

**NOTIFICATION CONCERNING THE DECISION UNDER PARAGRAPH 1  
OF ANNEX III OF THE AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION  
OF ARTICLE VII OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT  
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE 1994**

**TUNISIA**

The following communication, dated 26 April 2001, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Tunisia.

Further to its note No. 499 of 27 October 2000, the Permanent Mission of Tunisia in Geneva has the honour to attach herewith Tunisia's second progress report pursuant to the second paragraph of the Decision of 10 May 2000 granting Tunisia an extension under paragraph 1 of Annex III to the Agreement on Customs Valuation.

In view of the reference in the report to Tunisia's technical assistance requirements in that area, we have also attached, for your information, a copy of the table sent to the Committee on Trade and Development and the Technical Cooperation Division concerning the technical cooperation activities requested by Tunisia, particularly those relating to the implementation of the Agreement on Customs Valuation.

**PURPOSE**

To inform the WTO Committee on Customs Valuation of the progress made by Tunisia in implementing the work programme for the implementation of the Agreement on Customs Valuation, as called for by the Decision of 10 May 2000 granting an exemption from implementation of this Agreement and setting out the terms and conditions of the exemption.

**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

**GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON CUSTOMS VALUATION**

Resources allocation

*Human resources*

This activity is being completed. The Committee on Customs Valuation was informed of the progress made in this area in the first progress report submitted in October 2000.

In addition to the efforts being made at the domestic level, and in the framework of the efforts to train the officials directly concerned and responsible for implementing the internal reform process as a whole as well as the technical assistance programme concluded at the end of 1999 between Tunisia and the World Bank (G/VAL/W/62/Add.1), a customs training centre is currently being set up, and is scheduled to become operational in the second half of 2001. The purpose of this centre is to provide refresher courses and basic training for customs agents, and to train foreign trade operators.

*Creation of a nucleus of experts and technicians specialized in customs valuation*

Based on the experience of those countries that have implemented the Agreement on Customs Valuation and the recommendations of the World Customs Organization (WCO), a group has been set up within the Directorate-General of Customs. Supervised by a Controller-General, it comprises specialists in the four following areas:

- Legislation;
- inspection and control;
- informatics;
- training and reorientation.

*Material resources*

Tunisia is in the process of setting up a centre for customs research and documentation. The purpose of this centre is to disseminate information, carry out studies in the customs area and print customs documentation.

Tunisia considers that technical assistance in this area is needed to support the efforts being made to ensure that Tunisia has available the best means to enable it to implement its customs valuation commitments. This assistance will cover, *inter alia*, the furnishing of updated documentation setting out, for example, the interpretative notes to the valuation rules, adding practical examples or legal precedents so as to facilitate their application.

To that end, a request has been sent to the WTO Secretariat (Committee on Trade and Development) in accordance with the guidelines of the Three-Year Plan (2001-2003) of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

Computerized management of customs valuation and verification operations

*Arabic language version of the SINDA system and development of bilingual programmes*

Pursuant to Decree No. 97-2470 of 22 December 1997 on the single form, the Ministry of Finance, in an Order of 15 January 2001, established the new model for the computerized customs declaration. While the indications on the new declaration are in Arabic, the processing of the content of the declaration, and consequently the SINDA, remains in French. However, the new form required a new computer application and a change in configuration of the data input screens and the printing module. It is scheduled to be operational by April 2001.

Meanwhile, the process of conversion into Arabic of the customs declaration and the SINDA system continues.

*Computer equipment and risk assessment programmes*

As part of the programme for updating and improving the operation of the SINDA, an application that allows automatic targeting of shipments at risk has been set up. It is being further developed as the results obtained are evaluated.

Adapted tools: creation of a value index

As part of this activity, the competent customs services are currently drawing up a database on international prices for various products and services in international trade transactions within the period agreed. This computerized value index will provide all the customs departments responsible for verification at the local, regional and central levels with the necessary real-time information on international prices for products as part of the aid programme for post-entry verification.

In order to support the installation of this new system, Tunisia requests customs administrations that have experience in applying the Agreement on Customs Valuation to provide training so that all aspects of the Agreement can be mastered, particularly the form and content to be included in the value document (declaration of value) to be submitted by an applicant in support of the customs declaration of goods. An official request has been submitted to the WTO Secretariat (Committee on Trade and Development) in conformity with the guidelines of the Three-Year Plan (2001-2003) of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Adaptation of domestic legislation

The draft text on customs valuation, which reflects the substance of the provisions of the Agreement on Customs Valuation, has been transmitted to the Chamber of Deputies.

Training and information

With the assistance of the National Customs School (END), a training programme on customs valuation for administrative officials, covering the period from 1 February to 31 May 2001, is currently under way. To date, 105 officials operating in the greater Tunis area have been able to attend. In the days to come, it will be extended to the four customs areas, where 25 officials will be trained per week.

