



Committee on Import Licensing

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 APRIL 2019

CHAIRPERSON: MS. LORENA RIVERA ORJUELA (COLOMBIA)

The Committee on Import Licensing held its fiftieth meeting on 4 April 2019 under the chairpersonship of Ms Lorena Rivera Orjuela (Colombia). The agenda proposed for the meeting was circulated in document WTO/AIR/LIC/9.

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1 MEMBERS' COMPLIANCE WITH NOTIFICATION OBLIGATIONS – DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

1.1. The Chairperson reported that a total of 25 notifications had been received under various provisions of the Agreement since the last formal meeting, all of which were listed in the Airgram for consideration. As of 4 April 2019, 14 Members had not yet submitted any notification under any provision of the Agreement since joining the WTO; 24 Members had not yet submitted any such notifications regarding their import licensing laws under Article 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b); 24 Members had not yet submitted any Replies to the Questionnaire under Article 7.3. In addition, only 25 Members had submitted their replies to the Questionnaire for 2018. In this context, she encouraged Members that had not yet submitted their replies to the Questionnaire for 2018 to do so as soon as possible.

1.2. At the same time, she drew the Committee's attention to the fact that Myanmar had submitted its notifications to this Committee for the first time. The two notifications, namely documents G/LIC/N/1/MMR/1 and G/LIC/N/2/MMR/1, had been circulated and included on the agenda for review. She highlighted that these notifications were comprehensive and complete. Myanmar had submitted not only 21 laws and import licensing-related regulations but had also notified procedural details and product coverage for each law using the new notification template. In this context, she congratulated Myanmar for its tremendous efforts in preparing such comprehensive notifications, and especially for using the voluntary formats, which had significantly improved the transparency level of Myanmar's trade policy regime. Furthermore, she also encouraged Myanmar to submit as soon as possible its first reply to the annual questionnaire.

1.3. The representative of Myanmar thanked the Chair for her encouraging words. He noted that his delegation had been happy to submit their notifications to the Committee on Import Licensing for the first time. For the record, and for the sake of transparency, he reiterated some of the key points already made at the Committee's informal meeting of 8 March 2019.

1.4. He indicated that Myanmar attached great importance to improving its transparency record in the area of import licensing. Prior to June 2012, all imports into Myanmar had been subject to import licensing requirements. Since then, import licensing requirements had been gradually relaxed, such that approximately 70% of import licensing requirements had since been abolished. Indeed, his government was working continuously to further open up Myanmar's import licensing regime.

1.5. He explained that many ministries were involved in issuing licences on different products in Myanmar. Domestic coordination among government agencies had been extremely difficult in the past. As an LDC Member, Myanmar also faced capacity constraints with regard to fulfilling its notification obligations under the Import Licensing Agreement; for this reason, his country had not previously been in a position to submit any of its WTO import licensing notifications. This situation had begun to change further to their Capital officials attending import licensing workshops in Geneva in 2017 and 2018. In addition, a National Workshop on Import Licensing had been held in Nay Pyi Taw, in Myanmar, in January 2019. Over 60 officials from 30 Ministries had participated in this national workshop. The workshop had been very successful, and its participants had greatly benefitted from the training provided by the WTO Secretariat. He expressed Myanmar's gratitude to the WTO Secretariat for its assistance in this regard.

1.6. He continued by noting that, although Myanmar continued to face many challenges and constraints, it had made its best efforts to submit notifications that were as comprehensive as possible. His government would continue to welcome targeted WTO technical assistance in this regard.

1.7. Regarding Myanmar's notification circulated as document G/LIC/N/2/MMR/1, he highlighted that the new N/2 notification template had been welcomed and used by different ministries, where officials had found it to be clear and easy to follow, enabling them to provide the relevant information without undue difficulty. With regard to the annual questionnaire, he informed the Committee that his Capital was currently working on it and that Myanmar's first N3 notification would be submitted when ready.

1.8. The representative of the United States thanked the Chair for her report and congratulated Myanmar for submitting its first notifications to the Committee.

1.9. The representative of Japan underlined the importance of improving transparency and congratulated Myanmar for submitting its notifications to this Committee for the first time.

1.10. The Committee took note of the Chairperson's report and of the statements made.

2 WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND REPLIES FROM MEMBERS ON SPECIFIC TRADE CONCERNS

2.1 Document G/LIC/Q/GHA/2

2.1. The representative of the United States indicated that her delegation would take the floor under agenda item 10.

2.2. In response, the representative of Ghana thanked the US for its questions on the importation of meat and meat products (poultry) into Ghana, contained in document G/LIC/Q/GHA/2, dated 6 March 2019. He replied to the US questions orally, in accordance with the answers circulated in document G/LIC/Q/GHA/3.

2.3. The Committee took note of the statements made.

2.2 Document G/LIC/Q/BRA/23

2.4. The representative of the European Union noted that the EU had submitted follow-up questions on nitrocellulose for industrial purposes to the Brazilian delegation on 22 October 2018 and had also raised this issue at the Committee's previous meeting. She reminded the Brazilian Delegation that the EU were still awaiting Brazil's replies.

2.5. In response, the representative of Brazil indicated that his delegation had not yet received any additional questions from the EU and asked the EU to submit these as a WTO document. He underscored that Brazil had already provided its replies to the EU in document G/LIC/Q/BRA/23. His delegation stood ready to respond to any additional questions from the EU once these had been received in writing.

2.3 Document G/LIC/Q/CHN/27

2.6. The representative of the European Union reminded China that the EU had addressed to it a set of detailed questions, submitted in document G/LIC/Q/CHN/27, seeking further clarification of China's annual notification with regard to its restrictions on solid waste. She asked China when it intended to reply to the EU's questions.

2.7. The representative of China thanked the EU for its questions. He noted that China attached importance to the implementation of the WTO's transparency obligations. Currently, China was working on a new set of replies to the annual questionnaire and would submit these as soon as possible.

2.8. Regarding automatic import licensing, he indicated that it was applied to certain freely-imported commodities for collecting trade statistics and for monitoring imports. The practice was in compliance with the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures. No restriction was imposed on the quantity or value of imports.

2.9. With regard to poultry, which had been mentioned in the EU's Question 7, its import was subject to automatic import licences for monitoring and statistics purposes. Regarding electromechanical products, the automatic procedure applied was no different from that applied to any other products in this category.

