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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF 18-19 JULY 2019

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT[1]

[1] This document has been prepared under the Secretariat's own responsibility and is without prejudice to the positions of Members or to their rights and obligations under the WTO.

1 ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. The Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the "Committee") held its 75th regular meeting on 18-19 July 2019. The proposed agenda for the meeting was adopted with amendments (WTO/AIR/SPS/28).

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

2.1. The SPS Committee convened in formal mode prior to the informal meeting on 17 July 2019. Recalling the Committee's Rules of Procedure, the Chairperson noted that the term of office of the Chairperson of the SPS Committee finished with the conclusion of the first meeting of each year. At the time of the regular SPS Committee meeting held in March 2019, the Chairperson of the Council for Trade in Goods had not yet concluded the consultations on chairpersons for the subsidiary bodies of the Council for Trade in Goods in accordance with the Guidelines for Appointment of Officers to WTO bodies (WT/L/31).

2.2. In the intervening period, the Council for Trade in Goods had agreed to the election of Mr Daniel Arboleda of Colombia. The Committee endorsed the election of Mr Arboleda by acclamation, and voiced its appreciation to Ms Vutula for her work during the past year.

3 INFORMATION SHARING

3.1 Information from Members on relevant activities

3.1.1 Japan - Current status of food safety after the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station accident in 2011

3.1. Japan thanked the United States and the Philippines for relaxing their import restrictions, and the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Democratic Republic of the Congo for lifting their import restrictions. Japan also provided an update on the most recent data and status of its food safety control measures, as well as on its water management at the nuclear power station and the marine environmental impact. Japan reminded the Committee that its limits of radioactive caesium were lower than those set by Codex. Foods exceeding the maximum levels were neither distributed in the domestic market nor exported to third countries. Their test results concluded that farm and fishery products had not exceeded Codex levels for many years, except in wild harvests of certain game meat. Japan also reported on the measures taken by its government and the Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings (TEPCO) to safely manage contaminated water, and recalled that the IAEA mission in November 2018 found that: the rate of arising contaminated water had significantly reduced; the water level inside the reactor and turbine buildings had been maintained ensuring leakage-prevention; the construction of an impermeable sea wall had improved the protection of the marine environment; and contaminated water from the reactor and turbine buildings had been purified and was safely stored at the nuclear power station. Japan explained that when the radioactive caesium in seawater decreased due to dispersal and dilution, the caesium in marine fish also decreased gradually, and that clay in marine soil absorbed and trapped the caesium in water. Therefore, the caesium in soil had no significant effect to fish, even to demersal fish living at the bottom of the sea. Japan concluded that the results of monitoring showed that fish exceeding Japanese stringent maximum level had been seldom detected, and that those rare detections signified no meaningful effect to human health. Japan urged Members who maintained import restrictions to review them, based on the scientific evidence presented.

3.2. Canada provided information on its enhanced import controls put in place following the Fukushima nuclear power station accident in 2011. This included a subsequent sampling and testing strategy for agricultural products imported from Japan. The results of the sampling and testing found radioactivity levels below Canada's limits. Therefore, their enhanced import control measures had been lifted in June 2011 and no further testing was planned. Evidence available to Canada supported that Japanese products had been safe for consumption for many years.

3.1.2 Canada – International initiatives undertaken by Canada to support the setting of Codex Alimentarius Commission maximum residue limits (MRLs)

3.3. Canada stated its commitment to the work of Codex. Canada underlined that the relevance and acceptance of Codex standards as an international reference for food safety and quality depended on the strength and independence of the scientific advice of its scientific bodies, such as that of the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR). Canada made reference to the joint proposal (G/SPS/W/292/Rev.4) on pesticide maximum residue limits, which identified the absence of established MRLS for traded products as a significant concern, particularly for specialty products and minor use crops. The joint proposal underlined Codex resource limitations and invited Members to contribute resources to enable JMPR to better respond to the increased demand for Codex MRLs. Canada reported on its work with the FAO, WHO, the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) and Members; notably on a JMPR expert training and an extraordinary session of JMPR. The training led to the designation of six new JMPR pesticide residue experts. Canada committed to working with all Members to continue to deliver on Codex's mandate.

3.4. The United States supported Codex efforts to implement its dual mandate to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in food trade. It committed additional funding to train scientific experts and further support the work of the CCPR. The United States highlighted three STDF projects it had led in cooperation with FAO, AU-IBAR, IICA, and the ASEAN Secretariat, which had led to the establishment of new Codex MRLs. The United States also provided information on the Global Minor Use Foundation, which sought to expand access to newer, lower-risk pesticide options for tropical produce, and on an international workshop hosted in May 2019 on missing MRLs.

3.5. Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal and ECOWAS, echoed Canada's support for science-based SPS measures and the importance of contributing to the work of Codex and JMPR.

3.6. Chile noted its work co-chairing two of JPMR's working groups on pesticide residues, one with India and the United States, and the other with India and Kenya, and encouraged Members to contribute in this way.

3.7. Burkina Faso requested that JMPR include sesame in its studies, and as well as Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, pointed to the need for technical assistance in this area.

3.1.3 Argentina - Ministerial declaration of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) on low-level presence of GMOs not authorized in the importing country (LLP)

3.8. Argentina informed Members that at the last meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the Agricultural Council of the South (CAS), Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay had signed a declaration on low level presence (LLP) of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) not authorized by the importing country (G/SPS/GEN/1703). The declaration underlined the importance of innovation to their agricultural production, and of biotechnology as a tool to incorporate innovation in the development of GMOs. Argentina encouraged Members not to restrict trade based on LLP of non-authorized GMOs, in the importing country, and international cooperation in the context of harmonized international standards.

3.9. Brazil, Paraguay, the United States and Uruguay, stressed the crucial role of biotech in facing global food supply challenges. Paraguay added that the use of biotechnology had been scientifically proven to be an efficient tool to produce safe food and had been integrated into its production. With the increasing development and production of biotech crops, asymmetric and asynchronous approvals could restrict trade. They supported the management of LLP incidences through the development and implementation of science-based, predictable, transparent and practical approaches and policies, harmonized with international standards. Brazil emphasised the importance of predictability to innovation systems' stakeholders.

3.10. The United States underlined that the global area of biotech crops had expanded from 150 million hectares in 2016 to 190 million hectares in 2017; and that 24 countries cultivated biotech crops in 2017, most of which were developing countries. The United States added that LLP was a significant trade issue affecting not only exporting countries but importing countries as well.

3.11. Canada supported the CAS Declaration on LLPs and reminded Members of the international declaration on LLPs it reported on at the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting. Canada also invited members to an information session it was hosting later in the week on LLPs and its consequences for importers and exporters and importing and exporting countries.

