and

²⁰ Suggestions along these lines were recently made in the communication from the People's Republic of China and Pakistan (TN/TF/W/29).

improvement of Articles V, VIII and X of the GATT 1994, of the identification of each Member's needs and priorities, as well as of the means of providing technical assistance and support for capacity-building. Moreover, the effectiveness of special and differential treatment will depend on the way in which the existing links and relationships between the above-mentioned elements are given effect in the final outcome."

Communication from Chinese Taipei (TN/TF/W/62)

Establish "a long-term mechanism, in the form of either a committee, a working group, a task force, annual periodic meetings, any other appropriate structure, or even recourse to an existing mechanism, in order to deal with trade facilitation issues, especially customs matters. The functions of the long-term mechanism might include, but would not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Review the effectiveness of the support and assistance provided to developing Members, especially least-developed Members, so as to ensure progress on the implementation of the results of the negotiations. If difficulties in implementation are encountered by developing or least-developed Members, the mechanism, in conjunction with additional developed Members and/or relevant international organizations, shall ensure provision of the necessary technical assistance and capacity building.*
- (b) Grant to developing Members, especially LDCs, upon request, specified, time-limited exceptions from obligations, in whole or in part, taking into account their financial, trade and development needs with a view to ensuring full compliance with the final results of the negotiations.*
- (c) Provide a regular forum to allow Members to consult on any matters relating to trade facilitation.*
- (d) Maintain close contact with the relevant international organizations in the field of trade facilitation with the aim of securing the best information on trade facilitating measures, and thus avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts.*
- (e) Encourage the use of international standards, guidelines, or recommendations by all Members.*
- (f) Serve as a forum for Members to share national experiences and exchange views on trade facilitation matters. The mechanism shall also promote effective cooperation between customs, or any other appropriate authorities, on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues.*
- (g) Serve, as appropriate, as a platform for the coordination of matters relating to trade facilitation with other WTO Committees.*

Communication from Pakistan and Switzerland (TN/TF/W/63)

"One of the key messages of Annex D is that Trade Facilitation obligations would become effective for a country when, in the view of the WTO Members, the country has acquired the capacity to administer efficiently the rules. Any measures will become binding obligations once the capacity to implement has been achieved. Part C of this paper proposes elements of a mechanism that strives to operationalise this objective. The following three elements would complement this operational mechanism:

An Inventory of Trade Facilitation Measures

(...) *The WTO Secretariat's compilation document TN/TF/W/43 and subsequent revisions provides a good basis for such an inventory.*

The contribution by the African Group TN/TF/W/56 suggests further support for clarification and educative process, including training of customs officials, with respect to the measures contained in the compilation document related to GATT Articles V, VIII and X. We welcome this proposal and encourage Members and relevant international organizations to contribute to this educational process. We also encourage proponents to voice their specific interests in the NGTF and bilaterally.

Assessment of the Current Situations (Needs and Priorities)

Undertaking an assessment of the current situation vis-à-vis trade facilitation and the future needs and priorities is necessary for each Member so that it can then define which technical measures under negotiation it can implement and in what timeframe. Where do countries currently stand in trade facilitation? What gaps exist between ground facilities and proposed commitments? We tend to agree with China and Pakistan²¹, as well as with a number of Latin American countries²², which see this assessment exercise as a continuous process that has to accompany the negotiations.

(...) *Like other Members that have made proposals on assessment, we believe that each Member needs to undertake a thorough self-assessment.*

*Complementing the picture of the assessment of Members' needs and priorities, Members should also get a clearer idea on **ongoing and planned TA&CB and infrastructure-financing activities** related to the inventory of trade facilitation measures.*

(...) *Because this needs to be accurate and done on a country-by-country basis, we suggest that the recipient Members make this compilation (...).*

Sequencing of measures

Determining the sequencing and interrelationship of the technical measures being negotiated is equally essential. Indeed, sometimes a combination of measures allows to reap real benefits on the ground. Also, some advanced measures may require the prior implementation of other basic measures. Experienced international organizations could be of valuable support to Members by assisting them to organize these interrelationships and their sequencing.

It is our assessment that the measures enumerated in the inventory of trade facilitation measures²³ are of a different nature: such that would not require investments in expensive infrastructure but primarily require administrative – although sometimes politically not easy to implement – actions and such that are increasingly demanding, both in terms of resources and implementation capacities. Members should not preclude devoting different treatment to these two categories of measures in a final Text on trade facilitation. As a starting point, Members could individually classify the measures contained in the Secretariat's compilation document according to the matrix provided by the WB/WCO at the July 2005 session, annexed to this document (see Annex).

²¹ TN/TF/W/29.

²² TN/TF/W/41.

²³ TN/TF/W/43 and subsequent revisions.

A Possible Mechanism to Relate TA&CB and Financing to Reform

A basic requirement for this mechanism is that it is predictable and transparent, and to quote from TN/TF/W/56: "such mechanism should ensure that the needs and priorities with respect to trade facilitation ... are addressed effectively; that available resources will be efficiently used; and that there will be long-term sustainability of technical assistance programmes."

