



## TRADE POLICY REVIEW MECHANISM

### REPORT OF THE TRADE POLICY REVIEW BODY FOR 2014

*Chairperson: H.E. Mariam MD SALLEH (Malaysia)*

1. This Report by the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) provides a brief assessment of its activities in 2014. The annexed tables provide information on Members that will have been reviewed up to the end of 2014, the geographical coverage of the reviews conducted to date, the proposed programme of reviews for 2015, and candidates for review in 2016.

#### Fifth Appraisal of the TPRM

2. The Fifth Appraisal of the TPRM was conducted by the TPRB in 2013 and the results were endorsed by Ministers at the Ninth Ministerial Conference.<sup>1</sup> Members underlined that the TPRM has generally performed its function well and considered that the various changes introduced following the Fourth Appraisal had worked satisfactorily. These included: the introduction on a pilot-basis of an alternative timeline for the submission of questions and responses; a seven-minute rule for statements during the first day of a TPRB meeting<sup>2</sup>; and the possibility of podcasting TPRB meetings. Members noted, however, that more time was needed to fully appreciate all aspects of these changes before agreeing to make them definitive, and agreed to continue applying them on a provisional basis until the following Appraisal.<sup>3</sup>

3. In 2014, four Members volunteered to use the alternative timeline: Hong Kong, China; Mongolia; Myanmar; and the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu.<sup>4</sup> The seven-minute rule for the interventions continued to be applied with very limited exceptions, contributing to making the meetings more efficient and focused. Since 2012, the WTO Secretariat has been testing, on a voluntary basis, digital audio files (podcasting) of TPRB meetings. It was used at twelve TPR meetings in 2014.

#### Activities of the TPRB

4. By the end of 2014, the TPRB will have conducted 405 reviews since its inception in 1989 (up from 384 in 2013), at 302 review meetings (Annex I). The reviews have covered 149 out of 160 Members.<sup>5</sup> The trade policies and practices of two Members were reviewed for the first time in 2014.<sup>6</sup> The TPRB will have conducted reviews of 21 Members in 2014 (Annex II).

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<sup>1</sup> Document WT/MIN(13)/5 of 17 October 2013.

<sup>2</sup> While deviations from the seven minute rule have been rare, some Members noted during the appraisal that flexibility may be required in the application of the seven-minute time-limit in the case of group reviews so as to allow deeper consideration of each member of the group.

<sup>3</sup> The Sixth Appraisal of the operation of the TPRM is to take place at a time to be decided by the TPRB, but not later than five years from the date of the Fifth Appraisal.

<sup>4</sup> Compared to the standard timeline, the alternative timeline provides Members under review with more time to prepare answers, and Members raising questions in writing, more time to review the answers provided. Both timelines are described in document WT/MIN(11)/6 of 29 November 2011.

<sup>5</sup> Members not yet reviewed by end 2014 are: Cabo Verde; Cuba; Lao People's Dem. Rep.; Moldova, Rep. of; Montenegro; Russian Federation; Samoa; Tajikistan; Ukraine; Vanuatu; and Yemen.

<sup>6</sup> Myanmar and Tonga.

5. The review process, from the preparatory stage to the meeting, has run relatively smoothly. The Secretariat's reports continue to be prepared in close consultation with the authorities of the Member under review. Responses to requests for data, documentation and information have generally been provided within the suggested deadlines. In preparing its reports, the Secretariat has continued its efforts to reduce the burden on Members under review by using, to the extent possible, other sources of documentation, including Members' official web-sites. Essential elements to the process have been the responses by the authorities to draft reports and visits to capitals by teams from the Secretariat.

6. There have been a few adjustments to the programme of reviews during the course of the year.<sup>7</sup> 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. However, the increasing number of WTO Members, while a success for the multilateral trading system, is also adding to the burden on chairpersons, delegations and the Secretariat through the increasing number of reviews necessary to comply with paragraph C (ii) of Annex 3 of the Marrakesh Agreement.

7. The TPR programme for 2015 comprises 21 review meetings covering 25 Members, counting the EU as one (Annex III). It includes a joint review of SACU Members (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland), and the postponed review of Sierra Leone.

### Coverage of LDCs and follow-up to TPRB Meetings

8. Trade Policy Reviews of LDCs have helped them enhance their understanding of the WTO Agreements, enabling better compliance and integration into the multilateral trading system. Of the 34 least-developed Members of the WTO, 31 will have been reviewed by the end of 2014.<sup>8</sup>

9. The Secretariat has continued to organize TPR follow-up workshops, at the request of Members. Two follow-up workshops were organized in 2014.<sup>9</sup>

### Monitoring of trade and trade-related measures

10. 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, on a regular basis, reports by the Director-General on the trade and trade-related developments of Members and Observer Governments. 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 of the Marrakesh Agreement. The WTO Secretariat continues to receive good cooperation from Members in collecting this information.