3.1.4 United States - Executive Order 13874: modernizing the US regulatory framework for agricultural biotechnology products

3.12. The United States brought Members' attention to its Executive Order 13874, issued on 11 June 2019 entitled Modernizing the Regulatory Framework for Agricultural Biotechnology Products. The United States also drew attention to its Sustainable, Ecological, Consistent, Uniform, Responsible, Efficient (SECURE) proposed rule, notified as G/SPS/N/USA/3082. The rule sought to modernize USDA's plant biotechnology regulations, to protect plant health while allowing agricultural innovation to thrive. The framework would provide a clear, predictable, and efficient regulatory pathway for innovators, while facilitating the development of new and novel GE plants that would be unlikely to pose a plant pest risk. The United States voiced its support for promoting constructive dialogues with trading partners on precision biotechnology to support open and fair trade, and to encourage research and innovation. The United States welcomed Members' comments on USDA's SECURE proposed rule by 5 August 2019.

3.2 Information from Codex, IPPC and OIE on relevant activities

3.2.1 Codex

3.13. Codex provided a summary of its activities, as detailed in G/SPS/GEN/1709. Codex reported that the Codex Committee on Food Additives had agreed on a consensus text that would remove the reference to national legislation of the importing country, and would allow for more inclusive provisions to facilitate the uptake of food additives' maximum levels by Codex. Codex highlighted the new work undertaken by the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) to develop new guidelines on definition and criteria for harmonization of biopesticides. Codex explained that it was not developing harmonized lists, but rather developing harmonised protocols, so that countries could reach a common understanding of what biopesticides meant for international regulations and how to include those substances in their national lists. Codex also explained that the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) decisions would impact the work of all Codex committees, while it did not deal directly with food safety issues, it addressed procedures that would impact Codex work overall. Finally, Codex expressed appreciation to Members who supported its work on MRLs.

3.2.2 OIE

3.14. The OIE outlined its report, contained in document G/SPS/GEN/1715. It highlighted the outcomes of its 87th General Session, held in May 2019. The OIE Terrestrial Code's Chapter 1.4 on Animal Health Surveillance had updated guidance on surveillance, relating to all disease-specific chapters; Chapter 8.14 now included guidance for countries to apply, on a voluntary basis, the OIE endorsement of their national control programs contributing to the global rabies eradication program; and new Chapter 7.14 on animal welfare had been adopted. The OIE also highlighted updates to the Aquatic Code and Aquatic Manual, including the new article 1.5.9 that provided a mechanism to list taxonomic groups of species as susceptible to infection. OIE also informed Members of the April 2019 4th Global Conference on Aquatic Animal Health hosted by Chile. Finally, the OIE reminded Members that information about new members, procedures for the self-declaration of disease freedom, technical information on strategic challenges in the control of ASF at the global level, new and amended texts, and survey results on the impact of external factors on veterinary services, could be found on the OIE website.

3.2.3 IPPC

3.15. The IPPC highlighted several points from its report, contained in document G/SPS/GEN/1719. The IPPC Strategic Framework for 2020–2030 had been endorsed at the 14th Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-14), held in April 2019. The new IPPC framework included the protection of "global plant resources from pest while facilitating safe trade", to promote trade and alignment with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). The IPPC also referred to its work on the Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE) tool, and updated Members on the completion of its

work on ePhyto, with support of STDF, as well as the Generic ePhyto National System (GENS), a new website for developing countries. IPPC drew Members' attention to the December 2018 UN General Assembly adoption of the 2020 Year of International Plant Health (IYPH). In preparation, the IPPC and FAO would be organizing events, including a ministerial level meeting, the first Global Plant Health Conference in Helsinki, Finland, and various other global, regional and national celebrations. The IPPC expressed its interest in working with the WTO Secretariat and STDF to organize a side-event to celebrate plant health on the margins of the July 2020 SPS Committee Meeting.

3.16. The European Union expressed its appreciation for the information provided and for the three sisters' work and cooperation with SPS Committee. The European Union stressed the importance of the IYPH 2020 and Global Plant Health Conference. The European Union voiced its support of Codex and highlighted its funding contribution to scientific advice. The European Union drew Members' attention to a paper, proposed by the European Union and co-signed by several Codex members at the Codex Alimentarius Commission CAC42 meeting, stressing the importance of sustainable and predictable funding for Codex scientific advice.

4 SPECIFIC TRADE CONCERNS (G/SPS/GEN/204/REV.19)

4.1 New issues

4.1. Before the adoption of the agenda, Brazil withdrew a specific trade concern regarding Peru's restrictions on fresh pork meat. This item had been included in the proposed agenda for the meeting, and was withdrawn because progress had been made in bilateral meetings scheduled to discuss the existing technical requirements.

4.1.1 EU amendments of MRLs for imazalil – Concerns of Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador

4.2. Colombia raised a concern regarding the draft EU Commission Regulation on maximum residue limits of imazalil, notified in G/SPS/N/EU/319. Colombia referred to documents G/SPS/GEN/1707 and G/SPS/GEN/1707/Add.1 of Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic and Ecuador.

4.3. Colombia explained that the draft Regulation would lower the MRL of imazalil in bananas to a level which would make its use unfeasible, despite being a substance that had been recently evaluated and approved at the European level. Imazalil was a fungicide used by banana-producing countries, for which there was no known phytosanitary alternative. The economic, social and environmental impact would be irreversible for producing countries.

4.4. Colombia called on the European Union to maintain its current MRL of 2 mg/kg for imazalil in bananas, in accordance with Codex standards, until the European Union carried out a scientific risk assessment in accordance with the WTO SPS Agreement. Colombia also requested that the EU Regulation take into account WTO obligations under Article 2 paragraph 2; Article 3 paragraph 1; Article 5, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the SPS Agreement. Finally, Colombia requested that the concerns of a significant number of Members who formally commented on the draft Regulation be considered.

4.5. Costa Rica referred to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recognition that the MRLs for imazalil in bananas should not be changed until there was more scientific evidence. Costa Rica added its concern that the draft Regulation shifted the burden of proving the safety of imazalil to its users. In this case producers from developing and least developed countries in tropical regions, countries whose institutional and budgetary constraints prevented them from commissioning their own scientific studies. Costa Rica urged the European Union to ensure sufficiently long transition periods so that the necessary studies could be conducted, and that exporting countries had the time to make those changes between crop harvests.

4.6. Ecuador highlighted that at the June 2019 meeting of the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed of the European Union (SCOPAFF), EU member States and the EU Commission had agreed to an MRL of 0.02 mg/kg of imazalil for bananas. According to Annex 3 of JMPR Report 234 of 2018, the International Estimated Daily Intake (IEDI) of imazalil varied between 2 and 40 percent of the maximum Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) for various products, including bananas. This meant that consuming agricultural products with the maximum value of imazalil residue would not have a health impact, since it would only amount to 40 percent of the

maximum ADI. The aforementioned JMPR report also recommended increasing the current limit to 3 mg/kg. The report was recognized at the 51st annual meeting of CCPR, held in April 2019, and put forward for adoption at the CAC 42 meeting. Ecuador further added that a number of EU member States had approved the MRL of 2 mg/kg, but that EFSA had considered that the data contained in the JMPR report was not sufficient, creating an uncertainty which led to the decision of lowering the MRL to 0.01 mg/kg. Finally, Ecuador stressed the need of a transition period to adjust to a new fungicide, and of resources to conduct relevant scientific studies.