2.10. In addition, the list of products subject to non-automatic and automatic licensing procedures could be found on the website of the Ministry of Commerce. Regarding procedures for automatic and non-automatic import licensing, he replied that he had already presented them at the Committee's last meeting.

2.4 Document G/LIC/Q/THA/4

2.11. The representative of the European Union noted with regret that Thailand had not submitted any reply to the annual questionnaire since 2013. The EU strongly encouraged Thailand to comply with its notification obligations and sought clarification as to the reasons behind such a long delay.

2.12. She reiterated the EU's concern over Thailand's import procedures introduced on feed wheat. She recalled that, following Thailand's request raised at last year's Committee meeting, the EU had submitted additional questions, in April 2018. However, no written reply had yet been received from Thailand.

2.13. The EU reiterated its wish to understand on what basis the measure would be maintained and for how long. The EU also wished to receive a detailed description of the import licensing procedures to be applied. Likewise, the EU wished to receive actual data on the corn market in order to verify whether or not Thailand's justification of the measure on the grounds of corn oversupply could be considered acceptable.

2.14. Furthermore, she pointed out that, as per its written questions, the EU had understood that the Thai government had launched a support programme for corn production since September 2018 in order to provide incentives for rice farmers to divert their farming to corn during the drought period and to fill in the gap between the domestic demand for corn (8 million MT) and domestic production (5 million MT). The programme provided both financial support (minimum price guarantee, crop insurance premium subsidy, and soft loans for inputs and management costs in the post-harvesting period) and non-financial support (marketing and technical assistance) to farmers that switched their farming from rice to corn. This support programme seemed to contradict the claim of alleged market oversupply of domestic corn. Therefore, the EU requested Thailand to clarify how government support for the expansion of corn production could be reconciled with an alleged market oversupply in domestic corn.

2.15. The EU looked forward to receiving detailed written replies to its questions circulated in documents G/LIC/Q/THA/3 and G/LIC/Q/THA/4. The EU also wished to know if Thailand intended to notify its import procedures for wheat feed in accordance with Articles 1.4 and 5 of the Import Licensing Agreement.

2.16. The representative of the United States shared the EU's concerns regarding Thailand's lack of notifications and import procedures for wheat feed. She noted that the US had also submitted questions to Thailand, in April 2018, but had not yet received a response. In order to meet its transparency obligations under this Committee, the US urged Thailand to submit its notification of this procedure and to complete the annual questionnaire.

2.17. The representative of Thailand thanked the EU and the US for their questions regarding the import of wheat and provided certain updated information in response to the EU's questions. He informed the Committee that, for the previous two years, the volume of wheat import had increased by 6.46%, from 1.6 million metric tonnes in 2015, to 1.71 million metric tonnes in 2017. Thailand believed that the volumes in this case would continue to increase. Currently, the relevant government agencies in Thailand were consulting with different stakeholders, including farmers and industry, to work on how to improve the animal feed supply chains. He indicated that his delegation would continue to provide Members with updated information.

2.18. On a separate note, the Chairperson informed the Committee that the Secretariat had updated the "Consolidated paper of written questions and replies submitted to the Committee since 1995", which had been circulated in document G/LIC/W/51/Rev.1.

2.19. The Committee took note of the statements made.

3 NOTIFICATIONS

3.1 Notifications under Articles 1.4(a)/8.2(b)

3.1. Three notifications from Myanmar and Tajikistan were reviewed (documents G/LIC/N/1/MMR/1, G/LIC/N/1/TJK/2 and G/LIC/N/1/TJK/2/Corr.1).

3.2. The Committee took note of the notifications.

3.2 Notifications under Article 5

3.3. Ten notifications under Article 5.1-5.4, from six Members, were reviewed at the meeting, as follows: Angola (documents G/LIC/N/2/AGO/1 and G/LIC/N/2/AGO/2); Costa Rica (document G/LIC/N/2/CRI/3); Hong Kong, China (documents G/LIC/N/2/HKG/9 , G/LIC/N/2/HKG/10, G/LIC/N/2/HKG/11, and G/LIC/N/2/HKG/12); Myanmar (document G/LIC/N/2/MMR/1); Switzerland (document G/LIC/N/2/CHE/3); and Ukraine (document G/LIC/N/2/UKR/8).

3.4. The Chairperson noted that most of the above notifications had been prepared using the new templates.

3.5. The representative of Costa Rica expressed his gratitude to the Secretariat for the assistance offered in preparing Costa Rica's notification.

3.6. The Committee took note of the notifications and of the statement made.

3.3 Notifications under Article 7.3

3.7. Twelve N/3 notifications, from 10 Members, were reviewed at this meeting, most of which were for 2018, with a few submitted for 2017 or earlier, as follows: G/LIC/N/3/COL/12 (Colombia, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/CRI/13, G/LIC/N/3/CRI/14, and G/LIC/N/3/CRI/15 (Costa Rica, for 2016, 2017, and 2018); G/LIC/N/3/SLV/3 (El Salvador, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/GEO/8 (Georgia, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/IND/18 (India, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/KAZ/3 (Kazakhstan, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/NIC/10 (Nicaragua, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/SGP/14 (Singapore, for 2018); G/LIC/N/3/ZAF/7 (South Africa, for 2018) and G/LIC/N/3/URY/12 (Uruguay, for 2018).

3.8. On India's notification (G/LIC/Q/N/3/IND/18), the representative of Canada stated that, as the largest supplier of pulses to India, Canada had been the Member most negatively affected by India's recent measures to limit its imports of pulses. He noted that pulses were an important source of protein for many Indian consumers and that Canada was a high quality and reliable supplier. In this context, Canada was disappointed that on 29 March 2019 India had extended its quantitative restriction (QR) on the import of dry peas for a whole year.

3.9. He emphasized that it had a been a full year since India had first introduced its quantitative restriction on dry peas, and that India had still not provided clear information on the GATT/WTO basis for this quantitative restriction.

3.10. He observed that in India's latest response to the questionnaire, submitted to the Committee on 17 January 2019, India had specified that its import restriction was maintained on the grounds of protection of human health or safety, animal or plant life or health, and security and the environment. However, to date, India had yet to respond to Canada's request to provide further details of the basis on which it applied this import restriction on dry peas.

3.11. He continued that India's response did not include any specificity on the rationale to impose import restrictions on dry peas and other pulses and reiterated that the elimination of quantitative restrictions was a fundamental principle in both the GATT and the WTO. Canada again asked India to specify the GATT or WTO legal basis for this measure.

