

**Trade Policy Review Body**

**TRADE POLICY REVIEW MECHANISM**

Report of the Trade Policy Review Body for 2012

Chairperson: H.E. Mr. Eduardo Muñoz (Colombia)

1. This Report by the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) provides a brief assessment of the activities of the TPRB over the past twelve months and reports on the reviews of Members conducted in 2012. Tables are annexed showing the Members that will have been reviewed up to the end of 2012, the geographical coverage of the reviews conducted to date, as well as the proposed programme of reviews for 2013 and candidates for review in 2014.

Follow-up to the Fourth Appraisal of the TPRM

2. The Fourth Appraisal of the TPRM was conducted by the TPRB between July and November 2011 and the results were endorsed by Ministers at MC8 (WT/MIN(11)/6). In addition, the Ministerial Conference took a decision to continue and strengthen the trade monitoring exercise (WT/L/848). The TPRB began implementing those results on a provisional basis in 2012. *Inter alia*: three Members (the Philippines, Singapore and Norway) volunteered to apply the alternative timelines for the Question and Answer process, which produced a more timely distribution of written answers ahead of TPRB meetings; improvements were made to the organization and structure of TPRB meetings, to make them more interactive and the discussion more fruitful; follow-up activities to the reviews of Members on the 6-year cycle, especially LDCs, were organised for four Members under review; and digital audio files (podcasting) were introduced on a pilot basis. The Fifth Appraisal of the TPRM will be prepared in 2013 for the Ninth Ministerial Conference.

Activities of the TPRB

3. The TPRB is required to periodically review the trade policies and practices of all Members. By the end of 2012, the TPRB will have conducted 364 reviews since its formation, at 274 review meetings (Annex I). The reviews have covered 145 of 157 Members.<sup>1</sup> The trade policies and practices of four Members were reviewed for the first time in 2012.<sup>2</sup>

4. The Trade Policy Review Body will have conducted 20 reviews (of 26 Members) in 2012 (Annex II). The Secretariat's reports continue to be prepared in close consultation with the authorities of the Member under review.

5. Procedures for the reviews conducted in 2012 have run smoothly. Responses to requests for documentation and questionnaires have normally been provided at or close to the requested dates. In line with recent practice, the Secretariat has attempted to reduce the burden on Members under review

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<sup>1</sup> Members not reviewed at end 2012 are: Cap Verde, Cuba, FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Myanmar, Russian Federation, Samoa, Tonga, Ukraine, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

<sup>2</sup> Guinea-Bissau, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Nepal.

of providing responses by using, to the extent possible, alternative sources of documentation, including Members' official web-sites. It has not been possible to do this for all Members under review, and requests for documentation continue to be followed up with a detailed questionnaire when sufficient information is not available from alternative sources. Secretariat visits to capitals have continued to be productive, and comments provided on Secretariat drafts have been pertinent; close contact with the Member under review is necessary to help ensure the factual accuracy and clarity of the documentation prepared for the Review.

6. Efforts continue to be made to space meetings of the TPRB as evenly as possible throughout the year and to avoid clashes with other meetings at the WTO so as to reduce pressure on Members.

7. Informal consultations have taken place during the year on possible ways in which the documentation costs of the TPRB can be reduced. Based on the results of those consultations, some positive steps have been taken.

8. The Trade Policy Review programme for 2013 comprises 18 review meetings for 23 Members (counting the EU as one) (Annex III). However, in view of the difficulty of scheduling TPRB meetings in December 2013, it has been agreed that the TPRs of Mongolia and Tonga will take place in early 2014.

#### Coverage of least developed countries (LDCs)

9. Of the 33 least developed Members of the WTO, 31 will have been reviewed by the end of 2012.<sup>3</sup>

10. Trade Policy Reviews of LDCs have helped to enhance understanding in these countries of the WTO Agreements, enabling better compliance and integration into the multilateral trading system. In some cases, better interaction between government agencies has been facilitated by the reviews. The reports' wide coverage of Members' policies also enables Members to identify any shortcomings in policy and specific areas where further technical assistance may be required.

11. When requested by the Member concerned, the Secretariat organizes follow-up seminars to discuss the outcome of the trade policy review process with domestic stakeholders. Follow-up seminars were conducted in 2012 for Jamaica, the D.R Congo, UEMOA (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo) and Zimbabwe.

#### Monitoring of trade and trade-related measures

12. The TPRM requires Members, in between their reviews, to provide information on significant trade policy changes. The WTO Secretariat uses this and other information to prepare reports by the Director-General on a regular basis on the trade and trade-related developments of Members and Observer Governments. The reports are discussed at informal meetings of the TPRB.<sup>4</sup> The WTO Secretariat consults closely with delegations to gather complete, up-to-date and accurate information on their trade and trade-related measures, and has received good cooperation. The information is consolidated and presented in the Director-General's Annual Report on Developments in the International Trading Environment, as called for by paragraph G of Annex 3. The 2012 Annual Report will be discussed by the TPRB in December 2012.