4.7. The Dominican Republic joined this concern. Imazalil was key to its banana, mango and avocado exports, which accounted for 20 percent of its annual food exports, the main destination of which was the European Union. The Dominican Republic drew Members' attention to the Communication from India in document G/SPS/W/284 of April 2015, which noted that the practice of adopting MRLs for pesticides that were not registered or not used in the territory of the importing Member had negative trade impacts. As a result of that Communication, the SPS Committee had held several technical workshops to discourage such practice. The Dominican Republic regretted that the European Union had not taken into account the recommendations of those workshops.

4.8. The United States noted that unnecessarily restrictive MRLs were already impacting United States production costs and resulting in unnecessary crop loss and food waste. The United States regretted the European Union move towards reducing imazalil MRLs for citrus when Codex had just approved increased MRLs for those commodities, and expressed concern that such actions were causing uncertainty for scientists and innovators in the plant protection sector, who faced rapidly rising costs and extended decision timeframes for maintaining authorisations and bringing new tools and products to the market.

4.9. Peru indicated that it was following these discussions as imazalil was used in its production of asparagus, grapes, and citrus fruits.

4.10. Jamaica delivered its statement on behalf of the ACP group. It shared with Members that Spain had new scientific evidence that would allow to address the data-gap and conclude the safe use of imazalil, and emphasized the need for a 36-month transition period. Jamaica also regretted that the EU vote on the measure had taken place ten days after the deadline for the submission of comments to the EU notification to the SPS Committee, which was insufficient time to properly review and analyse submitted comments.

4.11. Côte d'Ivoire joined Members presenting this STC. It underlined that it had been the largest African banana exporter and that the EU market was its main market. It also referred to the employment generated by banana production, and expressed concern that the EU measure would affect its development. Côte d'Ivoire called on the European Union to defer the implementation of the measure and requested for technical assistance to seek alternative fungicides. Côte d'Ivoire also supported Jamaica's comments on behalf of the ACP.

4.12. Uruguay informed Members that it would closely follow the evolution of the MRLs and appealed to the European Union that until new scientific evidence was provided, to continue maintaining the MRL for citrus fruits established by Codex.

4.13. Several other WTO Members including Brazil, Cameroon, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica on behalf of ACP countries, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Senegal, and Uruguay, supported this STC and expressed their concern with the MRL reduction, noting that the limit was lower to Codex standards. Some Members emphasized the lack of alternatives to imazalil and recalled the SPS principles supporting science-based measures, risk analysis, and the avoidance of unnecessary restrictions to trade. They also emphasized the importance of continuing work with Codex and the JMPR on the topic of MRLs.

4.14. The European Union considered that the new proposed MRLs were necessary to ensure the appropriate level of protection in the European Union. The 2017 assessment by EFSA had identified consumer health concerns and its subsequent assessments did not produce more favourable results for none of the good agricultural practices for which information was available to EFSA, it was demonstrated that and MRL could be established that would be sufficiently protective for consumers. The assessment had included current Codex MLRs. As information on alternative practices was not available, the European Union had proposed lowering the MRL to the limit of analytical determination.

The European Union invited Members who had information that would allow establishing safe residue levels, to submit applications under the relevant legislative framework, and clarified that such applications would not suspend the ongoing process of lowering MLRs.

4.15. The European Union acknowledged that other risk assessment bodies might arrive at different conclusions due to factors such as different databases, methodologies in risk assessments and protection limits chosen by risk managers. The European Union reserved the right to base its measures on evaluations by its own risk assessment body and clarified that the current Codex MRL predated both the identification of consumer health concerns by EFSA and the EU membership of Codex, which explained the absence of an EU reservation at the CCPR meeting. At the 2019 CCPR meeting, the European Union introduced a reservation to the advancement of the new draft Codex MRL for bananas of 3 mg/kg. The European Union added that its draft act lowering the MRL of imazalil in bananas had received a favourable opinion in the relevant Standing Committee. Formal adoption of the measure was expected for October 2019 and would apply from 2020 onwards. Precise dates would be published upon publication of the measure in the Official Journal of the European Union, allowing food business operators to adapt to the new requirements. The European Union underlined its respect to transparency obligations under the SPS and TBT Agreements, and ensured Members that all comments sent to its SPS contact points were being addressed in writing.

4.1.2 EU regulatory process for determining maximum levels of glycidyl fatty acid esters, 3-monochloropropanediol (3-MCPD) and its fatty acid esters, in foods or food ingredients – Concerns of Colombia

4.16. Colombia raised the concern, as detailed in document G/SPS/GEN/1708. Colombia drew Members attention to the draft regulation's proposed maximum level for palm oil of 2,500 µg/kg in food or food ingredients, which differed from the lower limit of 1,250 µg/kg proposed for other oils produced in Europe, including sunflower, colza, coconut and other oils. Although the European Union had not yet notified the measure for comments, it was being raised at an early stage given its possible implications on the international palm oil market. Colombia noted that if the regulatory process was based on health reasons, it could look to the ongoing work on a risk management measure under the Codex Alimentarius, through the development of a Code of Good Practice to reduce contaminants in refined oils and refined oil products, including palm oil. Colombia encouraged supporting the work of Codex and promoting the adoption of good practices to jointly contribute to the prevention of the risk associated with this food contaminant.

4.17. Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Malaysia expressed their interest in the matter and would continue monitoring its development. Guatemala also looked forward to receiving information from the European Union on the issue; and Ecuador highlighted the large number of palm oil producers who were small producers, and the socioeconomic impact the proposed measure would have on them.

4.18. The European Union clarified its proposed regulatory process maximum levels were based on the oils themselves, not on where they were produced, and that this was a trade facilitating measure. The European Union shared with Members EFSA's scientific opinion of May 2016 on the risks to public health of the presence of monochloropropanediol and its fatty acid esters, which concluded that their presence in vegetable oil was of concern. This was particularly the case for vegetable oil used in the production of infant formula. Following that divergent opinion of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (JECFA), EFSA decided to review its opinion and updated it in 2018 based on the tolerable daily intake (TDI). Discussions regarding appropriate regulatory measures were ongoing in the European Union. Draft measures would be notified under the SPS Agreement during the month of August or September, and WTO Members' comments would be taken into account in finalizing a proposal. Finally, the European Union asked other palm-oil producing Members to confirm whether Colombia's suggestion for 1,250 µg/kg was achievable.

4.1.3 New EU MRLs for lambda-cyhalothrin – Concerns of China

4.19. China expressed its concern regarding the European Union's amendment of MRLs of lambda-cyhalothrin in tea, from 1 mg/kg to 0.01 mg/kg, without a basis on risk assessment results. China requested that the European Union evaluate the health risk to consumers of the original MRL of 1 mg/kg, and that, in the absence of risk, to reinstate the original MRL. If the European Union

implemented new MRLs, China requests it take into consideration the tea planting and tea production period, and to provide a transition period of at least one year for Chinese tea producers.

4.20. The European Union provided Members with background to the 2018 and 2019 EU regulations on this topic, including the EFSA-reasoned opinion on which they were based. At that time, there had not been sufficient information to establish safe MRLs, so the limit of determination had been applied. The European Union informed China that the regulation had been notified to the SPS Committee, comments had been received, and a response had been sent to China. The European Union also stated that import tolerances could be requested.