3.12. Without prejudice to Canada's assessment of the legal basis for this measure that India might yet provide, Canada also asked India promptly to notify the relevant procedure for obtaining licences for the quota, and asked India to indicate when and on which Indian government website this information would be made available to importers.

3.13. The representative of Australia stated that his delegation continued to have significant concerns with regard to India's application of quantitative restrictions on the importation of various pulses. He emphasized that these concerns were held not only by Australia, but by other Members too.

3.14. He recalled that for almost two years Australia had been engaging with India in multiple formats to raise their concerns, including asking detailed and considered questions of India in every relevant WTO Committee with regard to the WTO basis and application of these QRs.

3.15. He noted that Australian concerns remained and were strengthening, notably as a result of new measures announced by India on 29 March 2019, which restricted pulse imports into India for a further year. He reminded all Members that, in August 2017, India had applied QRs on an annual basis of 150,000 tonnes for both Mung beans and Urad, and 200,000 tonnes for Pigeon Peas. These QRs had been further modified and expanded on 4 May 2018. On 25 April 2018, India had applied a three-month 100,000 tonne quantitative restriction on the importation of peas, back-dated to 1 April 2018. This QR had been extended three times, for three months each, with no additional volume added, with the last QR extension ending on 31 March 2019.

3.16. On 29 March 2019, India had notified Members that its QRs would apply for the fiscal year commencing 1 April 2019 on the following pulse varieties:

- Mung beans (green gram), limited to 150,000 tonnes for the fiscal year;
- Urad (black gram bean/lentil), limited to 150,000 tonnes for the fiscal year; and
- Pigeon Peas (toor dal), limited to 200,000 tonnes for the fiscal year.

3.17. The QR on peas would extend for another full year, starting on 1 April 2019, limiting imports of peas (including yellow, green, dun, and kaspas peas) to 150,000 tonnes during this period.

3.18. He requested India to explain the WTO basis of the application of these QRs, underscoring that the burden to do so fell on India. His delegation also asked India to explain why the announcement of these measures had not been accompanied by information on licensing procedures to ensure that traders could access these quotas. Furthermore, he asked India to explain how these measures were 'temporary', noting that India's QRs would see pulse imports restricted for two years or more. A clarification of whether or not the QRs for Mung beans, Urad, and Pigeon Peas were permanent would also be welcome; in other words, would these QRs continue in future fiscal years, until removed? And was the QR for peas 'temporary'; would it stop on 31 March 2020, unless removed?

3.19. The representative of Ukraine echoed the concerns expressed by Canada and Australia. She called upon India to comply with its WTO obligations.

3.20. The representative of the European Union also supported the concerns expressed by Canada, Australia, and Ukraine, and invited India to provide the legal basis for all of the measures in question.

3.21. In response, the representative of India thanked the delegations of Australia, Canada, the EU, and Ukraine for their continued interest in India's pulses import policy. He requested these Members to provide their questions in writing so that they could be sent to Capital to receive detailed responses, as requested.

3.22. The Committee took note of the notifications and of the statements made.

4 TUNISIA – IMPORT RESTRICTIVE MEASURES OF 28 NOVEMBER 2018: USE OF NON-AUTOMATIC LICENCES – STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

4.1. The representative of the European Union regretted to report that, on 29 November 2018, and without prior notice to private operators, Tunisia had enforced, by surprise, a new restrictive measure imposing import authorizations on a very long list of products. The EU had noticed that Tunisia had established a *de facto* system of non-automatic import licences for these products. These authorizations should in theory be guided by technical specifications (so called "cahiers des charges") but these had not yet been defined. The Ministry of Trade in Tunisia evaluated and decided on importation requests literally on a case-by-case basis in the absence of objective criteria. Moreover, quantitative restrictions were also being applied.

4.2. He indicated that the list of products concerned included many agricultural and agri-food products, textiles and clothing, cosmetics, leather products, shoes, toys, and electrical goods. The products affected represented roughly 4% of total EU exports to Tunisia. The new measure had not been notified to the WTO and appeared to run contrary to WTO provisions.

4.3. He elaborated that Tunisia's import regime was based on four categories: (i) free import; (ii) import based on technical specifications (the importer had to comply with certain provisions and to obtain an authorization for all future imports of the same product); (iii) importation based on prior authorization, based on specific criteria; and (iv) prohibited products. The decision of Tunisia extended the scope of products in category (iii) above while, apparently, technical specifications were in the process of being prepared. The declared purpose of the measure was to assure product safety and consumer protection although, initially, the EU had been told that these measures were necessary to redress Tunisia's trade deficit.

4.4. He argued that these measures, specifically the imposition of non-automatic import licences, may constitute an import restriction inconsistent with GATT Article XI:1 if not justified under the relevant exceptions.

4.5. Regarding the way that the measure was being administered, the provisions of the WTO Import Licensing Agreement would apply in this case.

4.6. Regarding the potential informal conditions to be imposed on importers for obtaining an import licence (including a reduction in the quantity imported), these would not only be incompatible with GATT Article XI and the Import Licensing Agreement, but also in violation of GATT Article X:1 and 2 (publication of measures of general application).

4.7. Based on this analysis, the EU expected the Tunisian Government to repeal these measures as soon as possible. The EU would raise this issue at the next meeting of the Goods Council, if necessary. In this context, he asked Tunisia to comment on, and specifically to explain, the compatibility of these measures with WTO provisions.

4.8. The representative of the United States shared the EU's concerns over Tunisia's import licensing requirements for a variety of products. He supported the EU and asked Tunisia to provide more detailed information on its import requirements and to formally notify all of its import licensing-related measures.

4.9. In response, the representative of Tunisia took note of the EU and US statements. He confirmed that his delegation would engage in discussions with the EU and the US on this issue. He noted that the Minister of Trade of Tunisia was evaluating this decision and that his delegation would be happy to share any further information.

4.10. The Committee took note of the statements made.

5 INDONESIA – IMPORT LICENSING REGIME FOR CELLPHONES, HANDHELD COMPUTERS, AND TABLETS – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

5.1. The representative of the United States reiterated long-standing and serious US concerns over Indonesia's import licensing regimes, and its import licensing requirements for cell phones, handheld computers, and tablets in particular.

5.2. She recalled that, in past questions to Indonesia, the US had sought clarity on the specific requirements of Indonesia's import licensing regime and on the rationale for the requirements overall.

