

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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Committee on Regional Trade Agreements Thirty-First Session

EXAMINATION OF THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EFTA STATES AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Note on the Meeting of 19 February 2002

Chairperson: Ms. M. Liang (Singapore)

1. The meeting was convened in document WTO/AIR/1714.
 2. Under Agenda Item B.VII of its Thirty-First Session, the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements (CRTA) took up the examination of the Free Trade Agreement (Agreement) between the EFTA States and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).
 3. The Chairperson said that this was the second round of examination of the Free Trade Agreement. The proceedings of the first round, which had taken place in September 2001, had been distributed in document WT/REG/117/M/1. She added that the recent exchange of questions and replies had been distributed in document WT/REG117/4.
 4. The representative of Norway confirmed, in response to the question posed by the representative of the United States, during the first round of examination in September, that all forestry products were covered by the Agreement.
 5. The representative of Australia said that in the previous round of examination the Parties had indicated that the Agreement would likely be ratified and enter into force in the second half of 2001 and he wondered if this had in fact occurred. The representative of Norway replied that the Agreement had been ratified by the four EFTA States some time ago, but had not yet entered into force as it had not yet been ratified by FYROM. Ratification was expected in a few weeks.
 6. The Chairperson noted that the second round of examination of the Agreement had allowed the Committee to clarify a number of issues. Nevertheless, some outstanding questions remained. She requested delegations to forward any additional questions in writing to the Secretariat by 15 March. The Parties should submit replies in writing by no later than 30 April. She considered the factual examination complete. Once replies had been circulated, any request for additional information could be dealt with in writing without holding another round of examination. The Secretariat could then begin drafting the report for this examination.
 7. The Committee took note of the comments made.
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