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Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

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OIML ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE TBT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF LEGAL METROLOGY

This document contains information provided by the OIML at the TBT Committee meeting of 4-6 November 2015 under Agenda Item 4 (Update by Observers).

1. As I have reported at the last two TBT Committee meetings, the OIML is trying to improve its work in support of what we are now calling "Countries and Economies with Emerging Metrology Systems" rather than "developing countries". In March 2015 we organised a seminar on Legal Metrology in Daily Life in China. As a follow-up to this successful event, last month we organised a further seminar, in association with the annual meeting of the International Committee of Legal Metrology. This event aimed to develop an OIML package for assistance to Countries and Economies with Emerging Metrology Systems (CEEMS).

2. This seminar included the participation of the UNIDO, the ACP EU TBT Programme and the BIPM, and its results enabled the International Committee of Legal Metrology to pass a resolution in support of the OIML's activities in this area. Any interested members can download the full text of the resolution from the OIML website (<https://www.oiml.org/en/structure/ciml/pdf/50-ciml-resolutions-english.pdf>).

3. This resolution is important for the OIML since it makes it clear that the needs of these countries should be considered and fully integrated into the OIML's work at all levels. It also gives the secretariat of the Organisation the remit to work on training and capacity building issues in legal metrology. As a result, we are already working on some joint projects with UNIDO and the ACP EU TBT Programme.

4. The OIML would also like to bring to members' attention that it has become involved in implementation issues resulting from an amendment to the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention Chapter VI Regulation 2, by the International Maritime Organisation. This amendment has been made due to a significant number of maritime accidents in which the inaccurate weight declarations of containers has been a contributory factor. The regulations will now require, for the first time, that the gross mass of all shipping containers is obtained, using certified weighing equipment, before they are loaded onto ships instead of relying on a shipper's declaration. However, many port operators, shippers, and related trade organisations are poorly prepared for the implementation deadline of 1 July 2016 and little equipment is currently installed to satisfy these regulations. In particular, they are concerned that the metrological and technical performance of the weighing instruments used, as well as the type approval and verification procedures for these instruments are left to the national regulations applicable in the shipper's country. They are worried that there is no requirement in the SOLAS regulations, nor in available guidance, that these national regulations should be based on applicable international standards, such as those provided by the International Recommendations published by the OIML. The OIML is closely following this issue, and would encourage members to look into the implementation of the SOLAS regulations in their countries, since inconsistent application could potentially create significant technical barriers to trade.