5.3. While acknowledging the responses that Indonesia had provided in May 2017, the US considered that these responses had not resolved its concerns and, in some instances, they had insufficiently addressed the questions that had been asked.

5.4. The US continued to seek Indonesia's explanation as to why its import licensing regime requirements treated 3G and 4G technologies differently. Indonesia had confirmed in its responses

that these two types of products were treated differently but had not explained its rationale for doing so. The US once again asked Indonesia to clarify its rationale in this regard.

5.5. She pointed out that the US failed to understand why Indonesia required both a licence to import generally—which divided companies into those that imported for further processing ("API-P") and those that imported finished products ("API-U")—as well as a separate licence for specific products, in this case for 4G LTE products, including a requirement to obtain a recommendation from the specific ministry with regulatory responsibility.

5.6. It remained unclear to the US if domestic companies were subject to equivalent requirements to those imposed upon importers. For example, there appeared to be a different requirement for domestic companies with regard to the use of distributors. When asked to identify similar requirements for domestic producers, Indonesia had provided no specific information.

5.7. In addition, Indonesia's regulations had imposed a number of additional requirements for obtaining certification prior to obtaining an import licence. Based on Indonesia's responses to date, it appeared to the US that Indonesia's system favoured imports intended for further processing as opposed to imports of finished products.

5.8. The US continued to question whether or not Indonesia's import licensing regime was consistent with the principles of the WTO as a general matter, as well as how these requirements could be considered to be no more administratively burdensome than necessary.

5.9. She underscored the seriousness of the issue, highlighting that these import licensing requirements had distorted trade and investment in an important and dynamic sector, which was a sector of significance to both the US and the global economy. Her delegation noted that Indonesia had stated that it intended to undertake a comprehensive review of the local content requirements attached to its import licensing regime for 4G products.

5.10. The US welcomed this review and requested the Government of Indonesia to conduct it in an open and transparent manner in a process that included all stakeholders and trading partners. The US also asked that the Indonesian delegation keep the Committee informed of updates regarding this review.

5.11. Finally, she appreciated that Indonesia had notified some of these measures to the Committee and urged Indonesia also to notify all of the associated measures, including Ministry of Industry Regulations 108/2012, 68/2016, and 29/2017, KOMINFO regulations 7/2018 and 16/2018, and KOMINFO Circular Letter 518/2017, and overall to reconsider these import licensing requirements for cell phones, handheld computers, and tablets.

5.12. The representative of the [European Union](#) echoed the US statement.

5.13. In response, the representative of [Indonesia](#) thanked the US and the EU for their continued interest in the products concerned and reiterated Indonesia's position as explained in previous meetings.

5.14. She noted that Indonesia's regulation on imports of cellular telephones, handheld computers, and tablets, was governed by the Regulation of Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia. It aimed to secure compliance with Indonesia's law on trade, law on industry, and law on standardization and conformity assessment, to ensure that 4G devices met Indonesia's national standards and to protect end-users of these devices. The requirements stipulated in the regulation were also applied to domestic industries.

5.15. She emphasized that Indonesia had already notified the regulation regarding certification of cellular telephones, handheld computers, and tablets, to the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, in document G/TBT/N/IDN/116.

5.16. Regarding local content requirements, she noted that all of the relevant ministries were currently reviewing the existing policy. The regulations in the telecommunication sectors would be simplified and amended to be more efficient and transparent. Some issues within certain regulations were also being reviewed to establish a more efficient and transparent procedure to improve

Indonesia's contribution to global telecommunications development. She highlighted that this was a continuing process and that her delegation would inform interested Members of such an update in due course.

5.17. The Committee took note of the statements made.

6 INDIA – IMPORT LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR BORIC ACID – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

6.1. The representative of the United States stated that the US had been concerned for some time over India's import licensing requirements for boric acid, particularly with regard to the burdensome end-use certificates necessary for importation.

6.2. He recalled that this issue had been repeatedly raised in this Committee for over a decade. The US concerns had begun in 2006, when India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry had issued a rule stating that "Imports of Boric Acid for non-insecticidal purposes would be subject to an import permit issued by the Central Insecticide Board and Registration Committee under the Ministry of Agriculture." Prior to this change, no import permit had been required for boric acid.

6.3. He noted that the rule required that an importer of non-insecticidal boric acid provide details of the precise end-use of the product prior to importation, as well as the historical import and production data of the finished product. This information was subject to a formal government review process.

6.4. He pointed out that it did not appear that import requests were promptly reviewed. The Central Insecticide Board and Registration Committee (CIBRC) met only monthly, and it was not clear to what extent it had the opportunity to review those import requests that had been received. Indeed, the US understood that the CIBRC had not approved a single import permit for non-insecticidal boric acid since June 2018, despite repeated applications.

6.5. In addition to the lengthy time-frame for obtaining an approval, the US understood that the most recent approvals for imported boric acid were based on past import levels. This appeared to further limit the quantities that could be imported.

6.6. Indian importers had also expressed their frustration over the fact that import licensing applications had to include information on past consumption of boric acid and production of the finished product, which was information often unavailable to importers.

6.7. The US continued to request India to explain why boric acid, which had a toxicity level roughly equivalent to that of table salt, was the only insecticide that required an import permit for non-insecticidal use, considering its low toxicity level compared to other insecticides that did not require an import permit.

6.8. They also questioned why imports of boric acid were subject to these requirements, given that domestic manufacturers of boric acid did not have to seek approval from a government ministry to sell their product, and domestic producers did not have to determine the end use of the boric acid prior to its sale. To the contrary, domestic producers could sell to any buyer and faced no limit on how much they could sell.

6.9. In this context, he continued to request India to amend its Schedule-I (Imports) of the ITC (HS) Classifications of Export and Import Items to eliminate the requirement that imports of boric acid for non-insecticidal purposes need an import permit.

6.10. In response, the representative of India thanked the US for its continued interest in the matter relating to the import of boric acid. He indicated that India had already submitted its detailed written replies in documents G/LIC/Q/IND/12, G/LIC/Q/IND/14, G/LIC/Q/IND/16, and G/LIC/Q/IND/22, explaining in detail the policy objectives of the measure as well as the issues relating to its implementation.

