



HARMONIZED SYSTEM
COMMITTEE

-
29th Session
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NC0519E1

O. Eng.

Brussels, 25 April 2002.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

(Item II.6 on Agenda)

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Secretariat has continued its close co-operation with other international organisations with a view to achieving the wider and more uniform application of the Harmonized System. Important activities which have occurred between the Committee's 28th and 29th Sessions are summarized below.

II. AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

World Trade Organization (WTO)

2. At its 28th Session, the Harmonized System Committee examined certain classification issues submitted by the WTO. The decisions of the Committee were conveyed to the WTO and they were reflected in WTO Doc. G/IT/20 for the Committee of Participants on the Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products. In this connection, certain communications from Canada, concerning the HSC decisions, were reflected in another document G/IT/21 for the same WTO Committee. The Secretariat is awaiting developments at the WTO in this regard. We will, of course, continue to extend our co-operation and assistance to the WTO as needed.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

3. Following the UNEP workshop on "codes, contraband and co-operation : working with Customs authorities to implement environmental treaties", in Geneva from 28 to 29 June 2001 (see Doc. NC0443E1), a Secretariat officer participated in a "National Train-the-Trainer Workshop for Customs Trainers and National Stakeholders On Monitoring and Control of Ozone Layer Depleting Substances" organized by the UNEP and the Government of Sri Lanka, held in Colombo from 7 to 9 March 2002.
4. During this workshop, the Secretariat officer gave a general overview of the WCO and explained the HS background, HS Convention, HSC and HS 2002 amendments. Furthermore, he highlighted specific HS amendments and WCO Recommendations

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concerning certain chemical products and wastes of environmental concern, with particular emphasis on ozone layer depleting substances.

5. Participating at this workshop encouraged close working relationships between the UNEP Secretariats of trade-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and the WCO. The workshop recognized the benefits of a coordinated approach among MEA secretariats, implementing agencies, and the WCO Secretariat in areas such as training, enforcement, exchange of information and experiences, and awareness-raising.
6. A Secretariat officer also participated in the UNEP Expert Group Meeting on Monitoring of International Trade and Prevention of illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances, mixtures and products containing ozone layer depleting substances, Washington, D.C., 26-27 March 2002. The Group discussed a draft study, which will be presented to the Parties of the Montreal Protocol, with a view to implementing appropriate instruments to better monitor legal trade and to combat illegal trade in ozone layer depleting substances.

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

7. With regard to the HS classification of the 932 chemicals enumerated in Part A of the OPCW Handbook on Chemicals, the Scientific Sub-Committee continued its examination of the classification of these chemicals at its 17th Session and submitted its observations to the Committee (see Item V on the Agenda). A representative of the OPCW Secretariat participated in the SSC session. He thanked the WCO for its continuing co-operation.

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)

8. The Director of Tariff and Trade Affairs participated in the UN Statistical Commission, 33rd Session, New York, 5-8 March 2002. Among the topics of interest discussed at the Statistical Commission were informal sector statistics, statistical capacity building, international economic classifications, the definition and measurement of e-commerce, the dissemination of statistics by the UNSD and the co-ordination and integration of statistical programmes.
9. On 18 April 2002, a Secretariat officer will attend a meeting of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics in Rome, Italy. He will inform the Task Force on the progress to date on the implementation of the HS 2002 amendments. In addition, he will brief the participants concerning the scope of the 3rd Review Cycle.

International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)

10. The Director General of INBAR communicated with the Secretariat and held a meeting with the Secretariat officials on 8 March 2002 concerning the possibility of separately identifying bamboo and rattan in the Harmonized System for the purpose of obtaining more detailed trade statistics on these products. In this regard, the Secretariat expects INBAR to forward a proposal to amend the Nomenclature.

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

11. A meeting was held at the WCO on 13 February 2002 with representatives of the ICC. The meeting was a very productive one, enabling the Secretariat to receive timely and pertinent information for use in the preparation of the working document on Agenda Item VIII.14 (Classification of MP3 players) for this session of the Committee.

III. CONCLUSION

12. The Committee is invited to take note of these developments.
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