



28 February 2020

(20-1530)

Page: 1/2

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Original: English

**SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY DECLARATION FOR THE TWELFTH WTO MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE**

SUBMISSION BY BRAZIL, CANADA, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The following communication, received on 27 February 2020, is being circulated at the request of the Delegations of Brazil, Canada, and the United States of America.

1. The twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference coincides with the 25th anniversary of the SPS Agreement – an opportune point to reflect on the successes achieved since its adoption, and to recognize the challenges ahead resulting from emerging pressures related to international trade in food, animals, and plants.

2. We wish to take this opportunity to underline that the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement) and its provisions are as relevant and applicable today as they were in 1995, and they continue to safeguard the right for Members to take measures necessary for the protection of human, animal or plant life or health.

3. In addition to this, the implementation of the SPS Agreement by Members supports rural livelihoods, facilitates trade, and supports sustainable agricultural growth. Of particular note to these outcomes are the contributions of the SPS Agreement's provisions requiring Members to be transparent in taking SPS measures; and that these measures be based on scientific principles, applied only to the extent necessary, and not be maintained without sufficient scientific evidence, including through an assessment of risk.

4. We recognize that the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) has been instrumental in advancing the implementation of the SPS Agreement, particularly as it relates to improving transparency of SPS measures through increased notification among Members. Looking to the future, the SPS Committee will continue to undertake valuable work, and Members remain committed to the continued enhancement of the implementation of the SPS Agreement.

5. We reaffirm the rights and obligations of Members established by the SPS Agreement and call for Members' strengthened adherence to the SPS Agreement to support international trade while ensuring the protection of human, animal and plant life or health.

6. The Membership acknowledges the evolution of the global agricultural landscape since the adoption of the SPS Agreement in 1995, which has brought about a variety of new opportunities and emerging pressures for the international trade in food, animals, and plants. This includes but is not limited to:

- the expanding global population, as well as changing population structures and distribution;
- the increased pace of innovation in tools and technologies;
- the changing climatic conditions and associated stresses on food production;
- the growing importance of sustainable agricultural practices;
- the shifting pressures due to the spread of pests, disease, disease-carrying organisms, or disease-causing organisms; and

- trade protectionism through the application of SPS measures that would constitute a disguised restriction on international trade.

7. To that end, the Ministerial Conference decides that the SPS Committee will further enhance the implementation of the SPS Agreement in an effort to better manage issues related to international trade in food, animals and plants by undertaking with the utmost degree of transparency a work programme, which would be open to all Members and Observers, consisting of new work to identify: (1) common challenges in the implementation of SPS Agreement obligations and the mechanisms available to address them; and (2) the impacts of emerging pressures on the application of the SPS Agreement.

8. This work programme does not launch the negotiation of new obligations, nor re-opens the SPS Agreement.

9. The SPS Committee will address the outcomes of this work programme and report on key findings and actions undertaken as a result of this work to the thirteenth Ministerial Conference with recommendations, as appropriate.

10. Through the work programme, the Ministerial Conference envisions that the SPS Committee should explore the following themes, including but not limited to:

- How to facilitate sustainable intensification of agricultural production and international trade including by facilitating the adoption and use of safe, innovative plant-protection products and veterinary medicines and by encouraging of the use of international standards, guidelines, and recommendations developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the International Plant Protection Convention to protect human, animal, or plant life or health, including maximum residue limits for veterinary drugs and pesticides.
 - How to support basing SPS measures on scientific principles and scientific evidence in situations where there is scientific uncertainty, and to promote the use of internationally consistent approaches to risk analysis including where international standards, guidelines, or recommendations do not exist or are not appropriate.
 - How to support and facilitate greater access to and safe use of innovative tools and technologies (for example, plant breeding innovations to manage emerging pest pressures while supporting integrated pest management strategies) including through risk-based control, inspection, and approval procedures.
 - How to enhance food security and the safe international trade in food, plant, and animal through adaptation of SPS measures to regional conditions, including pest- or disease-free areas and areas of low pest or disease prevalence, which can strengthen Members' ability to protect plant and animal life or health through efforts to limit the spread of pests such as Fall Armyworm, diseases such as African Swine Fever, disease-carrying organisms, or disease causing organisms.
 - How to encourage cooperation with observer organizations that support the work of the SPS Committee and the international standard setting bodies through technical exchanges and assistance in the context of this work programme.
 - Other topics as identified over the course of the analysis or as a result of emerging sanitary or phytosanitary pressures worldwide.
-