6.11. The Committee took note of the statements made.

7 VIET NAM – IMPORT LICENSING FOR CYBER SECURITY PRODUCTS – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

7.1. The representative of the United States expressed US concern over Viet Nam's Decree No. 58 on the import of civil cryptography products, which mandated that import licences were required for certain products utilizing encryption (cryptography). She noted that, according to Decree No. 58, the Decree's supplemental Appendices, and the guidance issued by the Government Cipher Committee, import licences appeared to be required only for certain products where encryption was a "primary" or "core" function (Decree No. 58, Appendix 1, and GCC Letter No. 223). However, Viet Nam also appeared to require import licences for products where encryption was not the core function.

7.2. She listed some of the specific US questions on the import licensing requirements set out in Viet Nam's Decree No. 58, as follows:

- Why had the requirement been broadened to cover products where encryption was an "important" function, rather than limiting it to the narrower "core" function requirement, as provided for in the decree?
- What criteria were used to determine which products required an import licence?
- If there existed a list that was used by Vietnamese Customs authorities to determine which products required an import licence, how was that list drawn up? How could companies request to have a product removed from this list if it did not meet the encryption level threshold?
- Why did Viet Nam require additional licensing for IT companies, and what were the specific prerequisite conditions needed to demonstrate appropriate expertise?

7.3. She argued that this uncertain operating environment could unnecessarily stifle trade without providing any clear benefits to Viet Nam. In terms of procedure, she pointed out that the process for acquiring import licences also appeared unnecessarily burdensome, as an importer must be licensed as an "Information Technology (IT) company" even to be able to apply for an import licence. US industry had reported that this process alone could take 60 days, with an additional 60 days required for a product to be licensed for import.

7.4. The US urged Viet Nam to remove the conditions that it had introduced on companies applying for an import licence and instead to consider a less trade-restrictive method of implementation; Viet Nam should at least suspend implementation of these requirements until stakeholder questions and concerns had been addressed. The US requested that Viet Nam notify all of its measures to the appropriate WTO Committees, including the Committee on Import Licensing.

7.5. The representative of Japan expressed Japan's significant interest in Viet Nam's Cybersecurity Law. He requested Viet Nam to provide Japan with details of its import licensing requirements and procedures based on the Cybersecurity Law and its relevant regulations. He noted that Japan would monitor the situation closely and make further comments if necessary.

7.6. The representative of the European Union supported the US request and urged Viet Nam to notify its import licensing legislation to this Committee.

7.7. In response, the representative of Viet Nam indicated that Decree No. 58/2016/ND-CP on the sale, provision, services, as well as exportation and importation of civil cryptography products, had been promulgated to implement the Law on Network Information Security, dated 19 November 2015.

7.8. He explained that, recognizing that technology goods could be dual-use for civil and military purposes, the Vietnamese Law on Network Information Security was intended properly to manage civil cryptography products to ensure national security, sovereignty, and social and economic order.

7.9. In that spirit, Decree No. 58 and its attached Appendices, in particular Appendix II, clearly stipulated that only products that matched all of the listed criteria, including HS code at 8 digits,

name of products, and description of the cryptographic features of the products, were subject to import and export licensing requirements. He argued that the number of such products was very limited, and that the Decree's aim was to facilitate understanding and implementation by businesses and Customs at the border.

7.10. In addition, Appendix I of Decree No. 58 excluded nine types of civil cryptography products, including operating systems, internet browsers, and software with integrated cryptographic components (with cryptographic protection of information not the primary function), which were designed to be installed by users without manufacturers' assistance, and which could be deployed on a mass scale. Other examples included information technology products used universally and pre-installed with auxiliary cryptographic features for protection of information without manufacturer assistance, such as tablets, smart phones, DVD players, digital cameras, and other household electronics. Indeed, it was estimated that up to 80% of civil cryptography products were excluded from licensing.

7.11. To meet the objective of properly controlling dual-use cryptography products, the Law on Network Information Security required that import must be carried out through licensed companies so that end-users were well served and products sufficiently well managed. The business licence required a company to demonstrate appropriate expertise and adequate capacity (for example, capable technical and managerial personnel, and a service system pertinent to its business).

7.12. He noted that the procedures in the Law and Decree No. 58 for acquiring licences were transparent, time-bound, and facilitated trade, with all necessary forms having already been published. Upon submission of the complete application, an applicant should receive its licence, or else a refusal, within the time-limit stated in the Law. In the case of a refusal, a written notice clearly stating the rationale for such refusal would be issued to the applicant.

7.13. The Committee took note of the statements made.

8 CHINA – CHANGES TO IMPORT LICENSING FOR CERTAIN RECOVERABLE MATERIALS – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

8.1. The representative of the United States expressed significant US concern over the uncertainty, lack of transparency, lack of predictability, and trade-restrictiveness of the changes to import licensing surrounding China's implementation of its existing import ban on certain plastic and paper scrap and its plans to expand the ban to other recyclable materials. The US was also concerned that China did not seem to have applied the same bans and restrictive contaminant standards to domestically sourced products.

8.2. He argued that these restrictions and bans had left US recyclers without viable alternative processing capacity. The global shortfall in processing capacity had also caused a decline, and in some cases collapse, in the prices for certain recyclable materials. The pervasive market instability engendered by China's measures had led to a halt in recycling among several US municipal recycling programmes, resulting in the incineration or landfill disposal of otherwise saleable commodities.

8.3. The US considered that these restrictions were causing environmental harm globally; by forcing recyclables into landfills, China had vastly increased the volume of materials at risk of becoming marine litter.

8.4. He recalled that the US had raised the issue of certain recyclable materials at several previous meetings of the Committee and requested China to notify to the Committee any changes to its import licensing regime. Unfortunately, China had yet to provide sufficient information about its current licensing procedures and any planned changes intended to alleviate US concerns.

8.5. He recalled that China had announced its intention to expand its import ban to 32 additional recyclable materials; furthermore, China had released a draft law that would most likely lead to a ban on the import of all recyclable materials. Neither the changes to the list of materials subject to the ban nor the draft law had been notified to the WTO. He wondered if China could explain the new import licensing requirements under this policy and state when it would notify these changes to the Committee.

8.6. The US addressed the following questions to China: (1) Did China intend to expand the import ban to all recyclable materials; if so, when might it do so and what procedures would be followed in adopting such an expansion; and (2) did China intend to apply the same restrictive contaminant standards to domestically sourced recyclable materials; if not, why not?

8.7. In conclusion, he reiterated the US request that China inform the Committee of any new import licensing measures in a timely manner, according to its obligations under the Agreement, and that it halt its implementation of the existing and planned measures in order to give its consideration instead to less trade-restrictive alternatives to them.

