

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

SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COUNCIL FOR TRIPS

Report by the Chairman, Ambassador Eui-yong Chung,
to the Trade Negotiations Committee

I. STATUS OF WORK

1. The Special Session of the Council for TRIPS held its sixth meeting on 29 and 30 April 2003 on the basis of the agenda set out in WTO/AIR/2078. The agenda items were: negotiation of the establishment of a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications for wines and spirits; observer status for intergovernmental organizations; and other business.

2. With regard to the first item of the agenda, there were three new documents: the first one was a proposal from Hong Kong, China for a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications under Article 23.4 of the TRIPS Agreement (TN/IP/W/8); the second one was a note by the Chairman containing a Draft Text of Multilateral System of Notification and Registration of Geographical Indications for Wines and Spirits (JOB(03)/75); and the third one concerned a communication from the European Communities on the subject of traditional expressions (JOB(03)/76). Discussions were structured according to the headings of the Chairman's Draft Text. For each heading, delegations were invited to address the corresponding parts of Hong Kong, China's proposal. Discussions were comprehensive and helpful. The International Bureau of WIPO was invited to be represented in an expert capacity for these discussions.

3. With regard to observer status for intergovernmental organizations, there were no developments.

II. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

4. Positions remain quite divided. Issues where differences are still profound are: the legal effect of registrations, mechanisms for settling differences regarding geographical indications, and participation.

III. FUTURE WORK

5. At the sixth meeting, the Chairman expressed the hope that, by the seventh Special Session (scheduled for 2-3 July 2003), delegations would be able to address a text containing a single set of ideas, rather than a text with widely divergent proposals, as was done so far. With a view to being in a position to have such a text, the Chairman will hold intensive informal consultations in various formats, having regard as always to the need to ensure maximum transparency. As the next step, he will share his assessment of the state of the work of the Special Session in an open-ended informal consultation, which may be held back-to-back with the next regular session of the TRIPS Council (scheduled for early June).
