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Committee on Import Licensing

SECOND BIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES

Background Document by the Secretariat

This working document is circulated by the Secretariat in preparation for the second biennial review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures, to be conducted at the meeting on 20 October 1998. This document will have to be updated in light of the discussion at that meeting in order to give a full picture of the developments in the Committee during the period covered. Members are invited to communicate to the Secretariat any additional data they wish to have included in this document.

Article 7.1 of the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures requires the Committee to review as necessary, but at least once every two years, the implementation and operation of the Agreement, taking into account the objectives thereof, and the rights and obligations contained therein. Article 7.2 states that as a basis for the Committee review, the Secretariat shall prepare a factual report based on information provided under Article 5, responses to the annual Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures and other relevant reliable information which is available to it, and that this report shall provide a synopsis of the aforementioned information, in particular indicating any changes or developments during the period under review, and including any other information as agreed by the Committee.

The information contained in this document covers the period from 24 October 1996 to 20 October 1998.

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I. COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING

A. OFFICERS, MEMBERS AND OBSERVERS

1. Officers:

<u>Chairperson</u> (1997): Mr. Tomasz Jodko (Poland) <u>Vice-Chairperson</u> (1997): Mr. Rossman Ithnain (Singapore) <u>Chairperson</u> (1998): Mrs. Marie Gosset (Côte d'Ivoire) <u>Vice-Chairperson</u> (1998): Mr. Marshall Couper (New Zealand)

2. Members (132)

Angola Germany Niger
Antigua & Barbuda Ghana Nigeria
Argentina Greece Norway
Australia Grenada Pakistan
Austria Guatemala Panama

Bahrain Guinea Bissau Papua New Guinea

Bangladesh Guinea, Rep. of **Paraguay Barbados** Guyana Peru Haiti Belgium **Philippines Belize** Honduras Poland Hong Kong, China Portugal Benin **Bolivia** Hungary Qatar Romania **Iceland** Botswana **Brazil** India Rwanda

Brunei Darussalam Indonesia St. Kitts & Nevis

Bulgaria Ireland St. Lucia

Burkina Faso Israel St. Vincent & Grenadines

BurundiItalySenegalCameroonJamaicaSierra LeoneCanadaJapanSingaporeCentral African Rep.KenyaSlovak RepublicChadKoreaSlovenia

Chile Kuwait Solomon Islands Colombia Lesotho South Africa

Congo Liechtenstein Spain Costa Rica Sri Lanka Luxembourg Côte d'Ivoire Macau Suriname Cuba Madagascar Swaziland Cyprus Malawi Sweden Czech Republic Malaysia Switzerland Dem. Rep. of Congo Maldives Tanzania Denmark Mali Thailand Diibouti Malta Togo

Dominica Mauritania Trinidad & Tobago

Dominican RepublicMauritiusTunisiaECMexicoTurkeyEcuadorMongoliaUganda

United Arab Emirates Egypt Morocco El Salvador Mozambique United Kingdom Fiji Myanmar **United States** Finland Namibia Uruguay Netherlands Venezuela France Gabon New Zealand Zambia Gambia Nicaragua Zimbabwe

3. Observers

Observer Governments (35)

Albania Ethiopia Nepal Algeria Former Yugoslav Rep. of Oman

Russian Federation Andorra Macedonia Armenia Georgia Saudi Arabia Holv See Sevchelles Azerbaijan Belarus Jordan Sudan

Kazakhstan Taipei, Chinese Bhutan

Cambodia Kyrgyz Rep. Tonga Cape Verde Lao Dem. Rep. Ukraine China Latvia Uzbekistan Vanuatu Croatia Lithuania Estonia Moldova Vietnam

Observer organizations

IMF UNCTAD World Bank

B. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE DURING THE PERIOD COVERED

- 4. During the reporting period, the Committee held its fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth meetings on 22 April and 15 October 1997, and 24 April and 20 October 1998. The minutes of these meetings are contained in documents G/LIC/M/5-8, respectively.
- During the period covered, the Committee received notifications of legislation and/or publications submitted by 32 Members, replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures submitted by 43 Members and notifications relating to the institution of import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures submitted by 13 Members; agreed to grant observer status to the IMF, UNCTAD and the World Bank (G/LIC/M/5); carried out the second biennial review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement under Article 7.1 on the basis of a factual report prepared by the Secretariat (G/LIC/W/10 & G/LIC/M/8); and adopted its annual reports for 1997 and 1998 to the Council for Trade in Goods in accordance with Article 7.4 of the Agreement (G/L/203 and ...).

