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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**REPORT ON PROGRESS MADE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL SPS
COMMITTEE AND UPDATE OF LEGISLATION TO FACILITATE COMPLIANCE
WITH THE WTO-SPS AGREEMENT**

COMMUNICATION FROM ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The following communication, received on 15 October 2015, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of Antigua and Barbuda.

1. The delegation of Antigua and Barbuda wishes to inform the WTO membership of progress made by the country in the establishment of its national SPS Committee and the updating of relevant legislation to facilitate compliance with the WTO SPS Agreement.

2. The Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda agreed in October 2014 to the formalization of the Coordinating Mechanism for Agricultural Health and Food Safety in Antigua and Barbuda with the main objectives of fostering functional synergies among SPS-related government agencies and between these agencies and the private sector. The mechanism is expected to act as a direct conduit between the political directorate and public and private sector agencies on the ground. In addition, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda has approved in its program budget regime, an activity to support the management of national SPS systems.

3. In 2005, draft plant protection and animal health bills were notified to the WTO and a draft Food Safety Bill was notified shortly thereafter. The delegation of Antigua and Barbuda is pleased to report that the Plant Protection Act – which mandates the NPPO to implement the IPPC and the SPS Agreement – was passed by Parliament in November 2012 and came into force on 14 March 2013. The Animal Health and Food Safety Bills are in the advanced stages of revision and expected to be debated in and passed by Parliament within the next 12 months.

4. In conclusion, Antigua and Barbuda wishes to assure WTO Members that, despite its scarce national resources, but with the kind assistance of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, as well as technical assistance through the European Union's 10th EDF SPS Project, the USDA-APHIS Greater Caribbean Safeguarding Initiative (GCSI), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), all efforts are being made – in what has been an arduous but rewarding journey – to establish effective and efficient national frameworks and support systems to ensure that the country is able to fully implement the SPS Agreement.
