

**PROGRESS IN THE AREA OF SANITARY AND
PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

Statement by Ecuador at the Meeting
held on 28 and 29 October 2009

The following communication, received on 28 October 2009, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Ecuador.

1. Ecuador would like to inform WTO Members of the progress made and the institutional reforms introduced in the sanitary and phytosanitary area. To begin with, Ecuador has consolidated its Integrated System for Agricultural Health, Food Quality and Safety (SISCAL) which targets the sectoral harmonization and coordination of entities involved in quality, agricultural health and food safety and helps with the formulation and implementation of strategic government policies to promote safe food consumption, agricultural health and quality management systems in food production.
2. As part of this consolidation process, Ecuador's official service, AGROCALIDAD, has been strengthened: its human resources have begun to be upgraded with 85 technicians recruited through prequalification processes in order to ensure transparency and the excellence of its personnel. Moreover, AGROCALIDAD is developing 80 manuals on administrative, financial and technical procedures and protocols for its different departments, for example: the National Fruit Fly Programme; the redefinition of the Programme for Foot-And-Mouth Disease, Brucellosis and Avian Influenza; Control of the Marketing of Pesticides; and Monitoring of Export Crops. This means that AGROCALIDAD will have standardized, harmonized and transparent processes that meet international standards.
3. Meanwhile, at the domestic level there is improved awareness of the importance and of the benefits to be derived from Ecuador's proper participation in international forums. Accordingly, the national system of notification and information within the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Foreign Trade and Integration has been brought into operation with staff devoted full time to ensuring the proper management of the system and the follow-up of actions in the sanitary and phytosanitary area, in coordination with AGROCALIDAD and the private sector.
4. A foreign relations unit has been created within AGROCALIDAD's new institutional framework. It is currently starting up, and will be bringing in qualified staff. The aim of this initiative is to improve and optimize the country's participation in forums where sanitary and phytosanitary matters are being discussed. The institution has established a system of quarterly accountability for all of the action taken and the programmes developed, including good practices in

the development of standards and regulations, a process in which the official sector and the private sector are involved on a permanent basis.

5. Finally, the national Codex Alimentarius system is currently being validated in order to ensure more flexible and user-friendly management of the entire Codex legislation.
