

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Committee on Trade and Development

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MELANESIAN SPEARHEAD GROUP TRADE AGREEMENT

Notification from Papua New Guinea

The following communication, dated 3 August 1999, has been received from the Government of Papua New Guinea with the request that it be circulated to WTO Members.

In reviewing Papua New Guinea's responsibilities as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and consistent with the decision by the leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) at their recent meeting in Port Vila to make the MSG Trade Agreement compliant with WTO requirements, the Government of Papua New Guinea wishes to formally notify the WTO of the MSG Trade Agreement.¹

The MSG Trade Agreement is a preferential trade agreement amongst the four (4) independent Melanesian States of the South Pacific region and this includes Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. Established in 1984, the agreement allows for duty-free trade in selected products among the member countries.

Being a preferential trade arrangement among a group of developing countries, it is considered appropriate for the MSG Trade Agreement to be notified under the provisions of the Enabling Clause, which spells out the rule and disciplines for preferential arrangements among the developing countries. Therefore, the notification of the MSG Trade Agreement is now being made under the provisions of the Enabling Clause.

¹The text of the Agreement is circulated in document WT/COMTD/21.