4.1.4 China's restrictions on imports of US beef – Concerns of the United States

4.21. The United States raised its continued concern with China's restrictions on US beef exports, despite China's recognition that the United States had negligible risk for BSE. The United States noted that current trade conditions with China fell short of full alignment with OIE recommendations for negligible risk countries. The United States continued to seek access for all products and the elimination of age and product scope restrictions, and requested China to align its import requirements regarding veterinary drugs, including beta agonists and hormones, with Codex standards.

4.22. China noted that after it had conducted a risk assessment and in June 2017 it had resumed imports of deboned and boned beef under 30 months of age from the United States. Since China had never been affected by BSE, it had not imported beef over 30 months of age from Members that had been affected by BSE, because cattle over 30 months of age had a higher risk of being infected with BSE, which increased the risk of BSE transmission. The measure was based on China's appropriate level of animal health protection and complied with the SPS Agreement. China remained interested in continuing consultations with the United States on the issue.

4.1.5 Turkey's FMD-related import restrictions on live cattle – Concerns of Argentina

4.23. Argentina expressed its concern regarding Turkey's import restrictions of beef for fattening and slaughter from Argentina. Turkey's import ban was more stringent than the relevant OIE standard and did not have a scientific basis. Argentina regretted that the restrictions continued despite negotiations between their health services in 2011 and inspection visits in 2018, technical exchanges, conferences and visits. Argentina had a free zone without vaccination and a free zone with vaccination, as recognized by the OIE. Argentina pointed out that Turkey had an area recognized by the OIE in 2009 as FMD-free and an area without an official health status for FMD, and that it allowed entry of beef for fattening and slaughter from other countries, with similar sanitary conditions to Argentina. Therefore it requested that Turkey eliminate the restrictions on bovine meat from FMD-free with vaccination for live cattle areas, and to establish equitable and non-discriminatory conditions between Members with identical or similar conditions.

4.24. Turkey stated that, since 2010, it had been importing a considerable amount of live cattle from various countries which had completed the relevant approval procedures. Turkey had unfortunately faced incompliances that resulted in disease occurrences. Based on this and its legislative alignment as an EU candidate country, Turkey had adopted the relevant EU regulation, as notified in 2015 under G/SPS/N/TUR/58. The regulation entered into force with a five-year transition period for exporting countries to avoid trade disruptions. Turkey had an FMD-free zone with vaccination status since 2010, and had spent significant resources combatting FMD through vaccination, biosecurity measures, livestock movement restrictions and sampling, vaccine research and studies. Turkey clarified it was still experiencing FMD occurrences from imports, and noted that Argentinian imports had failed to meet its FMD standards. Turkey looked forward to bilateral discussions to resolve the issue.

4.1.6 Viet Nam's general restrictions on imports (melons, live cattle, beef, and meat and bone meal) – Concerns of Brazil

4.25. Brazil remarked that Viet Nam had been imposing restrictions against several Brazilian products, through undue delays in the process of negotiating International Sanitary Certificates (ISC) and requiring more information than what was scientifically necessary to perform risk analysis. Brazil reported that the negotiations between Brazil and Viet Nam to open the market for live cattle

had started in November 2015, when Brazil sent Viet Nam a proposal of an International Sanitary Certificate for the exports of live cattle. Brazil also sent Viet Nam the information they required in July 2016, and had provided all the necessary documents from 2016 to 2019. In September 2018, Vietnamese authorities had indicated that they were preparing for an on-site inspection in order to conclude the negotiations for opening the market to Brazilian live cattle. However, Brazil regretted that Viet Nam had recently sent another request for further information. Brazil noted that this procedure was similar to the one faced by its requests to export meat and bone meal and tropical fruits, and was not in compliance with Article 8 and Annex C of SPS Agreement.

4.26. Viet Nam stated its commitment to transparency and welcomed comments and feedback from all WTO Members. Regarding plant origin products and animal products from Brazil, Viet Nam recalled its 2018 Law on Crop Production and Law on Livestock Production. For plant origin products, Viet Nam had recently submitted notification G/SPS/N/VNM/105, replacing an older regulation. For import of products of animal origin, in 2018 Viet Nam's National Assembly had passed a new livestock law, amending the list of prohibited substances. Further, Viet Nam explained that a new notification could be submitted in July or August 2019. Viet Nam also referred to the limited capacity of its Department of Animal Health, which was working to provide the information requested. Viet Nam assured Brazil that it was not discriminating and looked forward to bilateral discussions.

4.1.7 Ukraine's restrictions on swine products – Concerns of Brazil

4.27. Brazil presented this STC due to Ukraine's embargo against Brazilian swine products. Ukraine was the only country to impose restrictions on Brazilian pork, following an occurrence of Classical Swine Fever (CSF) in 2018 in the state of Ceara, after ten years without CSF in Brazil. Since the beginning of the embargo, Brazilian authorities had been providing the technical information requested and held a bilateral meeting in March 2019. CSF-free zones covered 95 percent of all Brazilian swine production and 100 percent of its swine exports. Its National Program on Swine Health surveyed the whole national territory and imposed the necessary restrictions to the movement of animals and kept track of the animals and animal products considered susceptible. Brazil reaffirmed that the sanitary measures regarding CSF were in line with national regulations as well as with the OIE's Terrestrial Animal Health Code. Brazil noted that the restrictive measures were in breach of Articles 2.2, 3.1, 5.6 and 6 of the SPS Agreement.

4.28. Ukraine thanked Brazil for their bilateral cooperation on the issue. Ukraine noted that CSF was a mandatory notifiable disease, according to the principles and requirements of the OIE. Ukraine regretted that despite several requests, Brazil had not submitted the information necessary to carry out a risk assessment. Frozen pork meat had been imported in 2018. However, after Brazil's notification of CSF in October 2018, imports of pigs, pork meat and pork meat products had been restricted. In 2018, Brazil notified the OIE of 30 cases of CSF in the State of Ceara, in backyard farms. Unfortunately, almost 2 months had passed between the initial occurrence of the disease and the disease confirmation. During that period, 112 pigs out of 132 pigs had died, with an apparent mortality rate of 84.85%. The most recent occurrences of the disease had been registered in July 2019, as notified to the OIE. Therefore, Ukraine had requested additional information, including on Brazil's review of its strategy for surveillance and control of CSF. Ukraine voiced its concern with Brazil's lack of transparency and undue delays in notifying to the OIE, and looked forward to a more effective dialogue with Brazil.

4.1.8 Japan's restrictions on avocado – Concerns of Brazil

4.29. Brazil raised this STC due to Japan's undue delay in concluding its pest risk analysis to open its market to Brazilian avocado, in violation of Articles 2.2, 3, 5.6 and Annex C of the SPS Agreement. Since Brazil had initiated talks in 2014, Japan had repeatedly requested additional information from Brazil, which had been provided. In 2019, Brazil had sent the required information and technical information necessary to conclude the risk analysis.

