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Committee on Import Licensing

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**REPORT (2018) OF THE COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING
TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS**

1. The Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures (hereinafter "the Agreement") which entered into force on 1 January 1995, establishes disciplines on users of import licensing systems with the principal objective of ensuring that the procedures applied for granting import licences do not in themselves restrict trade. It aims to simplify, clarify and minimize the administrative requirements necessary to obtain import licences.
2. The Committee on Import Licensing was established to afford Members the opportunity of consulting on any matter relating to the operation of the Agreement or the furtherance of its objectives. The Committee's Rules of Procedure, which were approved by the Council for Trade in Goods, are contained in document G/L/147.
3. All Members of the WTO are *ipso facto* members of the Committee. Observer governments in the General Council of the WTO have Observer status in the Committee. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and UNCTAD have regular Observer status in the Committee.
4. The focus of this report is on the period since the Committee's last annual report (G/L/1187), namely 4 October 2017 - 22 October 2018 (hereinafter "the review period"). In 2018, the Committee held two formal meetings on 20 April and 22 October (G/LIC/M/47 and [G/LIC/M/48]). On 20 April, the Committee elected by acclamation, Ms. Lorena Rivera ORJUELA (Colombia) as Chairperson for the Committee of 2018. Mr. Kazunori FUKUDA of Japan was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Committee. Pursuant to the Committee's Rules of Procedure, the officers shall hold office until the end of the first meeting of the following year.
5. Pursuant to Articles 1.4(a) and/or 8.2(b) of the Agreement and procedures agreed by the Committee, all Members are required, to notify their laws, regulations and administrative procedures relevant to import licensing and to submit copies of any relevant publications or laws and regulations upon becoming a WTO Member. Any subsequent changes to these laws, regulations and administrative procedures are also required to be published and notified. During the review period, the Committee reviewed 16 notifications (Annex I) from the following 10 Members: [Botswana; Ecuador; the European Union; India; Israel; Liechtenstein; Macao, China; Paraguay; Switzerland; and Ukraine]. These notifications can be found in the document series G/LIC/N/1/-. Copies of publications and legislation submitted with these notifications are available for consultation via the Secretariat.
6. The Committee also reviewed, pursuant to paragraphs 5.1-5.4 of Article 5, 20 notifications (Annex II) relating to the institution of new import licensing procedures or changes in these procedures from 10 Members: [Argentina; Canada; the European Union; Indonesia; Israel; Japan; Paraguay; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Chinese Taipei; and Ukraine].¹ These notifications can be found in documents series G/LIC/N/2/-. Article 5.5 of the Agreement allows Members to submit reverse notifications, where a Member considers that another Member has not notified the institution of a licensing procedure or changes in the procedures. However, no such reverse notifications have been received under this provision since the entry into force of this Agreement.

¹ After issuance of the airgram on 10 October 2018, new notifications have been received from ..., which will be reviewed at the Committee's next meeting.

7. Article 7.3 of the Agreement requires all Members to provide replies to the Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures² by 30 September each year. During the review period, the Committee reviewed [41] notifications (Annex III) from the following [33] Members: [Argentina; Australia; Burundi; Canada; China; Cuba; El Salvador; the European Union; Georgia; Hong Kong, China; India; Israel; Japan; Kazakhstan; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mali; Mauritius; Montenegro; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Norway; Paraguay; Peru; Qatar; the Russian Federation; Singapore; Switzerland; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Chinese Taipei; Ukraine; United States and Uruguay].³ These notifications can be found in document series G/LIC/N/3/-.

8. During the review period, Botswana submitted a notification to this Committee for the first time. The Chair urged Members who had not yet notified and those who had not updated their notifications to do so as soon as possible.

9. The Committee has provided a regular forum for exchanging views on specific trade issues raised by Members. Written comments and questions concerning notifications submitted to the Committee and/or on import licensing procedures maintained by Members, and replies thereto, may be found in the document series G/LIC/Q/-. During the review period: the European Union posed written questions to Argentina (G/LIC/Q/ARG/16); Brazil (G/LIC/Q/BRA/22); China (G/LIC/Q/CHN/27); Egypt (G/LIC/Q/EGY/1); the Russian Federation (G/LIC/Q/RUS/4) and Thailand (G/LIC/Q/THA/4).³ The following Members provided written responses to comments and questions: Viet Nam to the United States (G/LIC/Q/VNM/7); Argentina to the European Union (G/LIC/Q/ARG/17 and G/LIC/Q/ARG/17/Add.1); and Brazil to the European Union (G/LIC/Q/BRA/23). At the Committee meetings, Members concerned exchanged views on the issues raised.

