



1 April 2020

(20-2605)

Page: 1/1

Committee on Market Access

Original: English/French

**UNILATERAL MEASURES RELATING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:
MEASURES TO FACILITATE THE IMPORTATION OF VITAL MEDICAL
SUPPLIES AND PROVIDE CASH FLOW AND LIQUIDITY SUPPORT TO IMPORTERS**

COMMUNICATION FROM CANADA

The following communication, dated 31 March 2020, has been circulated at the request of the delegation of Canada.

1. Canada wishes to notify World Trade Organization Members of recent unilateral trade-facilitative measures undertaken in response to the COVID-19 crisis, to support trade flows with respect to vital medical supplies, as well as liquidity support for importers. Canada will continue to monitor the evolving situation and may implement additional measures, should it be deemed necessary.

Measures to Facilitate the Importation of Vital Medical Supplies

2. To ensure the flow of vital medical supplies in response to the COVID-19 crisis, Canada is waiving tariffs and sales taxes on goods imported by or on behalf of public health agencies, hospitals and testing sites, and first response organizations (e.g., police, fire and local civil defence groups, including medical response teams), until further notice.

3. The action is effective 16 March 2020. The measure applies to all goods imported by covered entities, including essential medical supplies and personal protective equipment, such as face masks and surgical gloves. To facilitate availability of the goods, their customs clearance will be expedited where possible.

4. Further details can be found at <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/cn-ad/cn20-08-eng.html>.

Measures to Support Cash Flow and Liquidity of Importers

5. Goods imported into Canada are generally subject to the Goods and Services Tax (GST), at a rate of 5 per cent, as well as applicable customs duties, which vary by product and country of origin.

6. Typically, payments owing for customs duties and the GST on imports are due on a monthly basis. In order to provide cash flow and liquidity support for importers, Canada announced on 27 March 2020 that it will defer payment deadlines for March, April, and May to 30 June 2020.

7. Further details can be found at <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/cn-ad/cn20-11-eng.html>.

8. These measures represent concrete examples of Canada's global leadership to maintain open trade. Canada hopes that these actions encourage other Members to examine similar trade-facilitative measures to support open global markets and improve global health outcomes.