4.30. Japan responded that it needed to prevent the introduction of Mediterranean fruit fly, which it was free of. It had been lifting bans on avocado imports from countries after consultations, and was still in consultations with others. It had responded to Brazil's request to lift the ban on avocados in 2015, and had been communicating through various channels. Brazil was currently requesting to remove phytosanitary measures against Mediterranean fruit fly, and to allow exports of avocados from an area free of another fruit fly. In response to this request, in June 2019 Japan had asked

Brazil to provide relevant information about that pest-free area, based on the SPS Agreement and the IPPC's guidelines. Japan looked forward to constructive discussions.

4.2 Issues previously raised

4.2.1 EU MRLs for buprofezin, chlorothalonil, diflubenzuron, ethoxysulfuron, glufosinate, ioxynil, iprodione, molinate, picoxystrobin and tepraloxydim – Concerns of Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Panama and Paraguay (No. 448)

4.31. Colombia made reference to the most recent meetings of the TBT Committee and of the Council for Trade in Goods, where 90 Members had expressed their concerns over EU measures. Colombia highlighted the importance of basing measures on international standards, risk assessments, and scientific evidence, and not arbitrarily applying unnecessary distinctions on MRLs; and that these measures should not unnecessarily restrict trade and should provide a reasonable period of time before their entry into force.

4.32. Costa Rica emphasised the urgency of the concern for the agricultural products affected, as the concerned pesticides were essential in tropical climates. Costa Rica noted the EU regulations' deviation from Codex standards, and the lack of conclusive evidence on toxicology and doses for chlorothalonil. Costa Rica also highlighted the banana sector creation of 40,000 direct jobs and 100,000 indirect jobs; and that 50 per cent of its fruit exports went to the EU market, which would therefore also be affected. Costa Rica referred to communication G/C/W/767, which presented the same concern to the Council for Trade in Goods. Costa Rica requested the European Union to apply Codex-set MRLs, to carry out risk assessments for each product and substance at issue, and to base its measures on conclusive scientific evidence. It also requested a transition period of at least 24 months for new measures, to provide sufficient time between harvests. Costa Rica urged the European Union to establish an effective, broad-based dialogue with affected Members to limit the impact of new regulations.

4.33. Panama joined the concern regarding the substances used in Panama: buprofezin, chlorothalonil, diflubenzuron, ethoxysulfuron and picoxystrobin. Panama had signed joint declarations on MRLs in 2017 in Buenos Aires with Ministers of a dozen Members, and in June 2019 in Antigua, Guatemala with Central American neighbours, and was a co-sponsor of document G/C/W/767.

4.34. Paraguay joined the concern, underscoring that its agricultural sector represented 80 percent of its exports; and the employment numbers it generated. It added that these measures could lead to unpredictability for food exporters. The relevance of the matter was noted in that 14 delegations had taken the floor to express their concern at the March SPS Committee meetings, and that the issue had also been raised in the TBT Committee meeting and at the Council for Trade in Goods.

4.35. India joined the concern, especially regarding the use of bufoprezin for rice and grapes. India requested the European Union to share the rationale for deviating from international standards set by the CAC and from MRLs set by other countries. India noted that the European Union had based its decisions on the perceived uncertainty around genotoxic potential, and that upon heating treatment, buprofezin tended to produce aniline; whereas the chemical was also naturally present in many raw fruits and vegetables.

4.36. Brazil, Canada, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Peru, the United States, and Uruguay supported this concern. Several Members regretted that EU measures were based on a hazard-based approach instead of a risk-based approach grounded in science, in line with Codex standards. Many Members also expressed their concern that the transition period granted for the measure's entry into force was too short for producers to find and implement alternatives, thus restricting trade and creating serious socioeconomic impacts.

4.37. The United States noted that EU MRLs were impacting US production costs and resulting in unnecessary crop loss and food waste. The United States drew attention to the sweet potato and cranberry industries, which had suffered as a result of the EU removal of the MRL for thiabendazole and the lowering of its MRL for chlorothalonil, respectively. The United States awaited the European Union's review of import tolerance applications for substances like buprofezin. It remained concerned that the European Union was requiring additional genotoxicity studies that involved significant costs

and live animal testing for substances like imazalil, diflubenzuron, and picoxystrobin, when other authorities, including Codex, had found existing data to be sufficient and acceptable for completing risk assessments and establishing MRLs. The European Union's current glufosinate MRLs had been confirmed on the basis of a risk assessment in 2016 but would likely be lowered to the default level of 0.01 mg/kg based on the hazard-based criteria and the expiration of the European Union glufosinate authorization in 2018. The United States concluded that the European Union's actions were causing uncertainty for scientists and innovators in the plant protection sector.

4.38. Honduras recalled that experts from JMPR and the CCPR had evaluated buprofezin in 2013 and had recommended an MRL of 0.3 mg/kg in bananas. Honduras therefore urged the European Union to either follow this recommendation or maintain their current MLR of 0.5 mg/kg. It also requested an extension of at least 36 months before the entry into force of the new MRL, availing itself of Article 10 of the SPS Agreement.

4.39. Canada urged the European Union to provide Members with clarity on whether any changes were anticipated with regard to the EU's MRLs for glufosinate; the scientific basis for any such changes; and the transition periods that would be available for EU and non-EU farmers in the case of any new MRLs for glufosinate. If changes to the EU's glufosinate MRLs were anticipated, Canada requested that the European Union notify the SPS Committee well in advance, including a clear indication of the scientific basis and transition periods, to provide Members with the opportunity to comment and have those comments taken into account.

4.40. Guatemala regretted that its communications with the European Union had not yielded satisfactory results. It called on the European Union to respond to the concerns of tropical developing countries and requested a longer transition period of 24 months.

4.41. The Dominican Republic shared its concern that the only alternatives for buprofezin**,** diflubenzuron and chlorothalonil, used for mango production, was imazalil, which was also being restricted by the European Union.

4.42. Ecuador added its concern over the reduction of the MRLs of buprofezin and chlorothalonil, essential for its control of quarantine pests in bananas.

4.43. Chile requested the European Union to share the scientific basis for its measure, and to review whether it had faced problems in the past with those substances.

4.44. Regarding buprofezin, diflubenzuron, ethoxysulfuron, ioxynil, molinate, picoxystrobin and tepraloxydim, the European Union referred to the statements made at the November 2018 and March 2019 Committee meetings, where the rationale for the reductions of those MRLs had been explained. Regulation (EU) 2019/91 had been adopted in January 2019, and MRL changes for the mentioned substances were therein explained. On the restriction of approval of bufoprezin and diflubenzuron, the expiry of ethoxysulfuron, ioxynil, molinate, and tepraloxydim; and the non-renewal of the approval of picoxystrobin, MRLs had been set at the relevant limit of determination in accordance with Article 18 of Regulation (EC) 396/2005, which would apply as of August 2019. The European Union reminded Members that import tolerance requests could be submitted in accordance with Article 6 of Regulation (EC) 396/2005.

4.45. Regarding iprodione, the European Union reiterated the explanation given at the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting, notably that its approval had not been renewed because EFSA's evaluation concluded that acute intake concerns could not be excluded, and that genotoxicity concerns could not be excluded regarding its major residue metabolite. In a follow up assessment, EFSA had identified the commodities of concern for these risks. The substance also fell under the cut-of criteria established by Regulation (EC) 1107/2009, though even without the additional criteria, renewal of the substance would not have been approved due to the concerns raised. As per Regulation (EC) 2017/2091 of 14 November 2017, the non-renewal of the substance had been established, transitional measures for the withdrawal of authorisations had been granted until March 2018 and a grace period for the removal from the market had been granted until 5 June 2018. The reduction in MRLS had been adopted by a Regulation of January 2019, established at the limit of determination, and would apply from 31 July 2019. Requests for import tolerances could be submitted and would follow a risk assessment process as established in Regulation (EC) 396/2005.

