

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Committee on Trade and Environment

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REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS BY THE INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION

The following communication, dated 4 July 2001, has been received from the Assistant Director of Economic Information and Market Intelligence of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) requesting observer status for the ITTO in the Committee on Trade and Environment. The original letter can be consulted in Office 3025, Centre William Rappard.

We are pleased to inform you that at its Thirtieth Session held in Yaoundé, Cameroon from 28 May to 2 June 2001, the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC), the governing body of ITTO, adopted, *inter alia*, Decision 7(XXX) on the Role of ITTO in International and Regional Organizations and Fora. By way of the decision, ITTO has been requested to pursue measures for effective ITTO involvement in international and regional organizations and fora, including the WTO. Specifically, ITTO's involvement in WTO as prescribed includes providing information on ITTO's trade and environment activities, monitoring and reporting to the ITTC regarding developments on a proposal on Accelerated Tariff Liberalization (ATL) in the forest sector and participating in meetings of the WTO and the WTO's Committee on Trade and Environment when feasible.

In the context of implementing the above decision, we believe that one of the ways to forge a closer relationship between ITTO and WTO is for ITTO to be meaningfully involved with the activities of the Committee on Trade and Environment. On the basis of this consideration, I am pleased to hereby submit, on behalf of our Executive Director, our request for ITTO to be granted intergovernmental organization observer status in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment. We trust that the status will pave the way for the strengthening of cooperation between our two organizations in areas of mutual benefit and interest.

We earnestly hope that this request will be submitted for the consideration of the CTE in due course.
