



## **REPORT (2015) OF THE COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE EXPANSION OF TRADE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS**

1.1. The Committee of Participants on the Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee", was established pursuant to the provisions of the Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products (WT/MIN(96)/16), hereinafter referred to as "the Ministerial Declaration", and the provisions for the Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products (G/L/160), in order to carry out the provisions of paragraphs 3, 5, 6 and 7 of the Annex to the Declaration.

1.2. The Committee has held two formal meetings in 2015: on 8 May and 14 October. The minutes of these meetings are contained in documents G/IT/M/62 and G/IT/M/63. Mr Andrew Staines (United Kingdom) was elected Chairman of the Committee for 2015.

1.3. The total number of WTO Members that are participants to the Ministerial Declaration is 82. Since the last report, the Republic of Kazakhstan joined the ITA on 27 July 2015. Kazakhstan's ITA commitments will be implemented upon its accession to the WTO. The Committee's rules of procedure provide for observer status in the Committee for WTO Members that are not participants to the Ministerial Declaration, and governments that are observers to the Council for Trade in Goods. Requests for observer status by international intergovernmental organizations are considered on a case-by-case basis. The International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have been granted observer status, and the World Customs Organization (WCO) has been granted observer status to meetings where issues of HS classification and HS amendments are included in the agenda.

1.4. The Committee continued its deliberations on the Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) Work Programme in 2015. With regard to its work on the EMC/EMI Pilot Project, the Committee took note that, among the 53 participants, 29 had provided survey responses and the Committee encouraged those that had not yet done so to provide the information without any further delay. In considering ways to advance and expand its work on NTBs other than EMC/EMI, the Committee on 7 May 2015 held a workshop on NTBs affecting trade in IT products. The main issues raised at the workshop by industry representatives were: transparency, standards for recognition of test results, e-labelling, and energy efficiency. A factual report on the workshop was circulated in document G/IT/28. At the request of the Committee, the Chairman undertook informal consultations with interested delegations to examine the recommendations and avenues that were suggested by industry representatives at the NTB workshop, and such consultations will continue in 2016.

1.5. On classification divergences, with regard to the Committee's Decision (G/IT/27) concerning the endorsement of the 18 List I-A items for Attachment B (G/IT/W/34), the Secretariat has been approached by five ITA Participants for technical assistance. For the remaining 37 Attachment B items, the Committee discussed a Swiss proposal, circulated as document JOB/IT/12, and adopted from it a three-step procedure. The Secretariat's comments on the remaining 37 items and comments received from ten delegations were compiled in document G/IT/W/40 and its Addenda and Supplement.

1.6. The Committee has consistently reviewed the status of implementation, a summary of which is provided in document G/IT/1 and its revisions. The document details that most participants had submitted the formal documentation for rectification and modification of their WTO schedules in order to incorporate the commitments arising from the Ministerial Declaration, and most had been certified by the Director-General. One participant still had not yet submitted the necessary documentation.

1.7. At the meetings of 8 May and 14 October 2015, the Committee took note of the plurilateral negotiations and the result of an agreement on product expansion among some participants (WT/L/956). The Committee agreed to revert to this matter at its future meetings.

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