4.46. Regarding glufosinate, its approval had expired on 31 July 2018, and the applicant had withdrawn the application for renewal. EU member states could grant grace periods for the use of glufosinate in plant production products until 31 January 2020. Its MRL had last been modified in 2016. In response to the questions from Canada, the European Union responded that there was currently no proposal to modify the MRL for glufosinate, but that any possible modifications would be notified in due course, and applications for import tolerances would always be possible.

4.2.2 EU legislation on endocrine disruptors – Concerns of Paraguay and the United States (No. 382)

4.47. The United States reiterated its ongoing concern with the European Union's approach to regulating pesticides and MRLs. The United States regretted that despite repeated concerns expressed by more than 40 Members of the SPS Committee, questions remained about the consistency of the EU regulatory approach with the obligation to base measures on an assessment of risk. The European Union had previously informed the SPS Committee that the procedures of Regulation (EC) 396/2005 would apply to import tolerance requests, followed by case-by-case decision-making, taking into account "other relevant factors" without clarifying how those "other factors" would rationally relate to achieving an appropriate level of protection. The United States added that a 2017 study commissioned by the European Crop Protection Association had estimated that the European Union's hazard-based pesticide policies could adversely affect trade flows valued at approximately $86 billion, with a disproportionate impact to growers in Central and South America and Sub-Saharan Africa. The European Union's suggestion that those producers would find alternative crop protection methods was insufficient as, in many cases, viable alternatives did not currently exist or carried higher risks than those being banned by the European Union. The United States asked the European Union to reconsider its approach to regulating pesticides and to ensure that its actions with regard to MRLs and import tolerances were consistent with the European Union's WTO obligations.

4.48. Paraguay reiterated its concern that the EU hazard-based measures affected Paraguay's agricultural exports. It also highlighted that 22 delegations had intervened on this concern in the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting, 16 delegations in the relevant TBT STC at the June 2019 TBT Committee meeting, and 30 delegations representing 90 Members at the July 2019 meeting of the Council for Trade in Goods.

4.49. Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Chinese Taipei, Thailand and Uruguay supported the concern and called upon the European Union to take a risk-based approach, carry out risk assessments for the identification and regulation of endocrine disruptors, and apply criteria supported by sufficient scientific evidence in line with the commitments of the SPS Agreement. There were also requests for updates of the discussions, including those held in JPMR and the prospects for adoption.

4.50. Argentina also requested the European Union to allow waivers for at least those substances that represented an insignificant risk to human health, due to low exposure.

4.51. Brazil stated that the promotion of technology, investment, innovation and research on plant protection products were important drivers for the development of a resilient, stable and sustainable agriculture in tropical regions; and added that scientific evaluations should be able to separate chemicals with the potential to cause harm due to their endocrine mode of action from those without that potential. Finally, Brazil expressed its appreciation for the information on endocrine disruptors provided by the European Union, contained in documents G/SPS/GEN/1594 and G/TBT/GEN/241.

4.52. Canada expressed its concern on the growing number of plant protection products not being renewed by the European Union, without a clear scientifically-sound risk-based justification. Canada noted the different approaches between Regulation (EC) 396/2005 provisions which allowed for the establishment of an import tolerance based on a risk assessment, in the event of an active ingredient's non-renewal; and Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 specific hazard-based cut-off criteria to identify substances with endocrine disrupting or carcinogenic, mutagenic, or reproductive toxicant properties. Canada also referred to the European Union's statements at the Council for Trade in Goods, that import tolerances for active substances falling under the cut-off criteria would be established based on a risk assessment as per Regulation (EC) 396/2005, on a "case-by-case basis"

and would take into account "other considerations". Canada requested the European Union to provide detailed information on the process it would follow when setting an import tolerance for an active substance falling under the cut-off criteria, as well as clarity on how Regulation (EC) 396/2005 and Regulation (EC) 1107/2009 would be implemented in a coherent and transparent way. Canada finally requested that import tolerances for active substances which were not re-authorized in the European Union be maintained at existing levels to allow for trade to continue.

4.53. Ecuador stressed the difficulties posed for its producers by the lack of clarity around the process of requesting import tolerances, as well as the cost for developing countries to provide the data required for import tolerance requests.

4.54. India noted that the European Union measures did not refer to the processes for establishing import tolerances for substances identified as endocrine disruptors.

4.55. The Russian Federation explained that there was still a lack of conclusive scientific evidence to restrict the use of chemicals that disrupt the endocrine system, and expressed concern about how the European Union would move forward with its regulations on endocrine disruptors.

4.56. The European Union referred Members to its statement at the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting and recalled that Regulation (EC) 396/2005 would apply to requests for import tolerances. Regarding the "other legitimate factors" to be taken into consideration, the European Union explained that this provision was part of the same Regulation. Such import tolerance requests would be followed by risk assessments carried out by EU member States and an evaluation by EFSA. On transitional arrangements, the European Union explained that it applied as a general rule a deferral period of six months and a transitional period for products on the market, if there were not health concerns, until the end of their shelf-life. The use of substances falling under the cut off criteria was not allowed in the European Union, but import tolerance requests would be nevertheless processed under Regulation (EC) 396/2005, and a risk assessment would be carried out. The European Union further explained that the possibility of introducing a derogation on negligible exposure had not been supported by EU member States.

4.2.3 France's dimethoate-related restrictions on imports - Concerns of the United States (No. 422)

4.57. The United States reiterated its concern that France banned the import of cherries based on the authorization status of dimethoate in the country of origin, regardless of whether or not the cherries had been treated with dimethoate or contained dimethoate residues. The measure unjustly restricted access to the French market and harmed US cherry producers without adequately clarifying its scientific basis.

4.58. Canada reiterated its concern regarding the French emergency measures, in particular the lack of evidence to demonstrate that the EU's existing MRL for dimethoate was insufficient to protect consumers and whether another MRL would be more appropriate; and that a science-based ban of a substance should require the lack of residues of said substance in imported products, not ban imports from countries that permit the use of that substance, regardless of whether there is any residue on a particular shipment. Given that this was the fourth emergency measure notified by France since 2016 regarding the use of dimethoate in the production of cherries, Canada requested France that, if the current EU MRL was considered insufficient, to conduct a full scientific risk assessment to determine a more appropriate MRL.