8.8. The representative of the Republic of Korea thanked the US for raising this issue. Korea understood and appreciated Chinese efforts to protect the environment and pursue sustainable development. However, he believed that China's measures should have been implemented in a less trade-restrictive manner. In terms of transparency, Korea asked China to clarify its existing import licensing procedures, including the standard used when applying these restrictions, and in general to share sufficient information on the relevant regulations.

8.9. The representative of Canada shared the concerns that the US had raised regarding the uncertainty and disruption that China's restrictions on the import of solid waste created for traders. He emphasized that Canada did not intend to dispute China's goal of eliminating harmful environmental impacts resulting from contaminated waste material. However, Canada encouraged China to consider different and less trade-restrictive mechanisms to address this specific problem while ensuring that mutually beneficial trade in recycled products could continue in a predictable manner.

8.10. The representative of the European Union referred to the EU's statement delivered under item 2 of the agenda.

8.11. In response, the representative of China thanked the US and other delegations for expressing their interest in this matter. He pointed out that solid waste treatment and disposal was a shared environmental issue faced by all countries around the world. In accordance with the internationally recognized principles of "waste generator responsibility" and "disposal to the nearest", each country was obliged to dispose of its own domestically generated solid waste.

8.12. He argued that, as a developing country with the largest population in the world, and given the need to protect environmental safety and public health, it was imperative for China to improve domestic solid waste treatment and disposal while restricting and prohibiting the import of solid waste.

8.13. He indicated that China had established a catalogue for imported solid waste. Importing the products listed in the *Catalogue of Solid Wastes (That Could Be Used as Raw Materials) Restricted from Import* would be subject to the examination and approval of the competent authorities. *The Administrative Measures for the Import of Solid Waste and the Provisions on the Administration of Environmental Protection Relating to Solid Waste in the Category of Import Restriction Usable as Raw Material* regulated enterprises applying to import solid waste, as well as the documents, procedures, and time requirements pertinent to such applications.

8.14. Imports of solid waste listed in the *Catalogue of Solid Wastes (That Could Be Used as Raw Materials) Unrestricted from Import* did not require an import licence.

8.15. Regarding notification obligations, he noted that relevant adjustments to the catalogue would be reflected in the relevant notifications, to be submitted at the earliest possible time.

8.16. The Committee took note of the statements made.

9 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – IMPORT LICENSING PERMITS FOR POULTRY – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

9.1. The representative of the United States indicated that the Dominican Republic appeared to be operating an import licensing system that had not been notified to the Committee on Import Licensing.

9.2. This import licensing system appeared to be restricting trade in agricultural products, including dry beans, poultry, dairy products, hatching eggs, and potatoes.

9.3. He asked if the Dominican Republic could explain whether or not it operated any non-automatic import licensing programmes; if the Dominican Republic required that the Minister of State for Agriculture approved any import licensing permits for agricultural products; and if the Agriculture and Livestock Promotion Committee (DPAG) also approved any import licensing permit?

9.4. In response, the representative of the Dominican Republic welcomed the intervention from the US and noted that her country applied TRQs for dried beans, poultry, and powdered milk, but did not apply them for hatching eggs or potatoes. She emphasized that these two items, hatching eggs and potatoes, had not been included in the commitments notified by the Dominican Republic under the WTO.

9.5. With regard to Law No. 4990 on plant health, she noted that this law remained in force and that its objective was to guarantee sanitary protection for plants and crops. In this regard, she elaborated on the import licensing requirements established under Article 3 of this Law, as currently applied.

9.6. She explained that all imports of plant origin required a phytosanitary clearance certificate that had been issued by the Department for Plant and Animal Health within the Ministry of Agriculture; however, this certificate was not to be confused with an import licence because it exclusively concerned a sanitary control on plant imports, in accordance with the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and was based on scientific risk assessments. The requirement applied to all products of plant origin independently of whether or not they were imported under TRQs.

9.7. She also highlighted that the Dominican Republic was currently updating its legal framework; in this regard, it had already notified to the SPS Committee its draft law on plant and animal health protection (document G/SPS/N/DOM/56/Rev.1 and document G/SPS/N/DOM/57/Rev.1, dated 13 March 2017). This draft law was currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Agriculture's legal department.

9.8. Regarding licences issued by the Department for Agriculture Promotion and Livestock of the Ministry of Agriculture, the policy purpose was to collect trade statistics on agricultural products that had been authorized for import; licences were granted automatically for products not subject to TRQs. Products under TRQ administration were subject to non-automatic licences; these were issued following the procedures established under Decree No. 569-12, in line with WTO rules.

9.9. On meat products, Law No. 40-30 of 1955 applied in order to provide sanitary protection on products of animal origin. As indicated earlier, this law was currently being updated and would be substituted by the draft law for animal health protection.

9.10. She highlighted that the Dominican Republic used the foreign trade single window system to facilitate the submission of licence applications, which could be done digitally in one single location. She looked forward to cooperating with the US on this issue and expressed willingness to provide additional information.

9.11. The Committee took note of the statements made.

10 GHANA – IMPORT PROCEDURES AND PERMITS FOR POULTRY – STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

10.1. The representative of the United States noted that her delegation had addressed questions to Ghana regarding Ghana's apparent operation of a non-automatic import licensing regime, under which imports of poultry products had been limited. She understood that, under Ghana's import licensing procedures for poultry, only a limited quantity of poultry (25,000 MT) was permissible for import each month. The US was concerned that this policy hindered legitimate trade and lacked transparency.

10.2. She thanked Ghana for its oral responses and her delegation also looked forward to reviewing Ghana's written responses. In addition, she strongly encouraged Ghana to notify these import measures to the Committee on Import Licensing as soon as possible.

10.3. In response, the representative of Ghana thanked the US for its statement and its continued interest in Ghana's import regime. He noted that Ghana had already provided its replies to the questions from the US. He assured the US that its new written questions would be brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities once received. Ghana hoped that Members' concerns could be discussed bilaterally before being brought before the Committee.

11 IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY IN NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES OF THE AGREEMENT – REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

11.1. The Chairperson reported on the work that had been undertaken in improving transparency since the Committee's previous formal meeting. She recalled that the purpose of all the work and efforts on simplifying notification procedures and templates had been to improve transparency and notification compliance in the Committee, as well as to make the notification procedures easier for Members.

11.2. She noted that, since 2015, Members' capacity constraints and overlapping notification templates resulting from similar notification requirements under different provisions had been identified as the two main factors that were contributing to low notification compliance.