11. The latest trade monitoring report covered measures taken over the period from mid-November 2013 to mid-May 2014.<sup>10</sup> The report provided information on the trends in the number of trade restrictive measures as well as those facilitating trade. The report noted that although Members have introduced new trade restrictions, the pace at which these restrictions were introduced has not accelerated during the period under review. The report also underscored the need for greater transparency regarding those measures, and highlighted some areas where the record of Members' compliance with their WTO notification obligations could be improved.

12. The Director-General's 2014 Annual Report on Developments in the International Trading Environment will be discussed by the TPRB in December 2014.

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<sup>7</sup> The TPRs of Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Ukraine have been postponed at the request of these Members.

<sup>8</sup> First reviews are due for Samoa and Vanuatu in 2018, for Lao People's Democratic Republic and Tajikistan in 2019, and for Yemen in 2020.

<sup>9</sup> The workshops have been organized for the Kyrgyz Republic, and jointly for 5 countries of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, that are Members of the WTO (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, and Gabon).

<sup>10</sup> An informal meeting of the TPRB was held on 27 June 2014 to discuss the trade monitoring report contained in document WT/TPR/OV/W/8.

## ANNEX I

## TRADE POLICY REVIEWS

WTO Members reviewed, 1989-2014

Europe/Middle East	Asia/Pacific	Africa	America
Albania	Australia (6)	Angola <sup>b</sup>	Argentina (4)
Armenia	Bangladesh <sup>b</sup> (4)	Benin <sup>b, 2</sup> (3)	Antigua and Barbuda <sup>2</sup> (3)
Austria <sup>1</sup>	Brunei Darussalam (2)	Botswana <sup>2</sup> (3)	Barbados (2)
Bahrain, Kingdom of <sup>2</sup> (3)	Cambodia <sup>b</sup>	Burkina Faso <sup>b, 2</sup> (3)	Belize (2)
Bulgaria <sup>1</sup>	China (5)	Burundi <sup>b, 2</sup> (2)	Bolivia, Plurinational State of (3)
Croatia <sup>1</sup>	Fiji (2)	Cameroon <sup>2</sup> (4)	Brazil (6)
Cyprus <sup>1</sup>	Georgia	Central African Republic <sup>b, 2</sup> (2)	Canada (9)
Czech Republic <sup>1</sup> (2)	Hong Kong, China (7)	Chad <sup>b, 2</sup> (2)	Chile (4)
European Union (11)	India (5)	Congo, Dem.Rep. of the <sup>b</sup>	Colombia (4)
Finland <sup>1</sup>	Indonesia (6)	Congo, Rep. of <sup>2</sup> (2)	Costa Rica (4)
Hungary <sup>1</sup> (2)	Japan (11)	Côte d'Ivoire (2)	Dominica <sup>2</sup> (3)
Iceland (4)	Korea, Rep. of (6)	Djibouti <sup>b, 2</sup> (2)	Dominican Republic (3)
Israel (4)	Kyrgyz Republic (2)	Egypt (3)	Ecuador (2)
Jordan	Macao, China (4)	Gabon <sup>2</sup> (3)	El Salvador (3)
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Malaysia (6)	The Gambia <sup>b</sup> (2)	Guatemala (2)
Kuwait, the State of	Maldives (2)	Ghana (4)	Grenada <sup>2</sup> (3)
Liechtenstein <sup>2</sup> (4)	Mongolia (2)	Guinea, Republic of <sup>b</sup> (3)	Guyana (2)
Norway (6)	Myanmar <sup>a, b</sup>	Guinea-Bissau <sup>b</sup>	Haiti <sup>b</sup>
Oman <sup>2</sup> (2)	Nepal <sup>b</sup>	Kenya <sup>2</sup> (4)	Honduras (2)
Poland <sup>1</sup> (2)	New Zealand (4)	Lesotho <sup>b, 2</sup> (3)	Jamaica (3)
Qatar <sup>2</sup> (2)	Pakistan (3)	Madagascar <sup>b</sup> (2)	Mexico (5)
Romania <sup>1</sup> (3)	Papua New Guinea (2)	Malawi <sup>b</sup> (2)	Nicaragua (3)
Slovak Republic <sup>1</sup> (2)	Philippines (4)	Mali <sup>b, 2</sup> (3)	Panama (2)
Slovenia <sup>1</sup>	Singapore (6)	Mauritania <sup>b</sup> (2)	Paraguay (3)
Sweden <sup>1</sup> (2)	Solomon Islands <sup>b</sup> (2)	Mauritius <sup>2</sup> (4)	Peru (4)
Switzerland <sup>2</sup> (6)	Sri Lanka (3)	Morocco (4)	St.Kitts and Nevis <sup>2</sup> (3)
The FYR of Macedonia	Chinese Taipei (3)	Mozambique <sup>b</sup> (2)	St.Lucia <sup>2</sup> (3)
Turkey (5)	Thailand (6)	Namibia <sup>2</sup> (3)	St.Vincent & Grenadines <sup>2</sup> (3)
United Arab Emirates (2)	Tonga <sup>a</sup>	Niger <sup>b, 2</sup> (2)	Suriname (2)
	Viet Nam	Nigeria (4)	Trinidad and Tobago (3)
		Rwanda <sup>b</sup> (2)	United States (12)
		Senegal <sup>b, 2</sup> (3)	Uruguay (4)
		Sierra Leone <sup>b</sup>	Venezuela, Bolivarian Rep. of (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)	
45 Members (74 reviews)	30 Members (109 reviews)	41 Members (108 reviews)	33 Members (114 reviews)