II. **NOTIFICATIONS**

- **C**. INVOCATION OF DELAYED APPLICATION PROVISIONS BY DEVELOPING COUNTRY MEMBERS (FOOTNOTE 5 TO ARTICLE 2.2)
- Pursuant to footnote 5 to Article 2.2 of the Agreement, a developing country Member, other 6. than a developing country Member which was a party to the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures done on 12 April 1979, which has specific difficulties complying with the requirements of subparagraph (a)(ii) (which requires applications for automatic import licences to be accepted on any working day prior to the customs clearance of the goods) and subparagraph (a)(iii) (which requires applications for automatic import licences when submitted in appropriate and complete form to be approved within a maximum of ten working days) may, upon notification to the Committee,

delay the application of these provisions by not more than two years from the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for such Member.

7. The Committee did not receive any notifications under the above provision during the reporting period. Listed below are the 24 developing country Members which had invoked the delayed application provisions since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement and (in brackets) the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for the Member concerned (G/LIC/1 and Adds.1-3).

Bangladesh (1.1.95) Honduras (1.1.95) Bolivia (13.9.95) Indonesia (1.1.95) Brazil (1.1.95) Kenya (1.1.95) Burkina Faso (3.6.95) Malaysia (1.1.95) Cameroon (13.12.95) Myanmar (1.1.95) Colombia (30.4.95) Sri Lanka (1.1.95) Costa Rica (1.1.95) Thailand (1.1.95) Côte d'Ivoire (1.1.95) Tunisia (29.3.95) Dominican Republic (9.3.95) Turkey (26.3.95) El Salvador (7.5.95) United Arab Emirates (10.4.96) Gabon (1.1.95) Uruguay (1.1.95) Guatemala (21.7.95) Venezuela (1.1.95)

- D. NOTIFICATIONS OF PUBLICATIONS AND/OR LEGISLATION (ARTICLES 1.4(A) AND/OR 8.2(B))
- 8. Paragraph 4(a) of Article 1 and paragraphs 3, 4, 5(b), 5(c) and 5(d) of Article 3 require Members to publish certain information "for other Members and traders to know the basis for granting and/or allocating licences", or "in such a manner as to enable governments and traders to become acquainted with them". Article 1.4(a) requires Members to notify to the Committee the sources in which the information concerning import licensing procedures are published, and to make copies of these publications available to the Secretariat.
- 9. Paragraph 2(a) of Article 8 provides that "each Member shall ensure, not later than the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for it, the conformity of its laws, regulations and administrative procedures with the provisions of this Agreement"; paragraph 2(b) states that "each Member shall inform the Committee of any changes in its laws and regulations relevant to this Agreement and in the administration of such laws and regulations".
- 10. The Committee agreed that in cases where the publications or legislation were not in a WTO official language Members shall provide, together with such publications or legislation, a summary of the notification in one of the WTO languages. Other Members may ask for a full translation if they so wish, or seek any additional information on a bilateral basis. Any issues that cannot be solved on a bilateral basis may be brought to the attention of the Committee. It was also agreed that the first notification under Article 8.2(b) shall contain the full text of relevant laws and regulations in effect on the entry into force of the WTO Agreement for the Member concerned (G/LIC/M/2 and G/LIC/3).
- 11. Since the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, notifications pursuant to Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b) have been received from the following 54 Members and have been circulated in the G/LIC/N/1/- series. Copies of publications and/or legislation submitted with these notifications are available for consultation in the Secretariat.

