

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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Negotiating Group on Rules

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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19-21 MARCH 2003

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Negotiating Group on Rules ("the Group") held a formal meeting on 19-21 March 2003.
- A. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
2. The Group adopted the following agenda:
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 - Date of the next formal meeting of the Group
- B. ANTI-DUMPING
3. The first paper introduced was entitled "Proposal of the People's Republic of China on the Negotiations on Anti-Dumping" (TN/RL/W/66). The sponsor stated that the ambiguity of the Anti-Dumping ("AD") Agreement gave enormous discretion to investigating authorities and allowed AD measures to be used for protectionist purposes. As the leading target of AD, the sponsor attached great importance to these negotiations. Its proposal was in two parts. The first related to the provisions that needed to be clarified or improved. Since much of this part echoed viewpoints expressed by other participants, the sponsor explained elements of its proposal which had not yet been touched on by others, i.e., the issue of "particular market situation", where the lack of a definition gave rise to a possibility of misuse, and the so-called "non-market economy" clauses in Article 2.7 and the second supplementary provision of paragraph 1 of Article VI in Annex I to GATT 1994, which contradicted with the real situation of WTO members and should be revoked. The second part of the proposal focused on special and differential treatment for developing countries ("S&D"). Developing countries had always been the main target of AD measures, contrary to the WTO's goal of securing a share of trade for developing countries commensurate with their development needs. The sponsor supported proposals on S&D by other participants. It further proposed the mandatory acceptance of price undertakings and the automatic sunset of AD measures in cases where developed countries took action against imports from developing countries.
4. Various participants noted similarities between many of the sponsor's proposals and those contained in their own submissions to the Group. However, these participants' proposals regarding lesser duty, price undertakings, de minimis margins, negligible import volumes and sunset were of general application, whereas the sponsor's paper focused on these elements solely in the context of

S&D; in the view of these participants, these proposals merited general applicability in all AD cases, regardless of the WTO Member concerned. Many participants welcomed the sponsors' S&D proposals, but one participant noted that many AD actions were taken by developing countries against each other, and queried whether it mattered to a developing Member whether its exports were kept out of a developed or developing country market. This participant opined that it might be helpful to agree on a transparent and better-tailored differentiation among developing countries, as equal treatment of Members with fundamental differences was not conducive to creating a competitive edge for, nor to fostering the trade interests of, the poorest countries.

5. Comments were made and/or questions posed regarding a number of specific proposals. As regards back-to-back investigations, several participants sought clarification regarding the relationship between the sponsor's proposal and paragraph 7.1 of the Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns. On "all others" rates, where the sponsor proposed inclusion of *de minimis* dumping margins, it was queried whether the sponsor considered that zero margins and margins based upon best information should also be included in the calculation. One participant submitted its questions in document TN/RL/W/74, entitled "Comments from Australia on the People's Republic of China's Paper on Anti-Dumping (Document TN/RL/W/66)". This paper raised questions regarding causality; "all others" rates; the non-market economy clause; lesser duty rule; negligible import volumes; *de minimis* dumping margins and the automatic sunset of AD measures. One participant was of the view that any further complication of the AD Agreement would widen the existing gap between developed and developing countries.

6. The next paper introduced was entitled "Negotiations on Anti-Dumping and Subsidies - Reflection Paper of the European Communities on a Swift Control Mechanism for Initiations" (TN/RL/W/67). The sponsor recalled the problems relating to initiations, especially the work burden for exporters implied by an unjustified initiation and the fact that a Member had to wait 18 months to challenge the WTO-consistency of an initiation. It referred to three basic models which did not represent an exhaustive description of possible solutions to address unjustified initiations. The first and most ambitious was the fast-track initiation panel, which would allow panel review of an initiation to be conducted within a short period of time, under procedures similar to those under Article 21.5 of the DSU. The second model, arbitration, could be more suitable in cases that were straightforward, such as cases involving the absence of evidence. The third model, which was grounded in the SCM Agreement, was a standing advisory body that would issue a non-binding opinion. The sponsor was of the view that a swift system to deal with initiations should not be viewed as an extra burden, as it just meant that one specific issue could be reviewed earlier.

