

**COMMUNICATION FROM BARBADOS, CUBA, FIJI, PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
AND THE SOLOMON ISLANDS**

Revision

The following communication, dated 7 March 2007, is being circulated at the request of the Delegations of Barbados, Cuba, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

**REGIONAL APPROACHES TO TRADE FACILITATION**

1. In July 2006 a number of Small, Vulnerable Economies tabled document TN/TF/W/129/Rev.1. This was a proposal on regional approaches to trade facilitation, specifically on regional enquiry points. The proponents recognize the positive reaction to the measures recommended in that proposal and are tabling the current revision as a contribution to the discussions in the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation.

2. The current proposal provides three legal drafting suggestions to be included in three different areas of an eventual text. The idea at the core of these three suggestions is that small, vulnerable economies and other developing countries involved in a customs union or similar economic integration movement should be allowed to pool their scarce resources to assist in the implementation of the obligations arising from a possible WTO agreement on trade facilitation. It is important to note that this proposal seeks to provide the flexibility for members to use regional approaches as an additional option in the implementation of an eventual Agreement on Trade Facilitation, if these individual members decide. The proposed language is based in some measure on the General Council decisions of 10 October 2006 regarding the regional approaches to the SPS, TBT and TRIPS Agreements.

**I. TO BE PLACED IN THE PREAMBLE/INTRODUCTORY SECTION OF A  
POSSIBLE TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT**

*Small Economies/developing countries which are members of a Customs Union or a regional economic arrangement may adopt regional approaches to assist in the implementation of their obligations under the Trade Facilitation Agreement including through the establishment and use of regional bodies.*

**II. TO BE PLACED IN THE SECTION ON "ESTABLISHMENT OF ENQUIRY POINTS"**

*Small Economies/developing countries which are members of a Customs Union or a regional economic arrangement shall have the option of establishing one or more enquiry points at the regional level.<sup>1</sup> The existence of a notified regional enquiry point would satisfy the requirements for the existence of an enquiry point under this current provision.*

**III. TO BE PLACED IN THE SECTION ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

*Members and the WTO, within its competence, shall provide technical and financial assistance, on mutually agreed terms, to small economies/developing countries to support the establishment, modification and maintenance of these national and regional enquiry points.*

*Members and the WTO shall consider the advantages of providing assistance to the regional body, where one exists within a Customs Union or regional economic arrangement, which will assist those members in the implementation of their obligations under the Trade Facilitation agreement.*

**IV. FINAL REMARK**

3. This proposal is without prejudice to individual country positions and to the rights of the co-sponsors to submit additional proposals in future sessions on any issues contained in this paper and/or on any other issues not included here

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<sup>1</sup> It is understood that individual Members benefiting from these recommendations will continue to be legally responsible and accountable for their individual notifications and other obligations under these Agreements.