In addition, information and awareness seminars on the Agreement on Customs Valuation will be organized for the different economic operators, with the assistance of all the interested parties (Administration, chambers of commerce, relevant employers' federations from the Tunisian Union for Industry, Commerce and Handicrafts). These seminars will cover the entire national territory and will involve the country's different regional economic hubs in the framework of the preparation for the entry into force of the Agreement for Tunisia.

To that end, a request has been submitted to the WTO Secretariat (Committee on Trade and Development) in conformity with the guidelines of the Three-Year Plan (2001-2003) of the Technical Cooperation Programme.

**TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME ON WTO-RELATED MATTERS  
TUNISIA'S REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE THREE-YEAR PLAN 2001-2003**

Calendar Year 2001

Subject	Priority*
<p><b>I. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <p>– Specialized training courses for experts (advanced level) on investigations relating to protection against unfair import practices (dumping and subsidies) and on safeguard measures on imports (legal, technical, practical and operational aspects of the implementation of the Agreements). The aim of the courses is to create a nucleus of experts that are able to handle the various aspects of these issues. They will also be used to build up institutional capacities at the national level. Tunisia therefore requests training by the authorities responsible for investigations with experience in that area.</p> <p>– Training courses on the implementation of the new customs valuation system based on the value index. These courses, which form part of the preparation for the implementation of the Agreement on Customs Valuation (G/VAL/N/4/TUN/1), will help to initiate customs services personnel in the development of a database on international prices for various products and services in international trade transactions within the period agreed. This computerized value index will provide all the customs departments responsible for verification at the local, regional and central levels with the necessary real-time information on international prices for products as part of the aid programme for post-entry verification. In order to support the installation of this new system, Tunisia requests customs administrations that have experience in applying the Agreement on Customs Valuation to provide training so that all aspects of the Agreement can be mastered, particularly the form and content to be included in the value document (declaration of value) to be submitted by an applicant in support of the customs declaration of goods.</p> <p><b>2. Integrated data base:</b></p> <p>Technical mission on the utilization of the Document Dissemination Facility and the Integrated Data Base.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>

\* Referring to the specific notification questionnaire (WT/COMTD/W/79/Rev.1 and WT/LDC/SWG/IF/7/Rev.1), the technical cooperation activities set forth in this document and concerning the year 2001 reflect Tunisia's WTO technical cooperation requirements in WTO-related matters and take account of the country's priorities in that area for the same year.

Subject	Priority*
<p><b>4. Other:</b></p> <p>Technical mission in the framework of the preparation of the review of domestic legislation on the protection of trade-related intellectual property rights.</p>	
<p><b>II. PARTICIPATION IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM</b></p> <p><b>1. Negotiations:</b></p> <p>— Training courses on trade negotiations. These courses will essentially aim to enhance national skills and train negotiators in the following areas:</p> <p>* Negotiating techniques and tactics;</p> <p>* psychoeducational negotiating techniques.</p> <p>The courses will be based on practical exercises and simulated tariff and non-tariff trade negotiations.</p> <p><b>2. Dispute settlement courses:</b></p> <p>The main aim of these courses is to create and train a nucleus of experts in this area. They will be spread out over a period of three years in order to avoid a full mobilization of the body of resource persons, which would affect the normal operation of the services concerned, and will focus on the following questions:</p> <p>* WTO dispute settlement procedures and practices;</p> <p>* practical examples of dispute settlement;</p> <p>* participation, where possible, in certain meetings of the DSB at WTO headquarters.</p> <p><b>3. Other:</b></p> <p>— Cooperation in the areas of standardization and conformity assessment with a view to:</p> <p>* Building up national capacity in the areas of standardization, metrology, quality management and assurance and conformity assessment;</p> <p>* modernizing and developing Tunisian laboratories with a view to concluding mutual recognition agreements in the area of conformity assessment;</p> <p>* building up Tunisian structures for dealing with intellectual, industrial and commercial property as well as standardization and quality.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>

Subject	Priority*
<p><b>4. Other:</b></p> <p>Technical mission in the framework of the preparation of the review of domestic legislation on the protection of trade-related intellectual property rights.</p>	
<p><b>III. UNDERSTANDING OF WTO AGREEMENTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON WTO ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <p>– Organization of information and awareness seminars concerning the Agreement on Customs Valuation. These seminars will cover the entire national territory and will involve the different regional economic hubs of the country in the framework of the preparation for the entry into force of this Agreement for Tunisia (G/VAL/N/4/TUN/1).</p> <p><b>2. WTO Reference Centres:</b></p> <p>Technical mission to equip the Ministry of Trade's reference centre with an integrated database made up, <i>inter alia</i>, of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* International trade statistics (global, by country, etc.);</li> <li>* commitments of WTO Members;</li> <li>* trade policies;</li> <li>* unbound tariffs;</li> <li>* notifications submitted under the different Agreements etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Documentation:</b></p> <p>Updated customs valuation documentation setting out, for example, the interpretative notes to the valuation rules, adding practical examples or legal precedents. This documentation will facilitate the application of the rules of the Agreement.</p> <p><b>4. Other:</b></p> <p>Seminars on the new issues at the WTO (competition, trade and investment, government procurement, electronic commerce, etc.).</p>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>