7. Some participants considered the paper to be useful and to provide food for thought; its suggested models could be an important complementary tool to reduce unwarranted and frivolous initiations at an early stage. One participant had an initial preference for a mechanism based on a mixture of the second and third models and mentioned the importance of previously identified issues relating to initiation such as initiation standards and standing. It also stressed the importance of public interest as a concept to be taken into consideration at the initiation stage. Another participant was of the view that the application of this mechanism should be limited to objective aspects of initiation such as standing, the existence of prior notification to the government of the exporting Member and the existence of information relating to normal value and export price. This participant was concerned about the possible proliferation of disputes, abusive challenges to initiations, and negative implications on developing countries with scarce financial and human resources. There was a need to strike a proper balance between the legitimate possibility to question initiation and the equally legitimate right to initiate investigations. One participant considered that this proposal could not be considered a mere clarification or improvement of the current rules, and thus fell outside the scope of the negotiating mandate. Furthermore, the proposed mechanisms could be abused and the combination of an investigation and a dispute could lengthen investigations and make it even more difficult for investigating authorities to complete investigations within the deadlines set forth in the

AD and SCM Agreements. Several participants suggested that a system within a Member for the independent review of initiations might be a more effective way to address the problem of unjustified initiations.

8. Questions and requests for clarifications were posed. One participant submitted its questions in document TN/RL/W/75, entitled "Comments from Australia on the European Communities Paper - Reflection Paper of the European Communities on a Swift Control mechanism for Initiations (Document TN/RL/W/67)". Participants enquired about the general concept of a swift mechanism; its elements; how Members could set up such a mechanism outside the traditional dispute settlement system; whether investigations should be suspended during the course of these proceedings; at what stage of the investigation the proposed mechanism could issue rulings; whether or not these rulings should be binding; the relationship between the three models and Article 13 of the AD Agreement; and whether such a mechanism could lead investigating authorities to shift at least some of the investigation to the pre-initiation stage in order to prevent a negative outcome if it were challenged. One participant queried how effective these models might be in reducing the burden on parties in the case of unwarranted initiations. Did the sponsor envisaged that a fast-track panel could complete its work before an exporter incurred the expense of preparing its questionnaire response? What incentive did a Member have to enter into binding arbitration when it had just determined that the information contained in the application was sufficient to warrant initiation? Another participant asked whether the sponsor intended to pursue the first two models in the ongoing DSU negotiations, and whether these models could delay the investigation, thereby causing a negative impact on exporters. With respect to the standing advisory body model, it wondered whether the credibility of such a body would be affected if its advisory opinion differed from that of panel or Appellate Body rulings when the investigation in question was challenged later under the DSU.

9. In reaction to some of the comments and questions, the sponsor stated that it had deliberately left the relationship between the proposed mechanism, the DSB and the ongoing DSU negotiations open to encourage discussion. It saw merit in discussing issues relating to disputes in the areas of AD and CVD in the Group, but did not exclude discussing these issues in the DSU negotiations as well. Regarding the non-binding nature of the third model and its credibility, the sponsor noted that panel rulings may be either upheld or reversed by the Appellate Body, yet no Member questioned panels' authority or credibility. As regards the relationship between a fast-track initiation panel and questionnaire procedures, it would be ambitious to expect that such a panel could deliver its opinion within 37 days, but costs continued after completion of the questionnaire so such a mechanism remained useful. As for the possible suspensive effect of such a mechanism on an investigation, this would provide an incentive to invoke the mechanism and posed a risk of abuse. Thus, while it could be considered, it was probably not the right track to follow.

10. The next paper introduced, entitled "Proposal on Sunset" (TN/RL/W/76), was sponsored by 14 participants. One of the sponsors stated that this was the first negotiating proposal elaborating on one of 32 issues previously identified by the co-sponsors; more such negotiating proposals could be expected. A co-sponsor explained that there were two approaches to address difficulties regarding sunset reviews under Article 11.3 of the AD Agreement: a "nuanced" approach based on an indicative list of factors to be considered in determining likelihood of dumping and injury, or a "simple" approach based on automatic termination of all AD measures after five years without exception and a ban on new cases for one year thereafter (six months in exceptional circumstances). The sponsors submitted that the "simple" approach would be more consistent with the object and purpose of Article 11.3 and was a better solution to balancing of interests between exporters and domestic industries. Other co-sponsors stated that, although the AD Agreement stipulated that any extension beyond five years should be exceptional and based on the recurrence of dumping and injury, the exception had swallowed the rule and the sunset review mechanism was fundamentally flawed. The realities of the market-place and the desire to achieve profits should normally prevent companies selling at a loss over an extended period of five years. In the same vein, several co-sponsors were of

the view that prohibiting back-to-back investigations for one year following sunset was essential to prevent the abusive use of AD measures. One co-sponsor regarded the period of 5 years to be quite long and suggested it have to be reduced to 2 or 3 years maximum.

