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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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SADC REPORT

MEETING OF 9-10 JULY 2014

The following communication, received on 5 July 2014, is being circulated at the request of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

1. Trade is viewed as catalytic to deeper regional cooperation and integration and can foster economic growth and poverty reduction. It is therefore an important instrument for sustainable economic development. SADC exports are mainly primary and unfinished goods. About 90% of SADC exports comprise of mineral and agricultural goods. The SADC region attaches great importance to the regional and global activities for managing plant pests, animal diseases and food safety hazards in order to contribute to food and nutrition security and enhance safe regional and international trade in food and agro-products.

2. In the past one year, SADC Secretariat has carried out a number of activities aimed at improving the capacity of member states in implementing the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade. This included SPS awareness creation, training of regulatory agencies, SPS technical committee meetings and SADC SPS Coordination Committee meetings. The activities were funded through a European Union (EU) sponsored Regional Economic Integration Support (REIS) programme.

3. Two Regional SPS Awareness Creation workshops for farmers and traders were successfully held in 12-13 September 2013 in South Africa and 20-22 May 2014 in Swaziland. The objective of the workshop was to broaden the understanding of SPS issues by stakeholders, so as to enhance their participation in the formulation and implementation of harmonised (with international standards) SPS measures for improved intra-regional trade. The workshop was facilitated by experts from WTO Secretariat, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Sub-Regional office, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern Africa Trade Hub (SATH), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) sub-Regional Office, selected Government officials from member states and SADC Secretariat. This resulted in identification of seven specific trade concerns hindering smooth regional trade in food and agro-products. Participants resolved to enhance collaboration with the SPS regulatory agencies.

4. Three SADC SPS Coordination Committee meetings were held on 23-26 July 2013, South Africa; 29-31 January 2014, Botswana; and 24-26 June 2014, Botswana. These SADC SPS Coordination Committee meetings were preceded by Food Safety, Plant Protection and Livestock Technical Committee meetings so as to provide technical input. At each meeting, member states provided information on the implementation of the SPS Annex to the SADC Protocol on trade, progress reports on bilateral resolution of identified specific trade concerns, national pests and disease status, implementation of transparency provisions of international standards, and participation in international standards setting process. During the meetings, member states participated in the project formulation on "Promoting the effective participation of SADC member states in the WTO SPS Committee" facilitated by the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) Secretariat officials.

5. Progress has been made in the revision of the SPS Annex to the SADC Protocol on Trade in order to facilitate effective implementation of the WTO SPS Agreement on the application of SPS measures by member states. The final amended draft has been prepared to be submitted for deliberations and approval by SADC Committee of Ministers responsible for Trade.

6. A Regional Training Workshop on SPS measures for regulatory authorities responsible for food safety, plant and animal health was held in Pretoria, South Africa on 20-21 November 2013. The Training Workshop was aimed at enhancing the development and implementation of science based SPS measures. The workshop was facilitated by regional experts drawn from Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and the SADC Secretariat.

7. SADC Secretariat coordinated a regional workshop on the development of a strategy for the management of a quarantine pest of banana known as *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *ubense* Tropical Race 4, recently detected in Mozambique. The workshop was facilitated by experts from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Bioversity International, University of Stellenbosch (SUN), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB), China, Taiwan, Philippines, Australia and Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA).