Argentina	G/LIC/N/1/ARG/1-2	Korea	G/LIC/N/1/KOR /1-3
Australia	G/LIC/N/1/AUS/1 &	Liechtenstein	G/LIC/N/1/LIE /1
	Add.1	Madagascar	G/LIC/N/1/MDG/1
Bahrain	G/LIC/N/1/BHR/1	Malta	G/LIC/N/1/MLT/1
Barbados	G/LIC/N/1/BRB/1	Mauritius	G/LIC/N/1/MUS/1&
Benin	G/LIC/N/1/BEN/1		Adds 1-3
Bolivia	G/LIC/N/1/BOL/1	Morocco	G/LIC/N/1/MAR/1
Brazil	G/LIC/N/1/BRA/1	New Zealand	G/LIC/N/1/NZL/1
Bulgaria	G/LIC/N/1/BGR/1	Nicaragua	G/LIC/N/1/NIC/1
Burkina Faso	G/LIC/N/1/BFA/1	Niger	G/LIC/N/1/NER/1
Canada	G/LIC/N/1/CAN/1	Nigeria	G/LIC/N/1/NGA/1
Chad	G/LIC/N/1/TCD/1	Norway	G/LIC/N/1/NOR/1-2
Chile	G/LIC/N/1/CHL/1	Pakistan	G/LIC/N/1/PAK/1
Colombia	G/LIC/N/1/COL/1	Panama	G/LIC/N/1/PAN/1
Costa Rica	G/LIC/N/1/CRI/1	Peru	G/LIC/N/1/PER/1
Cuba	G/LIC/N/1/CUB/1	Philippines	G/LIC/N/1/PHL/1
Cyprus	G/LIC/N/1/CYP/1	Qatar	G/LIC/N/1/QAT/1
European		Romania	G/LIC/N/1/ROM/1
Communities	G/LIC/N/1/EEC/1/Rev.2 +	Singapore	G/LIC/N/1/SGP/1
	Adds.1-2 & EEC/2	Slovenia	G/LIC/N/1/SVN/1
Fiji	G/LIC/N/1/FJI/1	Swaziland	G/LIC/N/1/SWZ/1
Honduras	G/LIC/N/1/HND/1	Switzerland	G/LIC/N/1/CHE/1
Hong Kong,		Tunisia	G/LIC/N/1/TUN/1
China	G/LIC/N/1/HKG/1-4	Turkey	G/LIC/N/1/TUR/1 &
Hungary	G/LIC/N/1/HUN/1-2		TUR/2/Rev.1
India	G/LIC/N/1/IND/1/Rev.1	Uganda	G/LIC/N/1/UGA/1
Jamaica	G/LIC/N/1/JAM/1	United Arab Emirates	G/LIC/N/1/ARE/1
Japan	G/LIC/N/1/JPN/1	United States	G/LIC/N/1/USA/1 &
	& JPN/2/Rev.1		Rev.1
Kenya	G/LIC/N/3/KEN/1	Uruguay	G/LIC/N/1/URY/1
St. Kitts & Nevis	G/LIC/N/1/KNA/1	Zimbabwe	G/LIC/N/1/ZWE/1

E. NOTIFICATIONS OF IMPORT LICENSING PROCEDURES (ARTICLES 7.3 AND 5)

- 12. Article 2.1 of the Agreement defines automatic import licensing as "import licensing where approval of the application is granted in all cases, and in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 2(a)". Paragraph 2(a) of Article 2 states that "automatic import licensing procedures shall not be administered in such a manner as to have restricting effects on imports subject to automatic licensing ...". Article 3 defines non-automatic import licensing as "import licensing not falling within the definition contained in paragraph 1 of Article 2".²
- 13. Pursuant to Article 7.3 of the Agreement, Members undertake to complete the annual Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures promptly and in full. At its meeting in October 1995, the Committee established a time-limit of 30 September each year to submit these notifications (G/LIC/M/2 and G/LIC/3).

¹A concordance between the provisions the Agreement relating to automatic licensing procedures and the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures is contained in Annex I.

²A concordance between the provisions of the Agreement relating to non-automatic licensing procedures and the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures is contained in Annex II.