11. Some participants welcomed the paper and expressed agreement with many of its aspects, while others made comments or requested further clarifications. One participant mentioned that the proposal was ambitious. It noted that the likelihood standard was not an easy one as there were no detailed rules in the AD Agreement and each Member was left to its own devices when developing a workable methodology. This participant was ready to share its experience in this area and to discuss problems linked to the likelihood standard with a view of strengthening the instrument. Another participant noted that under the proposal a Member could not maintain an AD measure in place even where dumping had continued throughout the 5-year period. Some participants enquired whether it would be appropriate to prohibit a Member from initiating an investigation for six months from expiry of a duty even in cases where there was clear evidence of dumping. One participant requested the proponents to provide statistics underlying their view that the record of termination of AD measures was "miserable". One participant suggested that participants should seek to clarify, on the basis of an indicative list of factors, when an AD measure could be extended.

12. One of the co-sponsors responded to some of these questions and comments. It emphasized the difference between a simple and a simplistic approach. As for statistics supporting what they described as a "miserably poor record", the co-sponsors had considered including such data in their paper, but finally refrained from doing so as the figures were very poor and could cause sensitivity to some Members. The co-sponsor, nevertheless, referred to statistics in support of its position. Regarding the question of recurrence of dumping and injury, it stated that it would be illogical that after five years exporting firms would continue to sell below normal value after suffering the negative effects of an AD measure. It regarded the paper to be a balanced contribution that struck a balance between the interests of exporters and that of the domestic industry.

13. The next paper introduced was entitled "Identification of Certain Major Issues Under the Anti-Dumping and Subsidies Agreements" (TN/RL/W/72). The sponsor stated that its paper touched upon various issues including the misuse of the new shipper review process, repeated/persistent dumping and/or subsidization, and special problems faced by industries that produce perishable, seasonal and cyclical products. In its oral intervention, the sponsor focused on three issues to give a flavour of its paper. The first was new shipper reviews, where the sponsor gave an example of how in its view Article 9.5 of the AD Agreement could be abused. The second was the calculation of the "all others rate": the sponsor asked whether it might be appropriate for administrators in some circumstances to use margins that incorporate minimal facts available when calculating the "all others" rate. The third, related to the establishment of an overall weighted average dumping margin, including zeroing. The sponsor enquired how many Members had changed their practice to conform to the Appellate Body decision on zeroing, and of those which had conformed, how many were now re-examining their position on the use of the targeted dumping provision in Article 2.4.4 of the AD Agreement. It added that dispute settlement panels and the Appellate Body, when interpreting obligations related to trade remedy laws, should not impose obligations to which Members had not agreed.

14. A number of participants indicated that the paper has identified practical issues that were worthy of consideration. Certain other participants noted that the proposals addressed certain issues previously identified by other participants, but from a different perspective; one participant remarked that the thrust of the paper was to make AD easier. Participants also enquired whether the sponsor wished to apply an element of temporal segmentation to the definition of domestic production and whether the sponsor would be prepared to do the same in injury investigations. On overall weighted average dumping margins, one participant emphasized that zeroing is prohibited for all comparison methods under the AD Agreement and requested that this be explicitly clarified in these negotiations.

On "all others" rates, the same participant saw merit in clarifying the issue of facts available under Article 6.8 and Annex II of the AD Agreement, i.e., in what situation and how facts available could be used. As for new shipper reviews, some participants asked the sponsor to elaborate on how often this problem had arisen, what impact it had, and whether it could be addressed through clarifying and improving the AD Agreement.

15. The sponsor denied that its paper was an effort to facilitate the imposition of AD duties. It was rather a step towards identifying areas where clarity was needed. It added that it was not using the issue of cyclical products to the disadvantage of the exporters nor to achieve benefits for the administrator only, but for the benefit of the exporter and importer as well.

