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Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

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Ministry of Industry and Commerce

No: 0349/MOIC.FTPD
Vientiane Capital, 22 February 2011

Decision on GATS Enquiry Point

- Pursuant to Decree on the Organization and Activities of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce No.188/PM, dated 17 August 2006;
- Pursuant to Decree on the Notification and Enquiry of Trade Related Information No. 363/PM, dated 19 August 2010;
- Pursuant to the request of the Foreign Trade Policy Department No. 0249/FTP.D.MTPD dated 17 February 2011.

The Minister of Industry and Commerce issues a Decision:

Chapter 1 General Provisions

Article 1. Purpose

This Decision sets out the organization and activities of the Enquiry Point for the General Agreement on Trade in Services (hereinafter referred to as “**Enquiry Point**” or “**GATS Enquiry Point**”) to further elaborate and implement Decree on the Notification and Enquiry of Trade-Related Information No. 363/PM, dated 19 August 2010 (hereinafter referred to as “**Decree 363**”).

Article 2. Information on Trade in Services

Information on trade in services means information on any measures of general application effecting trade in services, and on agreements on trade in services to which Lao PDR is a party. Measures of general application affecting trade in services include laws, decrees, regulations, procedures and administrative actions in relation to the purchase, payment, access to and use of a service, and the supply of a service.

Chapter 2 Location, Role and Personnel

Article 3. Location and Role

The GATS Enquiry Point is located at the Foreign Trade Policy Department of

the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and has the role to implement duties on behalf of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce as stipulated in Paragraph 3 of Article 5 of Decree 363.

Article 4. Personnel

The GATS Enquiry Point shall be staffed with an appropriate number of personnel.

The Foreign Trade Policy Department shall appoint personnel and contact information of the GATS Enquiry Point and shall inform relevant sectors of such information.

Chapter 3 Rights and Duties

Article 5. Rights

The GATS Enquiry Point has the following rights:

1. To coordinate directly with relevant authorities in order to request for information on trade in services;
2. To respond to enquiry and provide information on trade in services, upon request;
3. To attend or organize meetings, seminars and trainings related to work of the GATS Enquiry Point; and
4. To exercise other rights as assigned by the higher authority.

Article 6. Duties

The GATS Enquiry Point has the following duties:

1. To receive and respond to enquiry on trade in services within a reasonable timeframe;
2. To organize trainings on coordination mechanism and the provision of information on trade in services for personnel of relevant authorities;
3. To assess and propose the improvement for effective coordination mechanism and other aspects of the GATS Enquiry Point;
4. To report regularly on activities of the GATS Enquiry Point to the Minister of Industry and Commerce; and
5. To exercise other duties as assigned by the higher authority.

Chapter 4 Working Method, Budget and Seal

Article 7. Working Method

The GATS Enquiry Point shall specify an appropriate working method in which the following tasks shall be implemented:

1. To create and maintain an electronic database to serve the work of the GATS Enquiry Point;
2. When receiving a request for information on trade in services, the GATS Enquiry Point shall prepare and provide answer to such request within a reasonable timeframe. If the GATS Enquiry Point has no answer to such a request, it shall forward the request to focal points in relevant services authorities as soon as possible in order to seek answer in writing from such authority and shall indicate the deadline for providing the answer; and,
3. To organize meetings at least every three months, or upon request of any focal points.

Article 8. Budget

The budget of the GATS Enquiry Point is part of the regular budget of the Foreign Trade Policy Department.

Article 9. Seal

The GATS Enquiry Point may use the seal of the Foreign Trade Policy Department for carrying out its function.

Chapter 5 Final Provisions

Article 10. Implementation

The Foreign Trade Policy Department shall implement this Decision. All authorities of the Industry and Commerce sector shall facilitate the work upon request by the GATS Enquiry Point.

Other sectors shall be informed of this Decision and appoint their respective focal points to cooperate as appropriate on the basis of the Decree 363.

Article 11. Effectiveness

This Decision shall be effective from its date of signature.

Minister of Industry and Commerce

[Signed and sealed]

Dr. Nam Viyaketh