This mechanism could comprise a set of components:

- (i) action plans containing obligations, implementation periods and required means;*
- (ii) pledging mechanism for TA&CB and funding;*
- (iii) multiple channels to provide TA&CB and funding*
- (iv) WTO Trade Facilitation Committee (TFC) to endorse Members' obligations (TF measures) and commitments (TA&CB and funding); and*
- (v) multilateral endorsement of implementation capacities."*

Document TN/TF/W/63 provides more detailed views on (i) to (v).

Communication from Mauritius on behalf of the ACP Group (TN/TF/W/73)

Making Annex D Operational

[...]

"The principle of special and differential treatment for developing and least-developed countries must be fully reflected and made directly operational in any negotiated outcome. The concerns of developing and least-developed countries relating to the cost implications of proposed measures shall be effectively addressed. Therefore [...] the ACP would not want to see any new disciplines or commitments which would impact negatively on existing policy space and the flexibility of developing countries in adopting trade facilitation measures. It is also critical that a balance be struck between the legitimate objective of border control and the economically desirable goal of trade facilitation. In addition, full account should be taken of the economic structure of and levels of development in ACP countries."

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

".... An important task in fulfilling the letter and the spirit of the negotiating mandate will clearly be the identification of the needs and priorities of developing countries for technical assistance and capacity building on Trade Facilitation, evaluating proposals in terms of the technical assistance they will require for implementation – and while some Members might view it otherwise, we believe that such assistance can and should include financial assistance, where necessary – and finally developing target projects or programmes of assistance to support the implementation of any negotiated outcome. [...] the TA&CB mandate should be made operational by providing support (both financial and technical) to developing countries to assist them during and after the trade facilitation negotiations.

[...] suggestions on how to operationalize TA&CB in the course of the trade facilitation negotiations:

A. Establishing an inter-agency coordinating mechanism for Trade Facilitation TA&CB

For details, see TN/TF/W/73, section III:A, pages 3-4.

B. Key areas for funding of Trade Facilitation TA&CB

- (i) Support for the identification of trade facilitation negotiating needs and priorities of developing and least-developed countries (Paragraph 4, Annex D);*
- (ii) Support and assistance during the trade facilitation negotiations (Paragraph 5, Annex D); and*
- (iii) Support and assistance to help developing and least-developed countries implement the commitments resulting from the negotiations, in accordance with their nature and scope (Paragraph 6, Annex D).*

For details on those three areas, see TN/TF/W/73, section III:B, pages 4-5.

In order to efficiently source and allocate TA&CB support for developing countries in the three areas listed above, a special Trade Facilitation Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building Fund needs to be established. This fund shall be managed by the inter-agency coordinating mechanism described previously, and contributions thereto shall be sourced from bilateral and multilateral donors. Developing countries requiring trade facilitation TA&CB support in the course of or after the trade facilitation negotiations may submit their TA&CB proposals and requests to the inter-agency coordinating mechanism, which will then expeditiously process and allocate such TA&CB support funded through this special fund.

[...]

Evaluating the Implementation of the Technical Assistance Mandate in Annex D

The provision of TA&CB support and assistance is a key component of the Trade Facilitation negotiations mandate under Annex D. Hence, the implementation of this mandate needs to be periodically reviewed by the WTO Membership to ensure that the development objectives of the negotiations are being met.

For details, see TN/TF/W/73, section IV, page 6.

Communication from the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Moldova (TN/TF/W/74)

Special Flexibilities and Technical Assistance and Capacity Building for Small Low-Income Countries in Transition

- *"... Members which are small low-income economies in transition [should] be also granted special flexibilities with regard to trade facilitation and be provided with an adequate technical assistance and capacity building in accordance with paragraphs 2,3,5 and 6 of Annex D of the General Council's Decision of 1 August 2004."*

VII. ANNEX A

PROPOSALS ON ARTICLES V, VIII AND X AND RELATED S&D AND TA&CB MATTERS

Symbol (TN/TF/...)	Sponsor(s)	Title
W/6 and Corr.1	European Communities	Clarifications and Improvements to GATT Article X ("Publication and Administration of Trade Regulations")
W/7 and Corr.1	Korea	Clarification of Article X of the GATT: Publication and Availability of Information and Prior Commenting Period on Core Measures
W/8 and Add.1, and Corr.1	Japan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, and Chinese Taipei	Trade Facilitation: Proposals to Clarify and Improve GATT Article X
W/9 and Add.1	Canada and Australia	Possible Commitments on Advance Rulings
W/10	Chinese Taipei	Trade Facilitation: Some Possible Measures to Improve GATT Articles VIII and X
W/11	United States	Introduction to Proposals by the United States of America
W/12	United States	Advance Binding Rulings
W/13	United States	Proposal on Transparency and Publication
W/14	United States	Fees
W/15	United States	Express Shipments
W/17 and Add.1	Japan, Mongolia, Peru and Chinese Taipei	Trade Facilitation: Proposals to Clarify and Improve GATT Article VIII
W/18	Korea	Clarification and Improvement of Article VIII of the GATT: Reducing Administrative Burdens
W/19	Australia and Canada	Possible Commitment on Enhanced Clearance Procedures – Provision for Collateral or Monetary Security
W/20	Canada	Possible Commitments on Border Agency Coordination – A Proposal by Canada
W/21	United States	Release of Goods
W/22	Uganda and United States	Consularization – Proposal by Uganda and the United States
W/23	European Communities and Australia	Clarification and Improvements to GATT Article VIII: Provisions on Fees and Charges
W/24	New Zealand	Proposals to Clarify and Improve Articles VIII and X
W/25	Chinese Taipei	Trade Facilitation: Possible Measures to Improve GATT Article VIII on Fees
W/26	China	Proposal on Clarification and Improvement of GATT Article X

