

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

G/TBT/M/9

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Committee to Technical Barriers to Trade

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 and 18 NOVEMBER 1997

Chairman: Mr. T. H.M. Tong (Hong Kong)

1. The Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade held its eleventh meeting on 13 and 18 November 1997.
2. The following agenda, as contained in WTO/AIR/721 was adopted:

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I. REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS IN THE COMMITTEE BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF LEGAL METROLOGY (OIML)

3. The Committee agreed to grant observer status to the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) on an ad hoc basis, pending further decision. The Chairman invited Members to continue consultations on the requests for observer status by the Office International de la Vigne et du Vin (OIV).

II. STATEMENTS ON IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGREEMENT

4. The representative of the United States informed the Committee of the acceptance of the Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). She said that ANSI was a private federation of the United States which had signed the Code on behalf of more than 200 standards developing bodies (G/TBT/CS/N/83).

5. The representative of the European Communities expressed concerns on the Mexican technical regulations on labelling of industrial products, including food products, textiles and non-alcoholic beverages. She requested for detailed information on the justifications of the regulations, and questioned whether the provisions of the Agreement had been respected. She recalled that her delegation had submitted comments to the Mexican authorities on 1 August 1997 on the above regulations, and on 7 November 1997 on the labelling requirements for spirits. She regretted that no reply had been received. She noted the obligations under Article 2.9.4 to provide opportunities for discussions of comments made, and under Article 2.9 to notify "if a proposed technical regulation is not in accordance with the technical content of relevant international standards, and if the technical regulation may have a significant effect on trade of other Members". She questioned whether Mexico had notified the regulation on labelling of spirits, and said that due to the lack of information, it was difficult to make detailed comments.

6. The representative of Mexico recalled that her authorities had provided replies to the comments made on the labelling requirements of industrial products within the framework of the Mexican Trade Policy Review. Concerning the notification of labelling requirement of spirits, she said that it was a new issue and would need to contact her authorities before replying.

7. The representative of the European Communities indicated her delegation's wish to discuss these matters within the framework of the TBT Agreement.

8. The Committee took note of the statements made.

III. FIRST TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 15.4

9. The Committee agreed to adopt its Report of the First Triennial Review of the Operation and Implementation of this Agreement under Article 15.4 (G/TBT/5).

IV. REPORT (1997) TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN GOODS

10. The Committee agreed to adopt its Report (1997) to the Council for Trade in Goods (G/L/207).

V. OTHER BUSINESS

11. The Committee agreed to the Chairman's proposal that the next Committee meeting be held in March 1998.