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COMMON DECLARATION WITH REGARD TO PREFERENTIAL RULES OF ORIGIN

1. Recognizing that some Members apply preferential rules of origin, distinct from non-preferential rules of origin, the Members hereby *agree* as follows.
2. For the purposes of this Common Declaration, preferential rules of origin shall be defined as those laws, regulations and administrative determinations of general application applied by any Member to determine whether goods qualify for preferential treatment under contractual or autonomous trade regimes leading to the granting of tariff preferences going beyond the application of paragraph 1 of Article I of GATT 1994.
3. The Members *agree* to ensure that:
  - (a) when they issue administrative determinations of general application, the requirements to be fulfilled are clearly defined. In particular:
    - (i) in cases where the criterion of change of tariff classification is applied, such a preferential rule of origin, and any exceptions to the rule, must clearly specify the subheadings or headings within the tariff nomenclature that are addressed by the rule;
    - (ii) in cases where the ad valorem percentage criterion is applied, the method for calculating this percentage shall also be indicated in the preferential rules of origin;
    - (iii) in cases where the criterion of manufacturing or processing operation is prescribed, the operation that confers preferential origin shall be precisely specified;
  - (b) their preferential rules of origin are based on a positive standard. Preferential rules of origin that state what does not confer preferential origin (negative standard) are permissible as part of a clarification of a positive standard or in individual cases where a positive determination of preferential origin is not necessary;
  - (c) their laws, regulations, judicial decisions and administrative rulings of general application relating to preferential rules of origin are published as if they were subject to, and in accordance with, the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article X of GATT 1994;
  - (d) upon request of an exporter, importer or any person with a justifiable cause, assessments of the preferential origin they would accord to a good are issued as soon as possible but no later than 150 days<sup>7</sup> after a request for such an assessment provided that all necessary elements have been submitted. Requests for such assessments shall be accepted before trade in the good concerned begins and may be accepted at any later point in time. Such assessments shall remain valid for three years provided that the facts and conditions, including the preferential rules of origin, under which they have been made remain comparable. Provided that the parties concerned are informed in advance, such assessments will no longer be

valid when a decision contrary to the assessment is made in a review as referred to in subparagraph (f). Such assessments shall be made publicly available subject to the provisions of subparagraph (g);

*(footnote original)* <sup>7</sup> In respect of requests made during the first year from entry into force of the WTO Agreement, Members shall only be required to issue these assessments as soon as possible.

- (e) when introducing changes to their preferential rules of origin or new preferential rules of origin, they shall not apply such changes retroactively as defined in, and without prejudice to, their laws or regulations;
- (f) any administrative action which they take in relation to the determination of preferential origin is reviewable promptly by judicial, arbitral or administrative tribunals or procedures, independent of the authority issuing the determination, which can effect the modification or reversal of the determination;
- (g) all information that is by nature confidential or that is provided on a confidential basis for the purpose of the application of preferential rules of origin is treated as strictly confidential by the authorities concerned, which shall not disclose it without the specific permission of the person or government providing such information, except to the extent that it may be required to be disclosed in the context of judicial proceedings.

4. Members *agree* to provide to the Secretariat promptly their preferential rules of origin, including a listing of the preferential arrangements to which they apply, judicial decisions, and administrative rulings of general application relating to their preferential rules of origin in effect on the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement for the Member concerned. Furthermore, Members agree to provide any modifications to their preferential rules of origin or new preferential rules of origin as soon as possible to the Secretariat. Lists of information received and available with the Secretariat shall be circulated to the Members by the Secretariat.

## 1.2 Notifications under Paragraph 4 of Annex II

1. Notifications of preferential rules of origin are circulated under the [G/RO/N/\\*](#) document series.
2. In addition, preferential origin rules are also notified to the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements<sup>1</sup> and to the Committee on Trade and Development<sup>2</sup>. In order to avoid duplicative notification requirements, the Committee on Rules of Origin decided, at its meeting of 22 November 2012, that notifications to either of these two Committees would suffice to discharge their notification obligations under the Agreement on Rules of Origin.<sup>3</sup> As a result, notifications submitted to the Committee on Regional Trade Agreements or the Committee on Trade and Development are also be circulated by the Secretariat to the Committee on Rules of Origin (under the [G/RO/N/\\*](#) document series).
3. Such notifications, including any legislative texts notified to the Secretariat, can be accessed through the WTO database of regional trade agreements (<http://rtais.wto.org>) or in the WTO database of preferential trade agreements (<http://ptadb.wto.org>).

Current as of: February 2019

<sup>1</sup> [WT/L/671](#), Article 2(d) of the Annex.

<sup>2</sup> [WT/L/806](#), Annex I, Article 2(d).

<sup>3</sup> [G/RO/M/59](#), paras. 3.5 to 3.7.