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<sup>3</sup> The first reviews for Samoa and Vanuatu are due in 2018.

<sup>4</sup> An informal meeting of the TPRB was held on 18 July 2012 to discuss the trade monitoring report contained in document WT/TPR/OV/W/6.

13. In the context of the 4th Appraisal of the TPRM done in November 2011, Members decided to bring this transparency exercise to the attention of Ministers at the 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, and prepared a Ministerial Decision aimed at the continuation and strengthening of the trade monitoring exercise under the TPRB. The Ministerial Decision was issued in document WT/L/848 of 19 December 2011.

14. Following on the Ministerial Decision, TPRB Members met on, 3 and 6 July, and 2 October 2012 to discuss ways to further strengthen and improve the trade monitoring exercise.

**Annex I**

**TRADE POLICY REVIEWS**  
**WTO Members reviewed, 1989-2012**

Europe/Middle East	Asia/Pacific	Africa	America
Albania	Australia (6)	Angola <sup>b</sup>	Argentina (3)
Armenia	Bangladesh <sup>b</sup> (4)	Benin <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	Antigua and Barbuda <sup>2</sup> (2)
Austria <sup>1</sup>	Brunei Darussalam (2)	Botswana <sup>2</sup> (3)	Barbados (2)
Bahrain (2)	Cambodia <sup>b</sup>	Burkina Faso <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	Belize (2)
Bulgaria <sup>1</sup>	China (4)	Burundi <sup>b,2</sup> (2)	Bolivia (3)
Croatia	Fiji (2)	Cameroon <sup>2</sup> (3)	Brazil (5)
Cyprus <sup>1</sup>	Georgia	Chad <sup>b</sup>	Canada (9)
Czech Republic <sup>1</sup> (2)	Hong Kong, China (6)	Central African Republic <sup>b</sup>	Chile (4)
European Union (10)	India (5)	Congo, D.R. <sup>b</sup>	Colombia (4)
Finland <sup>1</sup>	Indonesia (5)	Congo, Rep. of	Costa Rica (3)
Hungary <sup>1</sup> (2)	Japan (10)	Côte d'Ivoire (2)	Dominica <sup>2</sup> (2)
Iceland (4)	Korea, Rep. of (6)	Djibouti <sup>b</sup>	Dominican Republic (3)
Israel (4)	Kyrgyz Republic	Egypt (3)	Ecuador (2)
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia <sup>a</sup>	Macao, China (3)	Gabon <sup>2</sup> (2)	El Salvador (3)
Kuwait <sup>a</sup>	Malaysia (5)	Gambia <sup>b</sup> (2)	Guatemala (2)
Liechtenstein <sup>2</sup> (3)	Maldives <sup>b</sup> (2)	Ghana (3)	Grenada <sup>2</sup> (2)
Norway (6)	Mongolia	Guinea, Republic of <sup>b</sup> (3)	Guyana (2)
Poland <sup>1</sup> (2)	Nepal <sup>a,b</sup>	Guinea-Bissau <sup>a,b</sup>	Haiti <sup>b</sup>
Qatar	New Zealand (4)	Kenya <sup>2</sup> (4)	Honduras (2)
Romania <sup>1</sup> (3)	Pakistan (3)	Lesotho <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	Jamaica (3)
Slovak Republic <sup>1</sup> (2)	Papua New Guinea (2)	Madagascar <sup>b</sup> (2)	Mexico (4)
Slovenia <sup>1</sup>	Philippines (4)	Malawi <sup>b</sup> (2)	Nicaragua (3)
Sweden <sup>1</sup> (2)	Singapore (6)	Mali <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	Panama
Switzerland <sup>2</sup> (5)	Solomon Islands <sup>b</sup> (2)	Mauritania <sup>b</sup> (2)	Paraguay (3)
Turkey (5)	Sri Lanka (3)	Mauritius (3)	Peru (3)
United Arab Emirates (2)	Chinese Taipei (2)	Morocco (4)	St.Kitts and Nevis <sup>2</sup> (2)
Jordan	Thailand (6)	Mozambique <sup>b</sup> (2)	St.Lucia <sup>2</sup> (2)
Oman		Namibia <sup>2</sup> (3)	St.Vincent & Grenadines <sup>2</sup> (2)
		Niger <sup>b,2</sup> (2)	Suriname
		Nigeria (4)	Trinidad and Tobago (3)
		Rwanda <sup>b</sup> (2)	United States (11)
		Senegal <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	Uruguay (4)
		Sierra Leone <sup>b</sup>	Venezuela (2)
		South Africa <sup>2</sup> (4)	
		Swaziland <sup>2</sup> (3)	
		Tanzania <sup>b,2</sup> (3)	
		Togo <sup>b</sup> (3)	
		Tunisia (2)	
		Uganda <sup>b,2</sup> (4)	
		Zambia <sup>b</sup> (3)	
		Zimbabwe (2)	
44 Members (67 reviews)	27 Members (97 reviews)	41 Members (100 reviews)	33 Members (100 reviews)

( ) Number of reviews completed where this is greater than one.

a

First review in 2012.

b

Least developed Member.