Symbol (TN/TF/...)	Sponsor(s)	Title
W/28 and Add.1	Bolivia, Japan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Mongolia and Paraguay	Trade Facilitation: Improvement of Certain Elements Contained in GATT Article V
W/30	Peru	Proposals relating to GATT Articles, V, VIII and X, and Co-operation and Technical and Financial Assistance
W/31	Hong Kong, China	Proposal for Improving GATT Article VIII
W/32	Hong Kong, China	Proposal for Improving GATT Article X
W/34	Korea	Improvement of GATT Article V: Minimization of Burden on Cargo in Transit and Differentiation of Cargo undergoing Transshipment
W/35 and Add.1	European Communities and Paraguay	Freedom of Transit
W/36	New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland	Clarifications and improvements in GATT Article VIII - (Fees and formalities connected with importation and exportation) - Proposal on Simplification, Reduction and Standardization of Trade Documents
W/38	Singapore	Procedural Elements for Advance Rulings
W/39	Paraguay, Rwanda, and Switzerland	Improvement of Elements related to Transit
W/40	Argentina	Proposal to Improve and Clarify Article X of the GATT 1994
W/42	Japan	Risk Management
W/44	Chinese Taipei	Establishing a System for Immediate Release of Express Consignments
W/45	Turkey	Proposals to Improve GATT Articles VIII and X
W/46	European Communities	Improvements to GATT Article VIII and Formalities and Requirements Connected with Importation and Exportation and Related Proposals on S&D and TA
W/47	Singapore	Freedom of Transit
W/49	China and Korea	Clarification and Improvement of GATT Article VIII – Applying Risk Management
W/60	Dominican Republic	Reinforcing the Ethical Conduct of Staff and the Integrity of Customs Administrations
W/62	Chinese Taipei	Establishing a Long-Term Mechanism on Trade Facilitation Matters
W/64	Cuba	Improvement and Clarification of Article V of the GATT: Strengthening of the Principles of Non-Discrimination and Most-Favored Nation Treatment
W/67	New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland	Clarifications and Improvements in GATT Article VIII – Follow-Up to TN/TF/W/36

VIII. ANNEX B

NATIONAL EXPERIENCE PAPERS

Symbol (TN/TF/...)	Sponsor(s)	Title
W/48	Norway	Border Agency Cooperation
W/50	Malaysia	Trade Facilitation: Malaysia's experience
W/53	Japan	Explanatory Note on Pre-Arrival Examination – Japan's Experience
W/55	Korea	Post-Clearance Audit in Korea
W/58	Singapore	Singapore's National Experience in implementing a "Single Window" System via TradeNet®
W/61	Thailand	Trade Facilitation: Thailand's Experiences
W/65	Guatemala	Experience in Implementing a Special Procedure for the Rapid Clearance of Express Consignments
W/66	Australia	Binding Advance Rulings – Australia's Experience
W/69	Egypt	Reforming Customs Authority, Fighting Corruption and the Usage of Computers – Egypt's National Experience
W/75	Egypt	Egypt's National Experience Concerning Measures Related to Articles V, VIII and X of GATT 1994: Future Needs and Priorities

IX. ANNEX C

PROPOSALS ON CUSTOMS/OTHER AGENCY COOPERATION ON TRADE FACILITATION AND CUSTOMS COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Symbol (TN/TF/...)	Sponsor(s)	Title
W/57	India and the United States	Proposal on the Establishment of a Multilateral Mechanism for the Exchange and Handling of Information between Members ²⁴
W/68	India	Cooperation Mechanism for Customs Compliance

²⁴ Added by the Secretariat. The document does not have any specific title.

X. ANNEX D

PROPOSALS ON CROSS-CUTTINGS ISSUES WITH NO DIRECT LINK TO A SPECIFIC MEASURE

Symbol (TN/TF/...)	Sponsor(s)	Title
W/29	China and Pakistan	A Proposal on Identifying Trade Facilitation Needs and Priorities
W/33	African Group	Trade Facilitation
W/41 and Add.1 and Add.2	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, México, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay	Links Between the Elements of Annex D
W/56	African Group	Operationalizing Technical Assistance and Capacity Building in Trade Facilitation
W/63	Pakistan and Switzerland	Development-related issues in Trade Facilitation
W/73	Mauritius on behalf of the ACP Group	Issues in the Negotiations on Trade Facilitation and the Importance of Promoting Development Objectives Through Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
W/74	Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Moldova	Special Flexibilities and Technical Assistance and Capacity Building for Small Low-Income Countries in Transition