The parentheses indicate the number of reviews completed (where this is greater than one).

a First review in 2014.

b Least-developed Member.

1 Now included in European Union (EU28).

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

Reviews conducted at end-2014 = 405 reviews at 302 TPRB meetings

WTO Members reviewed = 149 out of 160 Members

Least-developed WTO Members reviewed = 31 out of 34

**ANNEX II***Trade Policy Reviews conducted in 2014*

<b>Member*</b>	<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Review cycle (years)</b>
Tonga (1)	11 and 13 February	6
Malaysia (6)	3 and 5 March	4
Myanmar <sup>a,b</sup> (1)	11 and 13 March	6
Oman (2), and Kingdom of Bahrain (3), and Qatar (2)	22 and 24 April	6
Ghana (4)	26 and 28 May	6
OECS: Antigua and Barbuda (3), Dominica (3), Grenada (3), Saint Kitts and Nevis (3), Saint Lucia (3), and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (3)	17 and 19 June	6
China (5)	1 and 3 July	2
Panama (2)	23 and 25 July	6
Chinese Taipei <sup>a</sup> (3)	16 and 18 September	4
Mongolia <sup>a</sup> (2)	24 and 26 September	6
Sierra Leone <sup>b</sup>	[Postponed]	6
Djibouti <sup>b</sup> (2) and Mauritius (4)	22 and 24 October	6
Hong Kong, China <sup>a</sup> (7)	19 and 21 November	4
United States (12)	16 and 18 December	2

\* Figures in brackets indicate the total number of reviews that will have been conducted by the end of 2014.

a Alternative timeline.

b Least-developed country.

**ANNEX III***Proposed programme of reviews for 2015*

<b>Member</b>	<b>Meeting dates (scheduled)</b>
Barbados	27 and 29 January
Brunei Darussalam <sup>a</sup>	10 and 12 February
Japan <sup>a</sup>	9 and 11 March
Pakistan	24 and 26 March
Australia <sup>a</sup>	21 and 23 April
Sierra Leone <sup>b</sup>	[postponed from 2014]
India	2 and 4 June
Canada <sup>a</sup>	15 and 17 June
Chile <sup>a</sup>	23 and 25 June
New Zealand <sup>a</sup>	29 June and 1 July
European Union <sup>a</sup>	6 and 8 July
Madagascar <sup>b</sup>	14 and 16 July
Dominican Republic <sup>a</sup>	28 and 30 July
Guyana <sup>a</sup>	15 and 17 September
Angola <sup>b</sup>	22 and 24 September
Cabo Verde	6 and 8 October
Moldova, Rep. of	19 and 21 October
SACU: Botswana, Lesotho <sup>b</sup> , Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland	4 and 6 November
Jordan	17 and 19 November
Thailand	24 and 26 November
Haiti <sup>b</sup>	2 and 4 December

[ ] Dates to be confirmed.

a Alternative timeline.

b Least-developed country.

**ANNEX IV***Candidates for TPRB Reviews in 2016  
(Due date in parentheses)*

<b>Member</b>	
Albania (2016)	Mali <sup>a</sup> (2016)
Armenia (2016)	Morocco (2015)
Belize (2016)	Mozambique <sup>a</sup> (2015)
Benin <sup>a</sup> (2016)	Niger <sup>a</sup> (2015)
Bolivia, Plurinational State of (2011)	Papua New Guinea (2016)
Burkina Faso <sup>a</sup> (2016)	Russian Federation
China (2016)	Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of (2016)
Congo, Dem. Rep. of the <sup>a</sup> (2016)	Senegal <sup>a</sup> (2015)
Cuba (2001)	Singapore (2016)
Egypt (2011)	Solomon Islands <sup>a</sup> (2015)
El Salvador (2016)	Sri Lanka (2016)
Fiji (2015)	Tunisia (2011)
The Gambia <sup>a</sup> (2016)	Turkey (2016)
Georgia (2015)	Ukraine (2014)
Guatemala (2015)	United Arab Emirates (2016)
Honduras (2016)	United States (2016)
Korea, Rep. of (2016)	Venezuela, Bolivarian Rep. of (2008)
Malawi <sup>a</sup> (2016)	Zambia <sup>a</sup> (2015)
Maldives (2015)	

a Least-developed country.