16. One participant reported to the Group on the latest developments in the OECD-led Initiative on Steel, which could have a bearing on and relevance to work being done on Rules issues under the DDA. The OECD's Steel Disciplines Study Group had held its first meeting on February 2003 to carry out the high-level instruction to develop the elements of a steel subsidies agreement. In advance of that meeting, eighteen delegations had submitted written comments and views on issues identified by the OECD Secretariat. On this basis, the OECD Secretariat was working on a consolidated text that would provide the basis for further discussion. An informal meeting of interested delegations was scheduled for April in Washington and the next official meeting of the Disciplines Study Group would take place in May 2003. The participant was hopeful that progress could be made on an expedited basis, and that the work done in the OECD would be of interest and use to negotiators in this Group and to Ministers as decisions were taken in Cancún regarding the next phase of negotiations under the DDA.

17. In reaction to this intervention, one participant responded that, although it was itself an active participant in the OECD process, it did not see merit in raising these developments in this Group, which should focus on necessary clarifications in the Rules area generally rather than on sector-specific issues.

C. SUBSIDIES AND COUNTERVAILING MEASURES, INCLUDING FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

18. The Group first discussed a paper entitled "Subsidies Disciplines Requiring Clarification and Improvement" (TN/RL/W/78). In its paper, the sponsor had identified provisions of the SCM Agreement which were ripe for further clarification, improvement and strengthening. A next step in the progressive deepening of subsidy disciplines was expansion of the existing category of prohibited subsidies to include government interventions that had a distortive impact on competitiveness or trade similar to that of export and import substitution subsidies, such as the practices listed in the now-lapsed provisions of Article 6.1 of the SCM Agreement. With respect to serious prejudice, the disciplines should be strengthened: the causation provisions should be reviewed, and the remedy could be simply and exclusively the withdrawal of the subsidy programme at issue. Regarding indirect subsidies, it might be useful to clarify the government control standard, the definition of public body, the "entrusts or directs" provision in Article 1, situations involving government intervention in bankruptcy or near bankruptcy proceedings, and industry restructuring. In addition, natural resources and energy pricing were an area for further consideration; one problem was dual pricing which benefited exporters that used these resources intensively. With regard to the provision of government equity, the sponsor suggested that Members notify the Subsidies Committee regarding any intended provision of equity capital and provide a detailed explanation as to how the investment was consistent with the usual investment practice of private investors. In respect of taxation, the sponsor called for more equal treatment of various tax systems that have only superficial differences with regard to their subsidy-like effects, but noted that it was only identifying the issue as it was too early to discuss specific ideas. The sponsor also raised the issue of royalty-based financing and requested more clarity on numerous measurement-related concepts, such as when and how to allocate subsidy benefits over time, the selection of commercial interest rate benchmarks, and the attribution

of subsidy benefits to specific categories of a company's sales and among related companies. As to CVD procedure issues, the sponsor was of the view that all Members would benefit from development of "model" questionnaire and verification outlines to be used in CVD investigations. Finally, the sponsor recognized the burden on developing and least developed Members in satisfying notification obligations, and supported continued efforts of the Subsidies Committee to provide technical assistance in this regard.

19. Several participants welcomed the paper, noting that submissions to the Group on subsidies lagged behind other areas. One participant noted that the submission overlapped somewhat with its own submission on subsidies, and that it shared the sponsor's overall approach of strengthening subsidies disciplines. Another participant indicated that it was ready to examine on their merits proposals to expand the scope of the prohibition where appropriate in light of the scale of the distortion or adverse effects caused by the subsidies. It was also ready to examine on their merits proposals to address inadequacies in the current serious prejudice provisions, which were difficult to apply effectively and had fallen into disuse. In respect of taxation, the participant enquired regarding how the sponsor's proposal would impact GST or VAT regimes; it would be surprising if revenue ministers were prepared to reopen these arrangements. It suggested discussing the issues of indirect subsidies; natural resources /energy pricing and equity capital in an informal mode to help obtain a clearer picture of the sponsor's goals.