- 14. Article 5.1 of the Agreement requires Members which institute licensing procedures or changes in these procedures to notify the Committee of such within 60 days of publication. Pursuant to Article 5.2, the notifications shall include: the list of products subject to licensing procedures; contact point for information on eligibility; administrative body(ies) for submission of applications; date and name of publication where licensing procedures are published; indication of whether the licensing procedure is automatic or non-automatic according to definitions contained in Articles 2 and 3; in the case of automatic licensing procedures, their administrative purpose; in the case of non-automatic licensing procedures, indication of the measure being implemented through the licensing procedure; and expected duration of the licensing procedure if this can be estimated with some probability, and if not, reason why this information cannot be provided. Article 5.4 requires Members to notify the Committee of the publications in which the information required in Article 1.4 will be published.
- 15. In addition, pursuant to Article 5.5 any interested Member which considers that another Member has not notified the institution of a licensing procedure or changes therein in accordance with the provisions of Articles 5.1-5.3 may bring the matter to the attention of such other Member. If notification is not made promptly thereafter, such Member may itself notify the licensing procedure or changes therein, including all relevant and available information.³
- 16. During the period covered, 43 Members have submitted replies to the Questionnaire pursuant to Article 7.3 of the Agreement and 13 Members have notified the institution of import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures pursuant to Article 5 (circulated in the G/LIC/N/3/- and G/LIC/N/2/- series, respectively). Notifications made under these two provisions since the entry into force of the Agreement are as follows⁴:

Members	Article 7.3	Date of latest communication	Article 5	Date of latest communication
Argentina	G/LIC/N/3/ARG/1 + Corr.1 & ARG/2	19.12.97	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/1-3	15.1.97
Australia	G/LIC/N/3/AUS/1 & Rev.1	28.4.97		
Barbados	G/LIC/N/3/BRB/1	15. 9.95		
Bolivia	G/LIC/N/3/BOL/1-2 + Corr.1	24.8.98		
Brazil	G/LIC/N/3/BRA/1	24.4.98	G/LIC/N/2/BRA/1	24.4.98
Brunei Darussalam	G/LIC/N/3/BRN/1	4.3.97		
Bulgaria	G/LIC/N/3/BGR/1	20.3.97		
Burkina Faso	G/LIC/N/3/BFA/1	8.1.97		
Canada	G/LIC/N/3/CAN/1-2	2.10.97		
Chile	G/LIC/N/3/CHL/1 & Add.1	9.9.97		
Colombia	G/LIC/N/3/COL/1 & Add.1	2.11.96		
Costa Rica	G/LIC/N/3/CRI/1-2	7.5.98		
Cyprus	G/LIC/N/3/CYP/1+ Rev.1 & CYP/2	28.8.98		
Ecuador	G/LIC/N/3/ECU/1	1.8.95		
European Communities	G/LIC/N/3/EEC/1	29.7.97	G/LIC/N/2/EEC/1-2	4.7.97

³So far, the Committee has not received any notifications under this provision.

⁴ Since the entry into force of the Agreement, 52 Members (European Communities and its member States counted as one Member) have submitted notifications under Article 7.3 and 16 Members under Article 5.

