

COMMUNICATION FROM THE UNITED STATES

The following communication, dated 4 April 2006, from the Delegation of the United States, is being circulated in advance of the Negotiating Group meeting of 5-7 April.

EXPRESS SHIPMENTS

1. The United States submits for consideration summarized elements of a proposal for a commitment to provide specific expedited procedures for express shipments.

I. ELEMENTS OF A COMMITMENT ON EXPRESS SHIPMENTS

- Expedited Procedures: Provide for separate and expedited customs procedures for express shipments, without limitation as to maximum weight or customs value of shipment.
- Operator-Customs Arrangement: Provide a process for each express consignment operator to create a mutually acceptable arrangement with Customs, which provides adequate infrastructure, financial security, and advance information, in return for expedited Customs procedures and release.
- Pre-arrival processing: Provide for submission and processing of information necessary for the release of an express shipment before its physical arrival.
- Single Manifest: Provide for the submission of a single manifest covering all goods transported in an express shipment, preferably through electronic means.
- "de minimis" treatment: Provide that for shipments valued at US\$200 or less, no duties or taxes will be assessed, and no formal entry documents will be required.
- Express Clearance: Procedures allow clearance of express shipments within one hour after the submission of the necessary customs documents, provided the shipment has arrived.

II. ELEMENTS ALSO TO BE ADDRESSED BY MEMBERS AS NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED:

- Special and Differential Treatment and Technical Assistance elements, including:
 - Assessments; identify individual specific needs and priorities of Members;
 - Assistance elements: Develop necessary administrative process, regulations and laws; train customs officers, establish partnerships with private sector;
 - Explore availability and effective utilization of private sector assistance resources;
 - Deferred or temporary partial implementation of commitments.
-