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Page: 1/1

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON DOMESTIC REGULATION TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES (2015)

Since its Annual Report of 2014 to the Council for Trade in Services¹, the Working Party on Domestic Regulation (WPDR) has held two formal meetings, respectively on 17 March and 3 June 2015.² During the period covered by this report, the Working Party continued with its work on domestic regulation disciplines pursuant to GATS Article VI:4. A dedicated discussion of domestic regulation in Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) was continued. Additionally, following earlier discussions of the Working Party on the Secretariat background Note on Technical Standards in Services (S/WPDR/W/49), a presentation was given by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on its work relating to services standards.

1 DEDICATED DISCUSSION ON DOMESTIC REGULATION IN REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

1.1. The dedicated discussion on Members' experiences with domestic regulation disciplines in services regional trade agreements was continued during the first meeting of the review period, on the basis of one additional oral contribution. The purpose of the discussion was to give Members the opportunity to share details on the different types of domestic regulation provisions that can be found in Regional Trade Agreements, as well as to draw any commonalities or differences with the disciplines negotiated under the GATS Article VI:4 mandate. The Working Party agreed to include this item on the agenda of future meetings on the basis of delegations' indications to the Secretariat.

2 DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATORY DISCIPLINES UNDER GATS ARTICLE VI:4

2.1. The Working Party continued to discuss the appropriate course of action with regard to the development of regulatory disciplines under GATS Article VI:4. At the June meeting, a group of delegations suggested a discussion on elements that delegations considered 'doable' and 'realistic', should domestic regulation form part of the post-Bali work programme.³ A large number of delegations intervened under this proposed discussion, with several of them providing substantive views on their DR priorities in the context of a post-Bali work programme. Other delegations reiterated that other areas of the negotiations needed to progress before the issue of domestic regulation could be considered in the same context.

3 PRESENTATION BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION

3.1. A representative of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) updated the Working Party on activities of the ISO in the field of services standards, and replied to questions by members of the Working Party.⁴

¹ S/WPDR/17, dated 17 November 2014.

² The reports of the formal meetings are contained in documents S/WPDR/M/63 and S/WPDR/M/64 and should be read in conjunction with this report.

³ RD/SERV/124, dated 22 May 2015; Unofficial Room Document - Communication from Australia; Canada; Colombia; Republic of Korea; Mexico and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu - Proposal to discuss elements of Domestic Regulation that could form part of the services post-Bali work programme.

⁴ The presentation by the ISO was made available in RD/SERV/126, dated 4 June 2015.