

**AGREEMENT ON THE APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY
MEASURES: DESIGNATION OF A REGIONAL BODY**

Communication from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Fiji,
Grenada, Jamaica, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands,
St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Revision

The following communication, dated 6 April 2006, is being circulated at the request of the above delegations.

This paper sets out some proposals to address certain specific concerns of the co-sponsors as it relates to the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The multilateral trading system needs to identify and implement responses to the issues identified in this submission to overcome the inherent economic disadvantages faced by these small, vulnerable economies.

1. Introduction

1. As small, vulnerable economies (SVEs), the co-sponsors of this proposal suffer from a severe lack of adequate financial, technical and administrative capacities to fulfil their obligations under the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

2. These countries have to prepare, adopt and apply sanitary and phytosanitary measures, including risk assessment systems and control, inspection and approval procedures, which are necessary to ensure the quality of exports and to protect human health, animal health and their phytosanitary situation and to gain access to export markets. Given the small size of their economies, the unit cost associated with implementation of the SPS Agreement is higher in these countries than in most other WTO member countries.

2. Relevant WTO provisions

3. Article 9; Annex B of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

3. Proposals

4. Recognising the special difficulties encountered by the co-sponsors of this proposal in complying with SPS measures and, as a consequence in access to markets and also in the formulation

and application of SPS in their own territories, the General Council is to recommend to the Ministerial Conference that there shall be explicit recognition that WTO Members may designate a regional body to provide technical support as is necessary and to carry out the functions necessary to assist them in implementing the provisions of the SPS Agreement. Members and the WTO, within its competence, shall provide technical and financial assistance at mutually agreed terms to support small, vulnerable economies in fulfilling their rights and obligations under this agreement.

4. Final remark

5. This proposal is without prejudice to individual country positions and to the rights of the co-sponsors to submit additional proposals in future Dedicated Sessions or, otherwise, in other WTO bodies on any issues contained in this paper and/or on any other issues not included here.