20. The next paper was entitled "Preliminary Replies to the Questions of Australia contained in Document TN/RL/W/61" (TN/RL/W/70). The sponsors noted that no non-actionable subsidy had ever been notified under Article 8 of the SCM Agreement, and one possible starting-point for negotiations in this area could be a discussion as to why this was the case. It added that the non-use of these provisions could be attributed to the level of ceilings or benchmarks that were indicated for each of the categories in Article 8 and also to the fact that these categories were designed, to a certain extent, for Members that had at their disposal considerable economic resources. Although the current stage was one of preliminary discussions and it could not yet envisage what concrete changes could be introduced to this Article, it did not rule out the possibility of discussing some proposals for modifications, amendments to the text and different types of approaches to see how these could become a reality. In reaction to this intervention, one participant asked how the development dimensions of subsidies were to be evaluated and whether these would necessarily include subsidies with a view to promoting research and development; regional growth; disadvantaged regions and environmental restructuring. It also enquired about the criteria that could be adopted to allow the effective use of the category of non-actionable subsidies.

21. The next paper introduced was entitled "Possible Approaches to Improved Disciplines on Fisheries Subsidies" (TN/RL/W/77). The sponsor considered that excessive subsidization had significantly contributed to overfishing and threatened the economic and environmental health of the world's fish stocks. By improving WTO disciplines on harmful fisheries subsidies, participants could demonstrate that trade liberalization benefits the environment and contributes to sustainable development. In its paper, the sponsor had identified some key issues and offered some ideas for initial discussion. It stressed that programmes that help to reduce overcapacity and overfishing, and contribute to fisheries sustainability, were not the focus, nor were programs that benefited artisanal fisheries in developing countries. In terms of the structure of disciplines, the sponsor saw merit in discussing the possibility of expanding the category of prohibited subsidies under the SCM Agreement to cover fisheries subsidies that directly contribute to overcapacity and overfishing or have other direct trade-distorting effects. Another possibility would be to shift the burden of proof to a subsidising Member to demonstrate that certain subsidies, perhaps above a certain level, did not contribute to overcapacity or overfishing. The sponsor also suggested exploring means to improve the quality of fisheries subsidies notifications under the SCM Agreement. It noted the importance of benefiting from the expertise of relevant governmental organizations such as the FAO and regional

fisheries management organizations, as well as obtaining the views of non-governmental groups and individuals interested in the issue, including the fisheries industry and the environmental community.

22. The next paper introduced was entitled "Korea's Views on the Suggested Categorization of Fisheries Subsidies" (TN/RL/W/69). In its paper, the sponsor raised several questions regarding the submission TN/RL/W/58 provided by a group of six participants at the last meeting. It questioned the sufficiency of the reasons for categorizing fisheries subsidies, given that no convincing arguments have been made to date to justify the sectoral treatment of fisheries subsidies. It also questioned the objectives of this categorization and the forum where such categorization should be conducted.

23. Many participants welcomed the first submission, which moved in the right direction by making concrete proposals and by building on the existing disciplines of the SCM Agreement. These participants supported the approach of the paper, which distinguished between different types of fisheries subsidies based on their effects, and agreed with the objective of targeting those subsidies that caused over-capacity and over-fishing or had other trade-distorting effects. In this respect, various delegations understood the paper to focus on trade-distorting subsidies, and several liked the focus on subsidies that reduced costs or increased revenues for fishers. Some participants linked the effects-based approach to suggestions to categorize fisheries subsidies; categorization was a way to establish which subsidies had such effects and should be disciplined. One participant suggested that operational subsidies for fishing fleets were an example of subsidies that had negative effects, while subsidies for fisheries management and R&D were examples of subsidies that did not. Many participants reacted positively to the idea of expanding the "red light" (prohibited) category of subsidies for fisheries subsidies with negative effects, but did not rule out exploring the "dark amber" approach. In the view of certain participants, the key question was deciding which subsidies had negative effects and should be included in these categories, with several delegations suggesting a comprehensive approach. In this respect, one participant queried how the sponsor's suggestion to include in the prohibited category subsidies to fisheries that were overfished could work in practice. Some delegations appreciated the sponsor's statement that artisanal fisheries in developing countries were not the focus of the negotiations, with one participant noting that some developing countries had fisheries sectors that, although not artisanal, were small by international standards. The importance of improved notifications was emphasized by some participants.

