

**CLARIFYING AND IMPROVING GATT ARTICLE V:
VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS ON TRANSIT TRAFFIC**

Communication from Turkey

The following communication, dated 4 November 2011, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Turkey for consideration by the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation at its meeting on 9-11 November 2011.

Explanation

Voluntary restraints are a kind of government imposed limitation on the volume of transit traffic that can pass through a country during a specific period of time. Such restraints, although called "voluntary" because of their self-imposed nature, are requested mandatorily by the transit country and have to be accepted by the country whose traffic passes through that transit country to avoid the risk of stricter or less transparent restrictions. Voluntary restraints, which were frequently practiced before the establishment of WTO, have been abolished through the Article 11 of the Safeguards Agreement. However, such restraints do continue to exist on transit passages. Turkey is of the view that the ongoing negotiations on facilitation of trade is an excellent opportunity to address this issue in the context of transit pillar and proposes the following paragraph:

Proposed New Text – Paragraph 3ter of the Article 11

"Members shall not seek, take or maintain any voluntary restraints or any other similar measures on traffic in transit."