Members	Article 7.3	Date of latest	Article 5	Date of latest
		communication		communication
Fiji	G/LIC/N/3/FJI/1	1.4.97		
Gambia	G/LIC/N/3/GMB/1	31.10.97		
Haiti	G/LIC/N/3/HTI/1	27.2.98		
Honk Kong,	G/LIC/N/3/HKG/1+	25.9.97	G/LIC/N/2/HKG/1-2	27.1.98
China	Rev.1-2			
Hungary	G/LIC/N/3/HUN/1-2	19.1.98	G/LIC/N/2/HUN/1	19.1.98
Iceland	G/LIC/N/3/ISL/1	1.9.98		
India	G/LIC/N/3/IND/1	29.11.95	G/LIC/N/2/IND/1	29.5.98
Jamaica	G/LIC/N/3/JAM/1	29.5.98		
Japan	G/LIC/N/3/JPN/1	2.4.98	G/LIC/N/2/JPN/1-2	18.8.98
	+ Corr. 1			
Kenya	G/LIC/N/3/KEN/1	10.11.97		
Korea	G/LIC/N/3/KOR/1-2	6.4.98		
Liechtenstein	G/LIC/N/3/LIE/1	18.4.97	G/LIC/N/2/LIE/1	18.4.97
Malaysia	G/LIC/N/3/MYS/1	4.12.97	G/LIC/N/2/MYS/1	31.3.95
Mali	G/LIC/N/3/MLI/1	9.5.97		
Malta	G/LIC/N/3/MLT/1-2	17.7.98		
Mauritius	G/LIC/N/3/MUS/1	2.11.95		
Morocco	G/LIC/N/3/MAR/1-2	22.12.97		
Namibia	G/LIC/N/3/NAM/1	28.2.97		
New Zealand	G/LIC/N/3/NZL/1	24.3.98		
	+ Add.1			
Nigeria	G/LIC/N/3/NGA/1-2	16.2.98	G/LIC/N/2/NGA/1-2	16.2.98
Norway	G/LIC/N/3/NOR/1	3.11.97		
	+ Corr.1 & NOR/2			
Pakistan			G/LIC/N/2/PAK/1	6.5.96
Panama			G/LIC/N/2/PAN/1	21. 7.98
Papua New			G/LIC/N/2/PNG/1	6.2.98
Guinea				
Peru	G/LIC/N/3/PER/1	27.8.96		
Philippines	G/LIC/N/3/PHL/1-2	6.4.98		
Poland	G/LIC/N/3/POL/1	7.10.97		
Qatar	G/LIC/N/3/QAT/1	24.3.98		
Romania	G/LIC/N/3/ROM/1	4.9.96	G/LIC/N/2/ROM/1	3.10.95
Senegal	G/LIC/N/3/SEN/1	20.1.97		
Singapore	G/LIC/N/3/SGP/1-2	17.11.97		
Slovenia	G/LIC/N/3/SVN/1	6.6.97		
South Africa	G/LIC/N/3/ZAF/1	13.5.97	G/LIC/N/2/ZAF/1	9. 7.97
Switzerland	G/LIC/N/3/CHE/1	14.4.97	G/LIC/N/2/CHE/1	14.4.97
Trinidad	G/LIC/N/3/TTO/1	17.1.96		
& Tobago				
Tunisia	G/LIC/N/3/TUN/1	31.10.96		
Turkey	G/LIC/N/3/TUR/1-2	8.5.98		
	+ Corr.1			
Uganda	G/LIC/N/3/UGA/1	17.6.97		
United States	G/LIC/N/3/USA/1	29.9.95		
Uruguay	G/LIC/N/3/URY/1	4.9.96		

III. CONSULTATION AND DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

Dispute	Request for consultations	Request to join consultations	Mutually agreed solution	Panel established	Panel report circulated	Notice of appeal	Appellate Body Report circulated
Brazil – Measures affecting payment terms for imports	8.1.98 European Communities (WT/DS116) (G/LIC/D/17)						
Canada – measures affecting the importation of milk and the exportation of dairy products	8.10.97 United States (WT/DS103) (G/LIC/D/13)			25.3.98			
European Communities – Regime for the importation, sale and distribution of bananas	5.2.96 Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, United States (WT/DS27) (G/LIC/D/2)			8.5.96	22.5.97	11.6.97	9.9.97 + Arbitrator's report circulated on 7.1.98. Recourse to DSU Art. 21.5 on 18.8.98.
European Communities – Regime for the importation, sale and distribution of bananas	24.10.97 Panama (WT/DS105) (G/LIC/D/15+Adds.1-2)						Recourse to DSU Art. 21.5 on 31.8.98.
European Communities – Measures affecting importation of certain poultry products	24.2.97 Brazil (WT/DS69) (G/LIC/D/3)			30.7.97	12.3.98	29.4.98	13.7.98
European Communities – Measures affecting butter products	24.3.97 New Zealand (WT/DS72) (G/LIC/D4)			18.11.97			
European Communities – Measures affecting import duties on rice	27.5.98 India (WT/DS134) (G/LIC/D/23)						
India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural, textile and industrial products	15.7.97 United States (WT/DS90) (G/LIC/D/6)			18.11.97			

