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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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DECLARATION OF CHILE AS A COUNTRY FREE FROM CAPRINE AND OVINE BRUCELLOSIS

COMMUNICATION FROM CHILE

The following communication, dated 11 March 2013, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Chile.

1. Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) Resolution No. 498 of 23 January 2013 declares the Republic of Chile a country free from caprine and ovine brucellosis caused by *Brucella melitensis*, and accordingly places that disease under the system for the prevention of exotic diseases.

2. The SAG is the government animal health authority and Chile's official veterinary service, covering all areas of the country. As the agency responsible for animal health, the SAG has been subject to regular evaluation by the various States and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), thus ensuring that it abides by fundamental ethical, organizational, legislative, regulatory and technical principles.

3. Brucellosis caused by *Brucella melitensis* has been a notifiable disease in Chile since 1961. The disease control and eradication programmes aimed at declaring the country free from the disease were implemented between 1954 and 1961. The pathogen was last detected in 1975.

4. Vaccination against *Brucella melitensis* has never been authorized in Chile.

5. Chile has a system of passive surveillance that records morbidity and mortality in goats, as well as evidence of the absence of cases exhibiting signs consistent with *Brucella melitensis*. Nationwide health monitoring has been conducted since 1993 to detect *B. melitensis* in sheep and goats, with a view to gathering the information needed for the sanitary certification of livestock products that are traded internationally. Over the period 1993-2011, areas and herds at risk were identified and various methods of statistical sampling were developed using the guidelines for the surveillance of exotic diseases. In addition, active surveillance was performed between 1993 and 2012 through laboratory tests which gave negative results for *B. melitensis*.

6. The import of goats and sheep, goat or sheep semen, embryos and dairy products derived from these species is regulated by specific sanitary requirements and the quarantine rules in force.

7. Chile has implemented the procedures set forth in Chapter 14.1 of the OIE's Terrestrial Animal Health Code in order to become officially recognized as a country free from caprine and ovine brucellosis caused by *Brucella melitensis*.

8. In order to complete Chile's hard-won achievement, this status needs to be recognized by Member countries, and for this reason, we respectfully request Members to consider implementing Article 6 of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and document G/SPS/48.