11.3. To address the capacity constraint issue, the Secretariat had enhanced its targeted technical assistance and capacity-building activities. For example, a Geneva-based Workshop on Import Licensing had been held every year since 2017. Upon the request of the Members concerned, national workshops on import licensing and notifications had been held in Paraguay, Egypt, the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Myanmar, and others were in the pipeline. One dedicated session of the Committee had also been held last year to improve Geneva-based delegates' understanding of the Agreement.

11.4. Regarding possible improvements to the notification templates, a lot of time and effort had been dedicated to this issue by Members and the Secretariat, with a view to finding a proper solution to simplifying and streamlining notification forms without jeopardizing Members' notification obligations as set out in the Agreement. She pointed out that at the Committee's informal meeting of 8 March 2019, the Secretariat had introduced a notification form for Members to use, *on a voluntary basis*, when submitting their notifications under Article 5.1–5.4 of the Agreement, and an explanatory note had also been circulated, in document RD/LIC/13.

11.5. She informed the Committee that a number of Members (including Costa Rica; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Japan; Myanmar; Switzerland; Chinese Taipei; and Ukraine) had already used this form when notifying their new import licensing laws and procedures, or changes to existing laws and procedures. She believed that it would be useful for these Members to share with the Committee their experience in using the new template.

11.6. The representative of Myanmar indicated that the feedback from his Capital had been very positive, with officials commenting that the form had been well organized and easy to follow. Indeed, Myanmar had used it for its first N2 notification.

11.7. The representative of Japan reiterated that Japan attached great importance to transparency and believed that notification was an important function of the Committee's regular activities. His delegation considered that streamlining the relevant procedures would be beneficial to all Members; Japan also considered that the new notification form suggested by the Secretariat was a valuable contribution in this regard.

11.8. He further noted that Japan was one of the Members that had already used this form for notifications and seen its benefits. He cited the experience of a Capital-based colleague who worked on notifications, who had informed him that his workload had been significantly reduced thanks to this new form. Therefore, Japan strongly encouraged other Members to use this form on a voluntary basis.

11.9. The representative of Colombia reiterated that his country attached great importance to notifications under this Committee. His delegation believed that it was particularly important to have a standard template for notifications, as presented by the Secretariat at the Committee's last session. The new form made it much easier to prepare a notification and also clarified many of the doubts that Colombia had encountered during its preparation of the relevant documents. He underscored that preparing these notifications required the involvement of many bodies and agencies; in this regard, the new template could also facilitate inter-agency cooperation. He also highlighted Colombia's belief that, when reviewing notifications from other Members, the proposed format allowed for an easier analysis of the information presented.

11.10. The representative of Chinese Taipei shared the view that transparency played a critical role in improving the functioning of the multilateral system; the efforts of the Secretariat were much appreciated in this regard. Chinese Taipei shared its experience of using the new N2 form for notifying under Article 5.1-5.4. She noted that Chinese Taipei had used the new N2 form for their 2018 notification under Article 5.1-5.4. The coordinating officials of Chinese Taipei, who had collected the relevant information from Chinese Taipei's different agencies, considered that the new N2 form was easier to complete. The requirements were clear and the format was unified; therefore, it took them less time. Her delegation had also noted that the footnotes in the new N2 form allowed the same form to be used to notify also under Article 1.4(a) and Article 8.2(b). She believed that this simplified and streamlined notification format would greatly enhance Members' efficiency as concerned the fulfilment of their notification obligations.

11.11. The representative of China highly commended the Secretariat on its efforts to improve transparency in import licensing notification procedures, and especially for the new notification form under Article 5.1-5.4 of the Agreement. According to their assessment, this new form was easy to use and understand; as a result, it effectively reduced the technical burden of notification. China believed that the new form would greatly contribute to improvements in transparency in the area of import licensing.

11.12. The representative of Uruguay appreciated the efforts made to improve the import licensing notification procedures and to create a standard template. He expressed his delegation's support for using this new voluntary format to improve Members' notification compliance under this Committee.

11.13. The representative of Hong Kong, China joined others in commending the Secretariat on the new N2 form. She noted that Hong Kong, China had submitted four notifications using the new form; these notifications had covered various subjects, including the amendment of a specific import licensing mechanism, and various new import licensing arrangements. The feedback from Hong Kong, China was similar to that described by other colleagues: the new form was very useful; it was clear; and it facilitated inter-agency cooperation. She encouraged Members to use this form to enhance transparency in this Committee. She was also highly encouraged to see Myanmar's good example, which indicated that a national workshop was an effective way of helping Members to fulfil this notification requirement. She emphasized the importance in this Committee of continuing the discussion on further improving notification compliance.

11.14. The representative of the United States thanked the Chair and the Secretariat for their work on improving transparency in the area of Members' import licensing regimes. The US placed great importance on improving transparency as well as on increasing the quantity and quality of notifications submitted to this Committee; indeed, the US was an advocate of any attempt to improve transparency and to streamline notification compliance. The US emphasized that Members should notify their legislation to the Secretariat in electronic format, preferably, which were transmittable and accessible.

11.15. The representative of the European Union thanked the Chair and the Secretariat for their good work on improving notification compliance and transparency. The EU also encouraged Members to use the new format, on a voluntary basis. In addition, she suggested that online notification submission systems could be incorporated into the new import licensing website.

11.16. The Chairperson proposed that the Committee agree that the new notification form be used by Members on a voluntary basis and that the Secretariat circulate the form as a G/LIC document.¹

11.17. The Committee so agreed.

11.18. The Committee took note of the Chairperson's report, of the statements made, and of the decision taken.

12 NEW IMPORT LICENSING WEBSITE – UPDATE BY THE SECRETARIAT

12.1. The Secretariat made a presentation and updated the Committee on its work on the new import licensing website.

12.2. On the deadline for Members to review and update their Member profile, he emphasized that the Secretariat had already uploaded the profiles of all Members onto the website, except for those Members that had as yet not notified under the Agreement. In order to officially launch the website at the earliest opportunity, the Secretariat proposed a two-month review period to allow Members to verify the contents of their respective Member profiles. However, taking into account the workload and internal consultations that might be necessary to complete such a review, the Secretariat clarified to Members that the deadline proposed was only a target date.

