

**Committee on Regional Trade Agreements**

REPORTING ON REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Recommendations by the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements  
to the Council for Trade in Services

In fulfilment of its mandate under item 1(b) of its terms of reference,<sup>1</sup> the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements (CRTA) adopted, on 20 February 1998, recommendations to the Council for Trade in Services with respect to how the required reporting on the operation of regional trade agreements (RTAs) should be carried out. These recommendations are contained in the Annex to this document.

The nature of these recommendations is essentially procedural and their implementation would not entail any change in Members' legal rights and obligations. The recommendations are geared toward standardizing, as much as possible, the presentation of reports on RTAs to WTO Members; ensuring the provision of consistent information to the CRTA on developments in such agreements, which may be useful to the Committee's work under its terms of reference; and making operational the implementation of reporting requirements contained in WTO legal texts.

The CRTA may submit further recommendations in light of the experience gathered in implementing the recommended procedures.

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<sup>1</sup>"[T]o consider how the required reporting on the operation of such [regional trade] agreements should be carried out and make appropriate recommendations to the relevant body"(WT/L/127).

ANNEX

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to the Council for Trade in Services

The Committee on Regional Trade Agreements recommends, in the context of item 1(b) of its terms of reference, that the Council for Trade in Services adopt the following procedures, as general guidelines, with respect to reports/information on regional trade agreements submitted to it:<sup>1</sup>

1. Such reports/information will also be available to the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements, as an input to the Committee's work under item 1(d) of its terms of reference.
2. Where appropriate, a description of developments in the agreements not contained in the information previously presented to the WTO<sup>2</sup> and trade statistics covering the last representative period, for both trade among parties to the agreements and trade with third parties, should be provided.<sup>3</sup>
3. Where appropriate, parties to the agreements may make use, in presenting information, of the Standard Format for Information on Economic Integration Agreements on Services (document WT/REG/W/14). This would facilitate both the task of parties in reporting on their agreements and the task of WTO Members in considering the reports.

The above procedures will not in any way affect the legal rights and obligations of WTO Members.

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<sup>1</sup>Regional trade agreements (RTAs) reporting to the Council for Trade in Services are agreements liberalizing trade in services among the parties, notified under Article V:7(a) of the GATS. In addition to initial notification and provision of relevant data, as requested, parties to an RTA are required to "report periodically ... on its implementation" in the case of an agreement which is implemented on the basis of a time-frame (GATS Article V:7(b)).

Further, when agreements undergo "any significant modifications", parties should notify the changes and "also make available ... such relevant information as may be requested" (GATS Article V:7(a)).

<sup>2</sup>In case particular sectors and/or modes of delivery were excluded from, or only partially covered by, the regional liberalization process, the relevant data should also be provided.

<sup>3</sup>Statistics on the national product at the country level, broken down by the different services sectors or sub-sectors, would also be desirable.