Calendar Year 2002

Subject	Priority
<p><b>I. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialized courses for the training of resource persons on the protection of trade-related intellectual property rights. The courses will be designed to train these resource persons in the modalities and techniques for the protection of intellectual and industrial property rights [example of counterfeiting (G/VAL/W/62/Add.1 and Add.2)] as provided for in the framework of the TRIPS Agreement and on the basis of the experience of Member countries in this area. These courses will also be used to build up institutional capacities at the national level.</li> <li>- Workshops (advanced level) on techniques for the implementation of the anti-dumping, SCM and Safeguards Agreements. These workshops will cover, <i>inter alia</i>, the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculation of anti-dumping and countervailing duties;</li> <li>- determination of injury, import trends and causal link;</li> <li>- determination of normal value, export price and margin of dumping etc.</li> <li>- calculation of <i>ad valorem</i> subsidization etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p>
<p><b>II. PARTICIPATION IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM</b></p> <p><b>1. Negotiations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training courses on trade negotiations (advanced level). These courses will essentially aim to enhance national skills and train negotiators in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Negotiating techniques and tactics;</li> <li>- psychoeducational negotiating techniques.</li> </ul> <p>The courses will be based on practical exercises and stimulated tariff and non-tariff trade negotiations.</p> </li> </ul> <p><b>2. Dispute settlement courses:</b></p> <p>These courses will complete the training provided in 2001 in this area, and will concern the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiation to the preparation of files in respect of trade disputes;</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>

Subject	Priority
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- participation in the preparatory work of the competent WTO division, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Technical assistance is requested both from the WTO Secretariat and from the Member countries with experience in this area.</p> <p><b>3. Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical mission on WTO trade policy review and development of skills in that area;</li> <li>- technical mission on the Harmonized System and transposition of WTO schedules of specific tariff commitments.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>2</p>
<p><b>III. UNDERSTANDING OF WTO AGREEMENTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON WTO ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short course on trade policy</li> </ul> <p><b>2. WTO Reference Centres:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting up of a computerized electronic communication and data transmission system for matters relating to the implementation of WTO Agreements between the Reference Centre of the Ministry of Trade (the National Authority responsible for managing and following up the implementation of the WTO Agreements) and the different departments, structures and entities involved in the implementation process.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Documentation:</b></p> <p>General documentation to be distributed to the various Tunisian entities, organizations and universities concerning the WTO and the GATT legal instruments and texts as well as those resulting from the Uruguay Round. This documentation will include, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Final Act containing the results of the Uruguay Round;</li> <li>- the business guide;</li> <li>- the Guide to GATT Law and Practice, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>



Calendar Year 2003

Subject	Priority
<p><b>I. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical mission on the enquiry points established under the various WTO Agreements (such as the SPS, TBT and TRIPS Agreements) and on ways of improving their operation, particularly in the light of the results of the WTO Secretariat's survey on the electronic facilities available in national enquiry points (G/TBT/W/105) and the needs expressed by Tunisia in this area.</li> <li>- Workshop on MFN rules of origin and preferential rules of origin. The objectives of this workshop will include obtaining a legal and technical opinion on the Agreement on Rules of Origin, the joint WTO-WCO work programme for the harmonization of rules of origin, techniques and methods for the use of and recourse to MFN and preferential rules of origin, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>
<p><b>II. PARTICIPATION IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM</b></p> <p><b>1. Negotiations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional seminar on the development of skills with a view to servicing the multilateral, bilateral and regional trade negotiations. This seminar will cover issues relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tariff and non-tariff trade negotiations;</li> <li>- renegotiation of tariff concessions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>3. Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National workshop on contingent and prudential measures in the framework of the WTO Agreements and the multilateral trading system.</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <p>1</p>
<p><b>III. UNDERSTANDING OF WTO AGREEMENTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON WTO ISSUES</b></p> <p><b>1. Specific WTO Agreements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshop on the interaction between trade and the environment (advanced level). The main purpose of this seminar will be to familiarize participants with international rules governing the interaction between these two areas and the work being done in that area by the WTO.</li> </ul>	<p>1</p>