



WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION  
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES DOUANES

Established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council  
Créée en 1952 sous le nom de Conseil de coopération douanière

HARMONIZED SYSTEM  
COMMITTEE

-  
23<sup>rd</sup> Session

NC0007E1

O. Eng.

H9-3

Brussels, 28 April 1999.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

(Item II.5 on Agenda)

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Secretariat continued its close co-operation with other international organizations with a view to achieving wider and more uniform application of the Harmonized System. Important activities which occurred between the Committee's 22nd and 23rd Sessions are summarized below.

II. AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

World Trade Organization (WTO)

2. Mr. H. KAPPLER, Director of Tariff and Trade Affairs, visited the WTO Secretariat on 28 January 1999 and had fruitful discussions with respect to closer co-operation between the two organizations. He stressed the fact that WCO was finalizing a substantial number of amendments to the Harmonized System which would impact the WTO schedules of tariff concessions. Mr. Kappler assured the WTO of co-operation with the transition to the 2002 version of the Harmonized System. He also obtained information on the WTO dispute settlement process which should be useful in the HSC discussions on improvement of HS dispute settlement procedures.
3. Mr. M. DANET, Secretary General of WCO, also visited the WTO on 11 March 1999 and discussed certain issues relating to the HS. The WTO representatives stressed the importance of ensuring that the HS review is implemented on schedule. Mr. Danet described the discussions currently underway in the WCO on how to expedite the HS decision making process, etc. The WTO welcomed this work, and expressed the hope that results would be achieved quickly. In respect of technical assistance, the WTO agreed on the need for close co-ordination in identifying suitable targets and assigning resources to technical assistance projects in various fields, including the HS.

File No. 2082

---

For reasons of economy, documents are printed in limited number. Delegates are kindly asked to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

International Trade Centre (ITC)

4. Mr. Kappler visited the ITC on 29 January 1999 and discussed proposals for the use of the Harmonized System in tracking trade in artisanal products, organically grown products and environmentally friendly products.

United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD)

5. Mr. Kappler attended a meeting of the UN Statistical Commission in New York from 4 to 5 March 1999. In an interesting development, there appears to be a growing consensus to co-ordinate the timing of updates and revisions of international standard statistical classifications based on the timing of updates of the Harmonized System.
6. Mr. Kappler also attended the meeting of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics in Washington, D.C., from 8 to 10 March 1999. He made presentations on the WCO and the updating of the Harmonized System. The Task Force members wished to learn more about the G-7 efforts to harmonize and simplify trade data elements and Customs procedures, in general, as they relate to the collection of trade data. This issue will be placed on the agenda for next year's meeting of the Task Force.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

7. The Secretariat has been in communication with UNEP Ozone Secretariat and has kept them informed of progress on the draft Recommendation concerning the separate identification of certain mixtures of ozone layer depleting substances in the HS (see Agenda Item IV.2 (Doc.NC0015E1)).
8. The Secretariat communicated with the Basel Convention Secretariat with regard to the identification of hazardous wastes in the Harmonized System in order to facilitate the effective enforcement of the Basel Convention provisions and to establish a correlation between the Harmonized System codes and the wastes listed in Annexes VIII and IX to the Basel Convention.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

9. The Secretariat communicated with the CITES Secretariat in respect of possible amendments to the HS, to facilitate CITES controls (see the Agenda Item VI.2 ( paragraphs 36-38 of Doc. NC0017E1)).

UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

10. The Secretariat communicated with the Secretary, Sub-Group on Hides and Skins, FAO, in relation to the EC proposal on possible amendments to Chapter 41.

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

11. The Secretariat provided information to the ITTO concerning the nature of the proposed amendments to Chapter 44 of the HS (see Agenda Item VI.2 (paragraphs 66-68 of Doc. NC0017E1)).

International Customs Environment Meeting

12. The International Customs Environment Meeting was held at WCO Headquarters from 12 to 13 January 1999. Both intergovernmental organizations (EBRD, EC, IMF, UNCTAD, UNSD, WB, and WTO) and non-governmental organizations (IATA, ICC, ICS, IECC, IRU, and UPU) participated. The Secretariat made a presentation on the Harmonized System, stressing efforts toward the uniform application of the HS at global level and the importance of the successful maintenance of the HS.

Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)

13. The Secretariat has continued its co-operation with ALADI by providing clarifications with regard to numerous classification enquiries.

World Health Organization

14. The 29<sup>th</sup> consultation on Non-proprietary Names for Pharmaceutical Substances was held in Geneva from 13 to 16 April 1999. Mr. T. NAGASE, Deputy Director, participated in the discussions on collaboration with international and regional organizations and institutions.

III. CONCLUSION

15. The Committee is invited to take note of these developments.
-