

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

REPORT (1995) OF THE COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

1. Participation in the Committee is open to all WTO Members. Certain non-WTO Members participated in the work of the Committee in accordance with the Decision of the General Council of 31 January 1995 on Participation in Meetings of WTO Bodies by Certain Signatories of the Final Act Eligible to become Original Members of the WTO (WT/L/27). In addition, governments with observer status in the WTO General Council are invited to attend meetings of the Committee as observers, except if or when it is decided by the Committee to hold a close session with participation of Members only.
2. Representatives of the IMF, UNCTAD, ITC (UNCTAD/GATT), ISO, IEC, FAO, WHO, FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and the International Office of Epizootics are invited to attend meetings of the Committee in an observer capacity, pending the adoption of guidelines for observer status for international organizations in the WTO.
3. The Committee elected Ambassador C. L. Guarda (Chile) as Chairperson for 1995.
4. The Committee held its first, second and third meetings on 21 April (G/TBT/M/1), 14 July (G/TBT/M/2), and 20 October (G/TBT/M/3) respectively. At those meetings, the Committee heard statements on the implementation and administration of the Agreement. The Committee also held discussions on eco-labelling and agreed that discussions would continue in joint informal meetings with the Committee on Trade and Environment.
5. At its meeting in April, the Committee adopted its rules of procedure for the meetings of the Committee, subject to approval by the Council for Trade in Goods. The Committee took note of the statements made regarding the procedures for notifications under the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards contained in Annex 3 of the Agreement, and agreed that the Chairperson of the Committee would inform the Chairman of the Budget Committee regarding the financial requirements made known by the ISO representative on the resources needed by the ISO/IEC Information Centre for the application of the WTO Standards Information Service operated by ISO.

6. At its meeting of July, the Committee adopted its decisions and recommendations regarding:

- (i) Statements on implementation and administration of the Agreement under Article 15.2 of the Agreement;
- (ii) Notification procedures; and
- (iii) Procedures for information exchange.

7. At its meeting of October, the Committee adopted decisions and recommendations regarding: (i) Technical assistance and (ii) Regional standard-related activities. The Committee also agreed on the structure of its first annual review under Article 15.3 of the Agreement.

8. A special Joint Meeting on Procedures for Information Exchange of the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade and the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures was held on 6-7 November to facilitate the implementation of these procedures by some Members.