



**TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT FOUR YEAR REVIEW  
ARTICLE 23.1.6 OF THE TFA**

COMMUNICATION FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNITED STATES

*Revision*

The following communication, dated 7 July 2021, is being circulated at the request of the delegations of the European Union and the United States.

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**Subject:**

1. Proposal by the European Union and the United States for invigorating the coordination process to identify the need for future assistance in the framework of the four-year review of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

**Background:**

2. The Special and Differential Treatment Provisions in Section II of the TFA afford Developing Country and LDC Members the ability to seek help to implement the provisions of the TFA. The TFA likewise includes a number of mechanisms for the Committee to follow up with these Members to ensure that no Developing Country or LDC Member is left behind with regard to the implementation of the TFA.

3. For example, the mechanism set out in TFA Article 21.4(b) specifically requires the Committee to hold at least one dedicated session per year "to review progress in the provision of assistance and support for capacity building to support the implementation of the Agreement, including any developing or least-developed country Members not receiving adequate assistance and support for capacity building."

4. TFA Articles 16.1(c) and 16.2(d) also require Developing Country and LDC Members, respectively, to submit details about the Technical Assistance and Capacity Building (TACB) needed to implement Category C provisions. This information is important because it helps Committee Members understand what conversations are taking place in capital, where assistance is already provided, and identify any gaps. The notifications also promote transparency regarding any technical implementation issues that these Members encounter.

**Summary:**

5. We propose that beneficiary countries with category C commitments organize meetings with donors in capital, to review the state of assistance and potential future needs. Beneficiary countries are invited to share the outcome of these meetings with the Trade Facilitation Committee by mid-October 2021.

6. The notifications already made by the Members regarding their category C commitments, on the arrangements concluded and progress made in the provision of technical assistance and capacity building support on category C designations, are extremely useful, as they provide transparency for

the TF Committee to understand the state of play for that Member. The collection of such information and evidence on the advancement in the implementation of Members' commitments as well as their needs for future assistance facilitate the cooperation amongst Members. The notifications should be encouraged given that only few Members have notified the situation regarding their category C commitments.

7. Beneficiary countries should provide such detailed notifications of outstanding needs and gaps in implementation support identified in those capital-based meetings before mid-October 2021, when the next dedicated session on aid is scheduled. It is important that beneficiary countries explain in detail their needs, to allow the Committee to assess the outcome of the meetings, new areas of support, and any outstanding requests for assistance. Further, developing Members should notify or update their contact points responsible for coordinating and prioritizing assistance and support, if they have not yet done so.

8. In order to ensure a timely reception of these notifications, the EU and US express readiness to participate in meetings, called and organized by the Members having notified category C commitments, in their capitals. We believe that these meetings should be organized in an inclusive manner by inviting together all potential donors and relevant international institutions.

9. In addition the Committee should add to the agenda a standing item that provides the opportunity for relevant Developing Country and LDC Members to update the Committee about the progress being made in submitting full details about TACB needs with respect to the implementation of Category C commitments, the likely fulfilment of those needs by a donor, and outstanding remaining support gaps, if any.

10. We would very much welcome the views of the Members concerned on our proposal.

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