10. In addition, the following Members requested to include in the agenda and commented on specific issues regarding other Members' import licensing regimes/measures. At Committee meeting(s) during the review period, the United States made statements on Indonesia's import licensing regime for cellphones, handheld computers and tablets; on Indonesia's import requirements related to milk supply and circulation; on India's import licensing requirements for boric acid; on Viet Nam's import licensing for cyber security products and on China's import licensing on certain recoverable materials. Australia made a statement on India's import requirements for beans of the species *vigna mungo* hepper or *vigna radiata* wilczek and pigeon peas (Cajana Cajan). Australia, Canada and the European Union made statements on India's import requirements on certain pulses. Members whose licensing measures had been questioned responded at the meetings.

11. Pursuant to Article 7.1 of the Agreement, the Committee undertook its twelfth biennial review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement at the meeting held on 22 October, based on the draft report prepared by the Secretariat (G/LIC/W/49). The final report was circulated in document [G/LIC/...].

12. At the informal meeting held on 9 July, the Secretariat introduced the new WTO import licensing website/database (<https://importlicensing.wto.org>). The new website/database was developed by the WTO's Market Access Division, with technical support from the Information Technology and Support Division. The objective was to improve transparency, to consolidate all information on import licensing and to provide a more user-friendly platform for Members to obtain specific information otherwise scattered across numerous notifications. The information presented on the website was based on notifications submitted by Members under various provisions of the Agreement. The new "Member profile" gateway on the website provided direct access to import licensing-related laws, regulations and products subject to licensing, as well as administrative procedural details for each category of products for each Member (subject to the availability of notifications), which could significantly enhanced transparency of import licensing measures.

13. With a view to addressing developing Members' capacity constraints in fulfilling their notification obligations under the Agreement, in particular those of Least-Developed Countries', the second Workshop on Import Licensing was held from 17 to 20 April 2018 in Geneva. Thirty participants representing thirty WTO developing Members (including LDCs) participated in this workshop. In addition, during 2018, upon the request of individual Members, national workshops on import licensing were held, jointly by the Secretariat and the host governments, in Paraguay (22-24 May),

² Annexed to document G/LIC/3.

³ After issuance of airgram on 10 October 2018, new notifications have been received from ..., which will be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

Egypt (25-27 September) and Bahrain (scheduled for December). These technical assistance activities not only improved the overall understanding of the Agreement, but also effectively enhanced the capacities of government officials of relevant administrative bodies in these countries to prepare their import licensing notifications. As requested by Members, the Secretariat presented an overview of the Agreement, at an informal Committee meeting held on 9 July 2018, in order to familiarize Geneva-based delegates with the Agreement, and its notification obligations in particular.

**ANNEX I: NOTIFICATIONS REVIEWED DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD PURSUANT
TO ARTICLES 1.4(A) AND/OR 8.2(B) OF THE AGREEMENT
[FROM 4 OCTOBER 2017 TO 10 OCTOBER 2018]**

MEMBER	DOCUMENT	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THE DOCUMENT
BOTSWANA	G/LIC/N/1/BWA/1	26.02.2018
ECUADOR	G/LIC/N/1/ECU/7	18.09.2018
EUROPEAN UNION	G/LIC/N/1/EU/12	21.06.2018
INDIA	G/LIC/N/1/IND/14	15.05.2018
	G/LIC/N/1/IND/14/ADD.1	20.06.2018
ISRAEL	G/LIC/N/1/ISR/4	17.09.2018
LIECHTENSTEIN	G/LIC/N/1/LIE/4	09.01.2018
	G/LIC/N/1/LIE/5	09.01.2018
	G/LIC/N/1/LIE/6	22.02.2018
MACAO, CHINA	G/LIC/N/1/MAC/7	30.10.2017
	G/LIC/N/1/MAC/8	21.08.2018
PARAGUAY	G/LIC/N/1/PRY/8	02.03.2018
SWITZERLAND	G/LIC/N/1/CHE/5	04.12.2017
	G/LIC/N/1/CHE/6	19.01.2018
	G/LIC/N/1/CHE/6/REV.1	02.02.2018
UKRAINE	G/LIC/N/1/UKR/7	22.02.2018

**ANNEX II: NOTIFICATIONS REVIEWED DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5.1-5.4 OF THE AGREEMENT
[FROM 4 OCTOBER 2017 TO 10 OCTOBER 2018]**