1

Now included in European Union (EU27).

2

Joint review but counted as individual Members for statistical purposes from 2009.

Reviews conducted at end-2012

= 364 reviews at 274 review meetings

WTO Members reviewed

= 145 out of 157 Members

Least developed WTO Members reviewed

= 31 out of 33

**Annex II**

**Trade Policy Reviews conducted in 2012**

<b>Member<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Meeting date (scheduled)</b>	<b>Review cycle (years)</b>
Saudi Arabia	25/01/2012	4
Kuwait	07/02/2012	6
Turkey (5)	21/02/2012	4
Trinidad & Tobago (3)	07/03/2012	6
Nepal*	13/03/2012	6
Philippines (4)	20/03/2012	6
UAE (2)	27/03/2012	4
Uruguay (4)	25/04/2012	6
China (4)	12/06/2012	2
Colombia (4)	26/06/2012	6
Côte d'Ivoire (2)	02/07/2012	6
Guinea-Bissau*	02/07/2012	6
Togo* (3)	02/07/2012	6
Singapore (6)	24/07/2012	4
Korea, Rep of (6)	19/09/2012	4
Norway (6)	09/10/2012	4
Bangladesh* (4)	15/10/2012	6
Israel (4)	30/10/2012	6
Iceland (4)	13/11/2012	6
Burundi* (2) (EAC)	21/11/2012	6
Kenya (4) (EAC) (2)	21/11/2012	6
Tanzania* (3) (EAC) (2)	21/11/2012	6
Uganda* (4) (EAC) (2)	21/11/2012	6
Rwanda (2) (EAC)	21/11/2012	6
Nicaragua (3)	04/12/2012	6
United States (11)	18/12/2012	2

\* Least developed country.

a Figures in brackets indicate number of reviews.

**Annex III**

**Proposed programme of reviews for 2013**

Japan	19 and 21 February
Argentina	20 and 22 March
Indonesia	10 and 12 April
Mexico <sup>a</sup>	17 and 19 April
Liechtenstein and Switzerland	23 and 25 April
Macao China <sup>a</sup>	13 and 15 May
Suriname <sup>a</sup>	10 and 12 June
Brazil	25 and 27 June
European Union <sup>a</sup>	9 and 11 July
CEMAC (Cameroon, Central African Republic*, Chad*, Congo, Rep. of*, Gabon)	29 and 31 July
Vietnam	17 and 19 September
Costa Rica <sup>a</sup>	24 and 26 September
Myanmar	[29 and 31 October]
Kyrgyz Republic	19 and 21 November
Peru	13 and 15 November
FYR Macedonia	27 and 29 November
Mongolia	Postponed to early 2014
Tonga	Postponed to early 2014

\* Least developed country.

a Schedule of Review to follow the alternative timelines (WT/MIN(11)/6 and WT/TPR/6/Rev.3).

**Annex IV**

**Candidates for TPRB Reviews in 2014**  
(Due date in parentheses)

1. Cuba	(2001)	17. Brunei Darussalam	(2014)
2. Moldova*	(2007)	18. Cap Verde	(2014)
3. Venezuela, Bolivarian Rep. of	(2008)	19. China	(2014)
4. Haïti	(2009)	20. Dominican Republic	(2014)
5. Bolivia, Plurinational State of	(2011)	21. Ghana	(2014)
6. Egypt	(2011)	22. Hong Kong, China	(2014)
7. Mongolia	(2011)	23. Jordan	(2014)
8. Qatar	(2011)	24. Madagascar	(2014)
9. Sierra Leone	(2011)	25. Malaysia	(2014)
10. Tunisia	(2011)	26. Mauritius	(2014)
11. Angola	(2012)	27. Oman	(2014)
12. Djibouti	(2012)	28. Pakistan	(2014)
13. Bahrain	(2013)	29. Chinese Taipei	(2014)
14. OECS (Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent)	(2013)	30. Ukraine	(2014)
15. Panama	(2013)	31. United States	(2014)
16. Barbados	(2014)		

\* Scheduled for early 2015.

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