

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Statement by the Dominican Republic at the Meeting of 29 and 30 June 2010

The following communication, received on 5 June 2010, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of the Dominican Republic.

1. The Dominican Republic wishes to inform the Committee about the technical assistance relating to sanitary and phytosanitary measures received from the WTO in the course of the first six months of 2010.

2. Firstly, we should like to mention the selection of twelve (12) technical experts and officials of the institutions that belong to the SPS National Committee to attend the Electronic Training Course on the SPS Agreement, held in Spanish from 26 April to 18 June 2010. I should add that each module of the course was discussed at various work sessions and followed with great enthusiasm by each of the participants. We know that the knowledge acquired there has been and will be of great benefit for the work undertaken by each person in the areas, in particular, of plant health, laboratory work and food safety.

3. Secondly, we wish to inform you that on 7, 8 and 9 June 2010 the Dominican Republic hosted the National Seminar on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade, followed on 10 June by a Working Session on Agriculture, for a group of technical experts of the Ministry of Agriculture.

4. The main purpose of the National Seminar on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade was to strengthen local capacities in the knowledge, management and implementation of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and also in information relating to the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the country's commitments and rights, the implementation of the obligations undertaken in those documents, a better use of the multilateral system, better interaction and coordination of the functions of the institutions of the public and private sectors of the Dominican Republic in these fields.

5. During the first two days of the National Seminar attention mainly focused on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS), covering such areas as the importance of these measures in world trade, the importance of food safety in world trade, the SPS Committee of the Dominican Republic, the relationship with the "Three Sisters", the work of international organizations in the country, private standards, etc. The third day was devoted to the subject of Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), with expositions and discussions on the application of the conformity assessment procedures, the resolution of trade problems, the TBT Committee of the Dominican Republic, etc.

6. During the three days of the event there was active, enthusiastic and increasing participation by the representatives of the National Committee for the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CNMSF) and of the National Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (CNOTC) and also by technical experts and professionals from the various government institutions, the private sector and observers from international organizations concerned with the issues of trade and the application of the other subjects covered in the seminar. On behalf of the WTO, the Seminar was conducted by Ms Marième Fall and Mr Pablo Jenkins, both from the Agriculture and Commodities Division, while locally the representatives of the private sector, the CNMSF and the CNOTC, as well as local representatives acting as observers of international organizations, gave presentations on these subjects. Further information on these successful activities has been published on the country's SPS site: <http://www.cnmsf.gob.do/>.

7. The Dominican Republic would like to thank the World Trade Organization for the opportunity it gave us through the technical assistance received to continue directing our efforts towards making better use of knowledge, exchanges of experience and the application of the provisions of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) in the production and marketing of our products, with a view to improving and increasing trade relations for the benefit of all the stakeholders involved in the process.

8. Finally, but no less important, it would also like to express its gratitude to the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the WTO in Geneva for the coordination with this Organization of the technical assistance received.