MEMBER	DOCUMENT	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THE DOCUMENT
ARGENTINA	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/ADD.1	08.12.2017
	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/ADD.2	22.01.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/ADD.3	14.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/ARG/28/ADD.4	19.09.2018
CANADA	G/LIC/N/2/CAN/1	14.09.2018
EUROPEAN UNION	G/LIC/N/2/EU/12	21.06.2018
INDONESIA	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/37	04.05.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/38	04.05.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/39	15.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/40	15.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/41	15.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/IDN/42	15.08.2018
ISRAEL	G/LIC/N/2/ISR/4	17.09.2018
JAPAN	G/LIC/N/2/JPN/4	17.04.2018
PARAGUAY	G/LIC/N/2/PRY/8	05.03.2018
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	G/LIC/N/2/MKD/2	14.12.2017
THE SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU	G/LIC/N/2/TPKM/5	24.09.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/TPKM/6	24.09.2018
	G/LIC/N/2/TPKM/7	24.09.2018
UKRAINE	G/LIC/N/2/UKR/7	07.02.2018

**ANNEX III: NOTIFICATIONS REVIEWED DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7.3 OF THE AGREEMENT
[FROM 4 OCTOBER 2017 TO 10 OCTOBER 2018]**

MEMBER	DOCUMENT (YEAR NOTIFIED FOR)	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF THE DOCUMENT	
ARGENTINA	G/LIC/N/3/ARG/14	2018	02.10.2018
AUSTRALIA	G/LIC/N/3/AUS/10	2017	18.09.2018
BURUNDI	G/LIC/N/3/BDI/4	2018	04.05.2018
CANADA	G/LIC/N/3/CAN/16	2016	29.11.2017
	G/LIC/N/3/CAN/17	2017	01.10.2018
CHINA	G/LIC/N/3/CHN/15	2016	12.01.2018
CUBA	G/LIC/N/3/CUB/9	2018	20.09.2018
EL SALVADOR	G/LIC/N/3/SLV/2	2017	02.10.2018
EUROPEAN UNION	G/LIC/N/3/EU/6	2017	03.10.2017
	G/LIC/N/3/EU/7	2018	03.10.2018
GEORGIA	G/LIC/N/3/GEO/7	2017	31.10.2017
HONG KONG, CHINA	G/LIC/N/3/HKG/22	2018	04.10.2018
INDIA	G/LIC/N/3/IND/17	2017	12.04.2018
ISRAEL	G/LIC/N/3/ISR/4	2018	17.09.2018
JAPAN	G/LIC/N/3/JPN/17	2018	09.10.2018
KAZAKHSTAN	G/LIC/N/3/KAZ/2	2017	20.10.2017
MACAO, CHINA	G/LIC/N/3/MAC/20	2017	27.10.2017
	G/LIC/N/3/MAC/21	2018	21.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/3/MAC/21/REV.1	2018	23.08.2018
MALAYSIA	G/LIC/N/3/MYS/13	2017	19.03.2018
MALI	G/LIC/N/3/MLI/9/ADD.1	2000-2011	22.05.2018
MAURITIUS	G/LIC/N/3/MUS/8	2018	10.10.2018
MONTENEGRO	G/LIC/N/3/MNE/2	2018	20.06.2018
NEW ZEALAND	G/LIC/N/3/NZL/5	2018	05.06.2018
NICARAGUA	G/LIC/N/3/NIC/9	2017	26.10.2017
NORWAY	G/LIC/N/3/NOR/9	2017	02.02.2018
PARAGUAY	G/LIC/N/3/PRY/5	2017	05.03.2018
PERU	G/LIC/N/3/PER/12	2016	14.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/3/PER/13	2017	15.08.2018
QATAR	G/LIC/N/3/QAT/13	2017	01.02.2018
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	G/LIC/N/3/RUS/4	2017	14.08.2018
SINGAPORE	G/LIC/N/3/SGP/13	2017	11.12.2017
SWITZERLAND	G/LIC/N/3/CHE/14	2018	03.10.2018
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA	G/LIC/N/3/MKD/6	2017	14.12.2017
	G/LIC/N/3/MKD/7	2017	06.03.2018
THE SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY OF TAIWAN, PENGHU, KINMEN AND MATSU	G/LIC/N/3/TPKM/9	2018	21.09.2018
UKRAINE	G/LIC/N/3/UKR/11	2018	09.10.2018
UNITED STATES	G/LIC/N/3/USA/14	2017	22.01.2018
	G/LIC/N/3/USA/15	2018	05.10.2018
URUGUAY	G/LIC/N/3/URY/10	2016	14.08.2018
	G/LIC/N/3/URY/11	2017	15.08.2018