Dispute	Request for consultations	Request to join consultations	Mutually agreed solution	Panel established	Panel report circulated	Notice of appeal	Appellate Body Report circulated
India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural, textile and	16. 7.97 Australia (WT/DS91)		23.3.98 (WT/DS91/8) (G/LIC/D/20)				
industrial products India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural, textile and	(G/LIC/D/7) 16.7.97 Canada (WT/DS02)		25.3.98 (WT/DS92/8)				
agricultural, textile and industrial products India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of	(WT/DS92) (G/LIC/D/8) 16.7.97 New Zealand		(G/LIC/D/19)				
agricultural, textile and industrial products	(WT/DS93) (G/LIC/D/9) 17.7.97		23.2.98				
India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural, textile and industrial products	Switzerland (WT/DS94) (G/LIC/D10)		23.2.98 (WT/DS/94/9) (G/LIC/D/18)				
India – Quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural, textile and industrial products	18.7.97 European Communities (WT/DS96) (G/LIC/D/11)		7.4.98 (WT/DS96/8) (G/LIC/D/21)				
Philippines – Measures affecting pork and poultry	1.4.97 7.10.97 United States (WT/DS74 & 102) (G/LIC/D/5 & 12)		12.3.98 (WT/DS74/5 & 102/6)				
Slovak Republic – Measures concerning the importation of dairy products and the transit of cattle	7.5.98 Switzerland (WT/DS/133) (G/LIC/D/22)						
United States – Tariff rate quota for imports of groundnuts	19.12.97 Argentina (WT/DS111) (G/LIC/D/16)						

ANNEX I

Generally, information concerning the administration of <u>automatic licensing</u> procedures can be found under the following headings of the replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures:

		Relevant Article in Agreement	Relevant Question in Questionnaire
1.	Purposes of maintaining automatic import licensing procedures	Article 2.2(b)	No. 4
2.	Product coverage	Article 1.4(a)	No. 2
3.	Eligibility of importers to apply for automatic licences	Articles 2.2(a)(i) and 1.4(a)	No. 9(b)
4.	Period of submission and processing of applications	Articles 2.2(a)(ii) and 2.2(a)(iii)	Nos. 7(a), 7(b) and 7(c)
5.	Administrative body to be approached	Article 1.6	No. 7(d)
6.	Refusal of applications	Article 1.7	No. 8
7.	Application forms and other documents required on application	Article 1.5	No. 10
8.	Availability of foreign exchange for imports	Article 1.9	No. 19

ANNEX II

Generally, information concerning the administration of <u>non-automatic licensing</u> procedures can be found under the following headings of the replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures:

		Relevant Article in Agreement	Relevant Question in Questionnaire
1.	Purpose	Articles 3.1 and 3.3	No. 4
2.	Product coverage under each non-automatic licensing system	Article 1.4(a)	No. 2
3.	Distribution of licences among supplying countries	Articles 3.5(a)(iii) and 3.5(c)	No.3
4.	Size of quotas	Articles 3.5(h), 3.5(i) and 3.5(l)	Nos. 6(I), 6(II) and 6(III)
5.	Eligibility of importers to apply for non-automatic licences	Article 3.5(e)	No. 9(a)
6.	Allocation of licences to applicants	Article 3.5(j)	Nos. 6(III) and 6(VIII)
7.	Period of processing of applications	Article 3.5(f)	Nos. 6(V) and 6(VIII)
8.	Period of licence validity	Article 3.5(g)	Nos. 6(VI) and 14
9.	Application forms and other documents required on application	Article 1.5	No. 10
10.	Administrative body to be approached	Article 1.6	No. 6(VII)
11.	Refusal of applications	Article 1.7	No. 8
12.	Availability of foreign exchange for imports	Article 1.9	No. 19