24. Certain participants expressed doubts regarding the appropriateness of a sector-specific approach, noting the possible negative effects on developing countries, and questioning the intellectual basis for the distinct treatment of fisheries subsidies. Certain other participants did not rule out horizontal improvements to disciplines as part of a package to improve disciplines on fisheries subsidies. Some participants considered that the necessary ground for further work had not been laid because many questions had not been answered; the paper was based on unproven assumptions that fisheries subsidies were causing resource depletion and that categorization was necessary in order to make progress. As for the objective of disciplining subsidies that promote over-capacity and overfishing, one participant suggested that this differed from the "traffic light" approach in the SCM Agreement, which focused on trade effects. It was queried whether the sponsor had reasonable grounds to believe that fisheries subsidies were as trade-distortive as export subsidies, and why the sponsor wanted tighter disciplines for fisheries subsidies than for other products. One participant questioned the appropriateness of shifting the burden of proof from the complaining Member to the allegedly subsidising Member and asked whether the sponsor thought it necessary to establish a "bright green" category to include subsidies which had no adverse effects on trade, environment and sustainable development. This participant also noted the importance of aquaculture to developing countries and enquired whether fisheries subsidies on all activities, including subsidies to the fishery industry and aquaculture, should be subject to the possible disciplines.

25. In response to questions posed in document TN/RL/W/69, the sponsor considered that categorization of fisheries subsidies was necessary because different subsidy programmes required

different disciplines. For example, government financing of management regimes ought not be considered as a subsidy *per se*, or in any event should be subject to lesser disciplines. Its paper was aimed at putting discussions on a more concrete basis rather than arguing about the meaning of the Doha mandate. As for a suitable definition for the "red light" category, the sponsor had no specific examples but believed that it should focus on subsidies causing overcapacity and overfishing or other trade-distorting effects. Regarding a "bright green category" mentioned by one participant, the sponsor had no specific ideas, but its paper did not cover artisanal fisheries in developing countries as they were unlikely to cause overcapacity and overfishing and were not an appropriate object of increased disciplines. Regarding expertise from other governmental or non-governmental organizations, the sponsor did not intend to detract from the intergovernmental nature of the WTO, but was of the view that such expertise could enrich the discussions.

26. One participant expressed its support for the second paper and shared the sponsor's concerns and questions. It stated its objection to the categorization of fisheries subsidies and enquired how such an approach could contribute to the clarification of SCM Agreement disciplines. It submitted that a horizontal approach should be taken unless it was demonstrated that there was a specific trade distortion caused by subsidies granted to the fisheries sector and that the SCM Agreement could not effectively address these trade distortions. It wondered if any Member have ever requested consultations pertaining to injury caused to its domestic industry, nullification or impairment or serious prejudice as a result of fisheries subsidies.

D. REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

27. The Chairman proposed to give participants the opportunity to express views or make comments in formal mode and then turn to informal discussions. He noted that since the last formal meeting, the Group had not received any new submissions on regional trade agreements (RTAs). At the Group's request, the Secretariat had recently distributed a note entitled *Issues Related to the Retroactive Application of Possible New WTO Rules on Regional Trade Agreements* (Job(03)/44/Rev.1) and a draft outline for a Factual Presentation on Individual RTAs, which was distributed informally.

28. One participant recalled that his delegation had earlier put forward reservations on having the Secretariat or independent experts present a report on individual RTAs. It was the duty of the parties to take the political responsibility of presenting a report on their RTA on the basis of their own judgement. Despite such reservations, his delegation had gone along with other participants in considering the proposal and the Secretariat's informal paper as an experimental move, without prejudicing his delegation's position *vis-à-vis* the outcome of the work being done. He asked whether or not the draft outline for a factual presentation completely followed the Standard Format. He also indicated that his delegation would have two systemic concerns if agreement were reached on having an independent report on individual RTAs. First, it should be clarified whether the parties would still be required to present a report on the RTA. Second, there was a need to find a way to deal with those RTAs examined within the CRTA prior to any such decision.

29. Replying to the question posed, a representative of the Secretariat clarified that the draft outline was very similar to the Standard Format; adjustments made aimed at reflecting questions that have traditionally been posed in the context of the examination of RTAs.

30. In the absence of any other request for the floor, the Chairman turned the meeting into informal mode.

E. OTHER BUSINESS

31. The Group agreed that it would hold its next meeting on 5-7 May 2003, with Regional Trade Agreements to be discussed on Monday 5 May 2003.
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