4.59. The European Union explained that this was an emergency measure adopted by France on 18 April 2019. It entered into force on 20 April 2019, and would expire after twelve months. It was notified to the SPS Committee as an emergency measure on 8 May 2019. The measure suspended the importation and placing in the market of fresh cherries produced in EU member States or in non-EU countries where the use of plant protection products containing dimethoate was authorised for the treatment of cherry trees. France justified the measure due to public health risks associated with the consumption of cherries treated with dimethoate because of toxicological risks of certain metabolites. In October 2018, EFSA's review of dimethoate identified several areas of concern, including risks to humans from exposure to dimethoate because of its genotoxic and mutagenic potential. On this basis, the European Union submitted notification G/TBT/N/EU/467 in March 2019 regarding a draft measure on the non-renewal of dimethoate. The measure was adopted and

published on 26 June 2019 as Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1090, which provided for a short grace period for plant protection products intended to be used on cherries, because of the risks identified for these products. In view of health concerns, a proposal to reduce MRLs for cherries had been notified under the SPS Agreement in July 2019. The French measure would be reviewed following the European Union-wide developments.

4.2.4 New EU definition of the fungicide folpet – Concerns of China (No. 447)

4.60. China reiterated its concern about the new EU residue definition for the fungicide folpet. China regretted that the European Union had not revised the definition of the residue used for monitoring sterilization, and still considered it the sum of folpet and phthalimide. China requested the European Union to align with the Codex residue definition of folpet.

4.61. The European Union confirmed that the residue definition of the fungicide folpet was under consideration as part of its on-going renewal procedure. Part of the process included a peer review carried out by EFSA, which was ongoing. The European Union would provide updates on any developments.

4.2.5 EU transitional periods for MRLs and international consultations – Concerns of Colombia (No. 454)

4.62. Colombia noted that, considering harvest times and the times when agrochemicals were applied, the six-month period prior to the application of a measure did not provide sufficient time to make the necessary production adjustments to ensure the compliance of agricultural products with new MRLs. MRL transition periods should follow a different analysis to the general rule of six months. Colombia also shared that other Members had expressed similar concerns on this issue.

4.63. Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Thailand and the United States also expressed concerns over the transition and implementation periods for MRLs, and the time required to replace the affected substances.

4.64. Brazil regretted that new regulations would apply taking into consideration the date of production for European Union products, but the date of importation for non-EU products, which could introduce an unjustifiable discrimination between the SPS measures that were applied.

4.65. Ecuador underlined that the registration of new replacement substances required a 24-month evaluation process, followed by another 12 months for the issuance of the registration. Insufficient time and lack of access to alternative molecules could lead to blocking the entry of their agricultural products into their most important market.

4.66. The United States expressed its concern that the European Union's transition measures also appeared to establish arbitrary differences in the treatment of domestic and imported products. In the European Union's response to US comments on G/SPS/N/EU/248, one of the first notified European Union MRL measures to introduce the transition measures in question, the European Union explicitly acknowledged that non-EU countries would have a shorter time to comply with new MRLs compared to EU member States. The United States therefore asked the European Union to clarify how it was taking into account the technical and economic feasibility of producers to comply with the timeframes provided in its MRL measures, as well as its obligation to not arbitrarily or unjustifiably discriminate between its own territory and that of other Members.

4.67. Costa Rica requested the extension of the deadline for compliance with new tolerances and asked the European Union to establish a dialogue with the exporting countries of agricultural products that were affected by their modifications of the MRLs, and encouraged that studies, analysis and decisions be adopted within the framework of Codex and the SPS Agreement.

4.68. Chile requested the European Union to extend the transition period to at least 24 months; while the Dominican Republic requested at least one year. Guatemala also underlined a study undertaken by producers to determine the impact of EU measures. Canada referred to its previous comments on transition periods.

4.69. The European Union referred to its statement at the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting. It recalled that generally there was a deferred application of six months and there could be transitional measures when there were no immediate safety concerns, which would allow products produced in the European Union or imported to remain on the market until the end of their shelf life. The European Union explained that it applied the same cut-off date for production and importation for reasons of enforcement and feasibility of controls. The European Union also suggested that the notifications of non-renewal or revocation of authorisations of substances under the TBT Agreement were de facto an early warning, as normally mentioned in these notifications. Following these notifications, the period of withdrawal of authorizations was normally six months, and an additional grace period for placing new plant protection products without market disruption could be up to 18 months. Therefore, there could be two years between TBT notifications and the application of measures modifying MRLs. The European Union took note of Members' comments, and added that the EU system was transparent and predictable.

4.70. Costa Rica made reference to the European Union's response which noted its TBT notifications as an "early warning", providing Members with almost two years to adjust to lower MRLs. Costa Rica requested clarification on whether the European Union's TBT notifications should be evaluated under the disciplines of the SPS Agreement, too, including the science-based requirement.

4.71. The European Union responded that the notification under the TBT Agreement of the non-renewal of MRLs could be discussed, as it could be argued that there could be some SPS elements in those decisions. However, for measures to be notified, they had to have a significant impact on trade, and the non-renewal of substances' authorisations would not have a significant impact on trade, other than in the European Union.

4.72. The United States sought clarification from the European Union's comment that the reason to not notify the non-renewal of substances for domestic use was that they did not significantly impact trade, but at the same time it asserted that their TBT notifications were an early warning to trade partners.

4.73. The European Union expressed its commitment to transparency and notifying its measures. It noted that non-renewals of substances had no impact on trade until the MRLs were changed, and notifications had been regularly submitted that way.

4.2.6 South Africa's import restrictions on poultry due to highly pathogenic avian influenza - Concerns of the European Union (No. 431)

4.74. The European Union reported that South Africa did not apply regionalization and maintained country wide-bans on poultry products from six EU member States on grounds of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), even though those EU member States were free from HPAI. The European Union informed Members it was in discussions with South Africa about its control measures and regionalization system, including a study visit and a joint seminar in January 2019 and a South African inspection of three EU member States. The European Union asserted that its regionalisation measures were fully compliant with OIE recommendations. The European Union reiterated its call to South Africa to allow trade of all safe poultry products from disease-free EU member States and disease-free zones.

4.75. South Africa referred Members to its comments at the March 2019 SPS Committee meeting and noted that its delay had been due to challenges, including insufficient information received. South Africa highlighted a bilateral dialogue that had taken place in Brussels earlier that week and was positive about future market access for the remaining EU member States.

4.2.7 China's import restrictions due to highly pathogenic avian influenza – Concerns of the United States (No. 406)

4.76. The United States reiterated this concern and the request that China follow the OIE's guidelines on regionalization. The United States regretted that China maintained restrictions despite the entire United States being recognized as free of HPAI per OIE guidelines, and its strong surveillance programs for avian influenza (AI) in commercial poultry operations for live bird markets, backyard flocks and migratory wild bird populations. In July 2017, China had conducted an audit of the system maintained in the United States for AI control, but had not made official requests for

additional information. The United States asked that China remove all HPAI-restrictions on imports from the United States.

4.77. The European Union took the floor to added that country-wide bans after HPAI outbreaks disregard the SPS Agreement and the OIE Terrestrial Code, and were not scientifically justified.

4.78. China responded that its control over animal epidemics was based on relevant SPS principles and was in accordance with OIE standards, especially with regards to the control of AI in the regions where such technical standards were applicable. HPAI was mainly carried by wild birds, which made its prevention and control more difficult. China was communicating with those exporters who complied with the relevant OIE standards (i.e. free of HPAI for 12 consecutive months and other technical requirements). China explained that a risk remained in the United States control of live poultry transportation in AI infected areas, as it did not compulsorily implement uniform biosecurity measures in poultry farms; whereas a strict enforcement of biosecurity measures was the most effective way of preventing the introduction of HPAI into poultry farms. China would continue its technical exchanges with the United States, including discussions on the understanding of relevant OIE standards for the regionalization of AI.

