

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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General Council

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PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1999 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Agreement on TRIPS

Extension of the Additional Protection for Geographical Indications to Other Products

Communication from Turkey

The following communication, dated 9 July 1999, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Turkey.

Introduction

1. Turkey attaches great importance to the full implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
2. Section 3 (Articles 22-24) of the TRIPS Agreement deals with the matters related to the protection of geographical indications.
3. In this connection, Turkey believes that the ongoing negotiations within the TRIPS Council regarding the additional protection for geographical indications, and the multilateral registration system for geographical indications of wines and spirits should also be extended to other products.
4. Turkey views the concept of additional protection for geographical indications as one of the essential elements of the TRIPS Agreement. However, confining this concept narrowly just to wines and spirits, in our view, would not constitute a fair and equitable treatment of the rights and the interests of the Members.
5. Turkey also firmly believes that extending the protection scope to other products would play an important role for the development of local producers and industries concerned.

Proposal

6. Within the framework of the TRIPS Agreement, Turkey along with a number of WTO Members has indicated its interest in extending the scope of protection of geographical indications to other products in addition to wines and spirits.
7. In this context, Turkey proposes that the General Council submit a recommendation to the third Ministerial Conference in this regard.