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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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**FIFTH REVIEW OF THE OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT
ON THE APPLICATION OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

**ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN ADDRESSING SPS ISSUES
(SPECIFIC TRADE CONCERNS)**

Submission from South Africa

The following communication, received on 3 September 2018, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of South Africa.

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1. Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, by their very nature, may result in restrictions on trade. All governments accept the fact that some trade restrictions may be necessary to ensure food safety and animal and plant health protection.
 2. The SPS Committee meetings spend much time on the agenda item regarding specific trade concerns (STCs), wherein WTO Members raise STCs regarding SPS measures imposed by trade partners.
 3. Between the years 2010 and 2017, 149 STCs have been raised, out of which 124 have not been resolved, 19 have been resolved, while six have been partially resolved. Progress with regard to the resolution of SPS issues (STCs) raised during the SPS Committee meetings thus appears to be slow.
 4. South Africa considers that the international organizations (Codex Alimentarius Commission, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the International Plant Protection Convention) generally referred to as the three sisters, which develop international SPS standards, guidelines and recommendations, can play a crucial role in providing advice to the SPS Committee on STCs that are raised during the meetings.
 5. The three sisters' interventions would be to indicate if there is a relevant international standard, recommendation or guideline, and to assist the Committee to locate information that may facilitate the discussion on STCs.
 6. This proposal will provide for the OIE to be invited to speak when the trade concern relates to an animal disease or zoonosis; Codex would be invited to speak when the trade concern relates to a food safety issue, and the IPPC would be invited to address concerns about phytosanitary measures.
 7. The comments by the three sisters are of an advisory nature only and must be understood to be in their own responsibility and not binding on any WTO Member.
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