

Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19-21 MARCH 2002

Note by the Secretariat

Corrigendum

The following corrections are made to the summary report of the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures held on 19-21 March 2002.

The text of paragraph 1 is amended to read as follows:

1. The Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "Committee") held its twenty-third meeting on 19-21 March 2002. The meeting was chaired by Mr. William Ehlers (Uruguay). The agenda proposed in WTO/AIR/1741 and WTO/AIR/1741/Corr.1 was adopted with amendments. The Chairman welcomed China and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu ("Chinese Taipei") as new members of the Committee.

The text of paragraph 51 is amended to read as follows:

51. The representative of Chinese Taipei stated that safety assessment of all GM products should be based on scientific evidence to ensure that the products were as safe as their conventional counterparts. He stressed the need for all Members to work together in particular to strengthen risk communication. Chinese Taipei considered that an appropriate labelling scheme was necessary to respect consumers' right to know and to choose. Voluntary labelling had been introduced in Chinese Taipei, in January 2001, and mandatory labelling would be applied in three phases starting in January 2003. Information about the regulations of Chinese Taipei, was available at www.doh.gov.tw.

The text of paragraph 112 is amended to read as follows:

112. The Secretariat reported that its technical assistance activities since the last meeting of the Committee included national workshops in China and in Chinese Taipei, and regional workshops for the Golf Corporation Council countries held in the UAE and another for the Baltic states held in Estonia. The countries involved in these workshops clearly had a good, albeit uneven, understanding of the basic provisions of the SPS Agreement, but interest in specific areas. For example, participants

* In English only.

in the Dubai workshop identified the need for better internal coordination and the lack of effective implementation of the transparency provisions of the SPS Agreement as particular problems. These national and regional workshops also showed the value of good cooperation between the WTO, OIE, Codex and IPPC secretariats. In addition, an information session on the work of the SPS Committee was held in the margins of the Codex CCFICS meeting in Brisbane, where the equivalence decision by the SPS Committee was of critical concern and importance. The WTO Secretariat also participated in the FAO/WHO Global Forum for Food Safety Regulators in Marrakech in January, and drew attention to the valuable documents regarding national food safety programmes that were prepared for that occasion.
