

**Committee on Government Procurement**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY 2004**

Chairman: Mr. Niklas Bergström (Sweden)

1. The Committee adopted the following agenda, as outlined in Airgram WTO/AIR/2356/Rev.1 of 14 July 2004:

- A. Draft Decision on Modalities for the Negotiations on Extension of Coverage and Elimination of Discriminatory Measures and Practices
- B. Request for Observer Status
- C. Other Business

A. DRAFT DECISION ON MODALITIES FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS ON EXTENSION OF COVERAGE AND ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATORY MEASURES AND PRACTICES

2. The Chairman noted that, at informal consultations on 13 July, delegations had had another brief exchange of views on the draft decision on modalities for the negotiations on extension of coverage and elimination of discriminatory measures and practices. In the light of these consultations, he proposed adoption of the draft decision set out in Job No. 3067/Rev.1 (4741), dated 13 July.

3. The Committee adopted the Decision.<sup>1</sup>

4. The representative of Israel welcomed the Decision on modalities adopted by the Committee. Although his delegation was a small delegation representing a developing country with limited resources, it allocated a lot of resources to the issue of government procurement. It would have hoped to have finished negotiations on the text and the horizontal issues regarding specific commitments before entering into bilateral negotiations on the extension of coverage. This would have not only reflected a logical process but would have better enabled his delegation to manage its resource constraints. He assured the Chairman and other delegations that his delegation would continue to work with them in order to reach a successful conclusion to the negotiations.

5. The representative of the European Communities also welcomed the decision on modalities. He recalled that under the mandate provided for in Article XXIV:7(b) and (c) of the Agreement on Government Procurement, a significant increase of coverage should be achieved. All necessary efforts should be made by Parties to meet this objective rapidly. His delegation considered that the Decision on modalities adopted by the Committee should be understood as aiming at attaining this objective.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently circulated as document GPA/79, dated 19 July 2004.

6. The Committee took note of the statements made.

B. REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS

7. The Chairman noted that the Republic of Armenia had submitted a request for observer status (GPA/W/293, dated 18 June 2004), having regard to the commitment it had made, in the context of its accession to the WTO, to initiate negotiations on accession to the Agreement on Government Procurement.

8. The Committee approved Armenia's request for observer status.

9. The representative of the United States welcomed Armenia as an observer and looked forward to its accession to the GPA.

10. The representative of the European Communities also welcomed Armenia as an observer.

11. The Committee took note of the statements made.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

12. The Chairman noted that during its recent informal meetings the Committee had had several opportunities to look into the question of meeting dates for the second half of 2004. There was agreement on the principle of holding two meetings. As regards the precise dates of the first meeting, it looked as if all delegations' preferences could not be accommodated. However, there was a willingness to show flexibility, for which he thanked one delegation in particular. He proposed that the Committee agree on the following dates: 5 to 8 October and 16 to 19 November.

13. The Committee so agreed.

14. The representative of Israel said that his delegation would not be able to participate fully in the meeting scheduled for 5-8 October, and hoped that the meeting would be kept in a more formal mode, so that full and substantive records of the meeting would be available.

15. The Committee took note of the statement made.

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