12.3. Regarding the approach that Members should take when providing their updates, the Secretariat had already identified a few "best practices" of Members, which Members might wish to discuss. He highlighted that, no matter what approach a Member decided to take, two principles should be strictly followed, one being that the information provided should be "official", and the other being that this information should also be "trackable". All updated information from Members should be submitted as an official document, such as a notification; furthermore, any additional change or update made by a Member should be clearly identified as such.

12.4. Regarding online submission of notifications, the Secretariat noted that this aspect would be taken into consideration in the next phase of the website's development; for the current stage of its development, the focus was on streamlining the notification templates and updating the relevant information on Members' current import licensing regimes.

12.5. The representative of the United States thanked the Secretariat for developing the new website; the US was hopeful that it would enhance transparency. At the same time, she noted that many Members had gaps and missing information in their Member profiles despite the fact that they had notified according to the different provisions.

12.6. She appreciated the information that had been provided on different approaches on the basis of which Members might review and update their respective Member profiles. Her delegation would convey this information to Capital. Until now, the US position had been that Member profiles could best be corrected by using the annual reply to the questionnaire (or the N3 notification). The US urged all Members to submit their next annual notification on time and to consider the information that had been presented in their Member profile in the process. The US believed that the recurring nature of the N3 notification would allow Members regularly to update any information missing from their profile. Such an approach was transparent and consistent with the established norms and procedures of this Committee.

12.7. She emphasized that the US could not support any approach to updating the website that was not transparent to the entire Committee. She expressed concern over the suggested dates as the intention of the US was to update and verify its import licensing information when submitting the new N/3 notification, by end-September.

12.8. The representative of Japan thanked the Chair and the Secretariat for their detailed explanation. Japan highly appreciated the dedicated work that had been carried out by the Secretariat in developing this new website and believed that this initiative would contribute to further improving transparency and revitalizing the Committee's activities.

¹ Document G/LIC/28, dated 1 May 2019.

12.9. Japan looked forward to the official launch of the website. He was confident that it would bring great benefits to various stakeholders outside of the WTO, encouraging their participation in global trade. With a view to officially launching the website as soon as possible, he encouraged Members to review their profiles and to make any necessary updates. He emphasized that it was Members' shared responsibility to ensure the accuracy of the information on the website.

12.10. Regarding the two approaches to updates as described by the Secretariat, Japan indicated that it was open to either approach, as long as any updating and verification of information was undertaken in a transparent, official, and trackable manner. Japan also hoped that online submission of notifications via this website would be possible in the near future.

12.11. The representative of Chinese Taipei thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and development of the website. She informed the Committee that her delegation had verified its Member profile and had also confirmed to the Secretariat that its profile was accurate and up to date. Chinese Taipei would be flexible with regard to the two options proposed by the Secretariat.

12.12. As for the procedural aspect of the website's development, her delegation supported the gradual introduction of a process for Members to submit their notifications themselves online, either via the delegation in Geneva or directly from Capital, once the interface of the website had been built up. In addition, the Secretariat might wish to review any submitted notification before it was made public. On the issue of possible approaches to harmonizing product descriptions for "Products" and their related HS Codes, she suggested that, given the complicated nature of the issue, one possible approach might be to identify the HS Code in the description of the products.

12.13. The representative of China appreciated the Secretariat's excellent work in developing this new import licensing website. He noted that the interface of the website was user-friendly and that the information in the database could be searched and found rapidly and efficiently. China would continue to test the new website, to check its data, and to provide further feedback in due course.

12.14. The representative of Hong Kong, China joined others in commending the Secretariat for its great efforts in developing this website, which her delegation had found to be user-friendly. Hong Kong, China had shared its experience of coordinating between domestic agencies when verifying its Member profile at the Committee's informal meeting that had been held on 8 March 2019.

12.15. She noted that it took time to update and verify the information on the Member profile; nevertheless, the exercise was rewarding in the long run. She encouraged Members to complete this task as soon as possible with a view to launching the website at the earliest opportunity. As for possible approaches to updating Member profiles, Hong Kong, China considered that this could be discussed further. She had heard the concerns expressed by some Members regarding the process of N3 notifications, in particular the issue of how to synchronize the work of verification with the submission of an N/3 notification; here too, she believed that the issue should be further discussed. In any case, she believed that the website would be further improved, including through the possible incorporation of e-submission of notifications. In this context, she encouraged the Secretariat to continue in its efforts to explore concrete options on e-submission.

12.16. The representative of the European Union echoed other delegations in thanking the Secretariat for developing this very useful website. She indicated that the EU was still reviewing the website as well as the EU's profile. The EU would provide feedback as soon as possible, which in all probability would be at the same time that it submitted its N3 notification, in September 2019.

12.17. The Chairperson recalled that, at the Committee's most recent informal meeting, Hong Kong, China had shared its experience of reviewing and updating its Member profile on the website. She thanked Hong Kong, China and encouraged all Members to review and update their information in a timely manner. She noted that, during the Committee's informal meeting of 8 March 2019, certain technical issues had been raised, such as how to update a Member profile, electronic submission of notifications, and how to harmonize product descriptions according to the HS system. She suggested that a discussion among Members of these issues be continued.

12.18. The representative of Liberia congratulated the Committee for its good job on streamlining the notification procedures and notification forms; Liberia supported this initiative. However, he sought clarification regarding the management of the import licensing website, including if it was

being managed by the Secretariat or if it was for Members themselves to update their own information on the Member profile, and to publish their own notifications.

12.19. In response, the Secretariat clarified that the website had been and would be managed by the Secretariat, and that all official notifications submitted by Members would be uploaded onto the website by the Secretariat.

12.20. The Committee took note of the statements made.

13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

13.1. The Chairperson informed the Committee that the Secretariat had tentatively reserved the date of Friday, 4 October 2019, for the Committee's next formal meeting, on the understanding that additional meetings could also be convened, as necessary.

14 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

14.1. The Chairperson informed the Committee that the CTG Chair had been consulting with Members regarding chairpersons for the CTG's subsidiary bodies, including the Committee on Import Licensing; this process was ongoing.

14.2. She proposed that as soon as there was consensus on a slate of names, the Secretariat would send a communication to all delegations with the name of the proposed Chairperson for the Import Licensing Committee. If no objection were received within the time-frame indicated in the communication, the candidate would be deemed to have been elected by the Committee by acclamation.²

² Ms. Carol TSANG (Hong Kong, China) was nominated as the new Chairperson of the Import Licensing Committee by the CTG and the Secretariat informed Members through a communication dated 4 June. The Committee elected her as the Chairperson by acclamation on 6 June 2019.