4.2.8 The Russian Federation's import restrictions on processed fishery products from Estonia – Concerns of the European Union (No. 390)

4.79. The European Union acknowledged the developments after a recent audit carried out by the Russian Federation, the announcement of their intention to lift the ban from a second establishment, and possibly a third one on a conditional basis. It expressed its hope that all Estonian fishery establishments, compliant with the requirements of the Russian Federation, would regain access to the Russian market in the near future.

4.80. The Russian Federation updated Members on the progress made on this issue. The Russian Federation's Veterinary Service had conducted the inspection of four Estonian fish product-manufacturing plants, interested in supplying their products to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The results of the inspections had not been satisfactory for all the inspected plants. The efficient control of the production process and compliance with the EAEU regulation had been confirmed only by one of the plants and temporary restrictions on its product supplies had been lifted from 27 May 2019. The Russian Federation was looking forward to the comments and corrective actions from Estonia.

4.2.9 EU Commission Decision 2002/994/EC on animal products – Concerns of China (No. 442)

4.81. China had requested in September 2016 that the European Union lift its requirements for test results and certificates for every batch of animal products exported from China, following the improvements of its food safety supervision system. China recalled that the European Union had agreed to expedite lifting the drug residue certificate for food of animal origin in November 2018, which China looked forward to.

4.82. The European Union responded that it was assessing the responses provided by China to the recommendations of the audit on residues of veterinary drugs carried out by the European Union in 2018, as well as the assurances made concerning the 2019 residue plan, received on 24 June 2019. The European Union acknowledged the progress made and the ongoing bilateral dialogue.

4.2.10 Guatemala's restrictions on egg products - Concerns of Mexico (No. 413)

4.83. Mexico requested Guatemala an opportunity to demonstrate that thermally-processed egg-based products lacked risk, and to allow the import of egg-based products that had been subject to a thermal treatment that guaranteed the destruction of the AI virus, regardless of the country's AI status, as per Article 10.4.15 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code. Regarding Newcastle disease, Mexico had been informing detected outbreaks, and requested Guatemala to allow the importation of heat-treated products which guaranteed the destruction of the virus, as per the Terrestrial Animal Health Code Articles 10.9.11.2 and 10.9.20. Guatemala had explained that its restrictions were in compliance with its Ministerial Agreement 228/2013, however Mexico noted that

the Agreement also stated that it would comply with OIE guidelines. Mexico regretted the lack of response to the communications it had sent.

4.84. Guatemala informed Members that it would provide a written response to Mexico, including its requirements for imports to its market, which were part of the ongoing review process of their poultry regulations, which would take as reference the OIE guidelines for countries with outbreaks of AI and Newcastle virus. Guatemala would continue the ongoing bilateral discussions.

4.2.11 General import restrictions due to BSE – Concerns of the European Union (No. 193)

4.85. The European Union reiterated its concerns about the unjustified and long delays in approving imports of beef from the European Union due to concerns of several WTO Members related to BSE. The European Union regretted that Members were ignoring existing science, and that their delays breached Article 8 and Annex C of the SPS Agreement. The European Union welcomed the progress made by Japan in approving several member States and by Korea towards opening up its market for beef from some EU member States.

4.2.12 Indonesia's approval procedures for animal and plant products – Concerns of the European Union and the United States (No. 441)

4.86. The European Union thanked Indonesia for the meetings held and for the information provided on their procedures related to the lifting of import bans after outbreaks of HPAI in EU member States. The European Union added that it also looked forward to receiving details related to Indonesia's market access approval procedures for all kinds of products, including indicative and average timeframes for completing such procedures; as well as information on when EU member States applications would be finalised. The European Union recalled that some of its export applications on beef, dairy, poultry and pork products had been submitted six years ago. The European Union remained open to continue its dialogue with Indonesia.

4.87. The United States reminded Members that facility inspection requirements should be applied in a manner consistent with the SPS Agreement; and that approval procedures should be undertaken without undue costs or delays, and in a manner that did not discriminate against imported products. Further, the competent body for approvals should examine the completeness of the documentation submitted with an application and inform the applicant in a precise and complete manner of all deficiencies, and it should also transmit as soon as possible the results of the procedure in a precise and complete manner to the applicant, so that corrective action could be taken if necessary.

4.88. Brazil recalled the STC it had raised regarding its requests to export beef to Indonesia, due to similar undue and unjustified delays in the processes of risk analysis, approval and inspection of exporting establishments of bovine meat. Brazil also noted that in the dispute regarding Indonesia's measures concerning the importation of chicken meat and chicken products, the Panel had found an undue delay in the approval of veterinary health certificates for poultry meat.

4.89. Indonesia took note that the United States had joined the STC and that it now covered both animal and plant products. Indonesia explained that it had been working to finalize the approval for the import of animal products submitted by EU members States and that it had been providing responses to the European Union, including to questions regarding market access applications. Some applications had pending responses from Indonesia, and some from the European Union. Indonesia regretted the statement made that EU member States had not received feedback from Indonesia on their export applications for animal products since 2013. Trade data indicated that Indonesia had received imports of animal products from many trading partners, including India and the United States, as well as bovine meat from Spain and France; which meant that Indonesia had responded to import to applications and issued import permits to applicants that had fulfilled the established requirements. Indonesia looked forward to resolving its dispute settlement proceeding with the United States (DS478), which dealt with issues covered in this STC. Finally, Indonesia shared with the Committee that it was in the process of harmonizing its regulations to provide a detailed timeline of its audit process.

4.2.13 Indonesia's food safety measures affecting horticultural products and animal products – Concerns of the Philippines (No. 414)

4.90. The Philippines expressed its appreciation for the communication it had received from Indonesia's Ministry of Agriculture regarding the revised Decree on the Registration of Philippine Laboratories, with a revised list of active substances for MRL testing for horticultural products. The Philippines appreciated the recent development on this long-running trade concern. However, the Philippines regretted Indonesia's unclear requirement regarding prior notice and a certificate of laboratory analysis as accompanying documents on a per-consignment basis. The "per consignment MRL and heavy metals certification" would be burdensome and costly; lacked a scientific justification and was not based on international protocols and benchmarks. In addition, Indonesian horticultural products were not subject to the same requirements. The Philippines added that in 2016 Indonesia had closed its ports to horticultural products from the Philippines during their system equivalence determination and later the ongoing laboratory registration, despite having had prior trade. Exports from the Philippines to Indonesia had declined by almost 70 percent since 2013 and reached bottom-zero since 2016. Regarding Indonesia's approval measures for the import of meat and meat products, the Philippines remained deeply concerned with the undue delays, lack of transparency, unpredictable approach, and discriminatory requirements without scientific justification. Indonesia had required the Philippines to be of negligible risk status for BSE, even though both the Philippines and Indonesia had the same undetermined OIE status for BSE. The Philippines urged Indonesia to consider and accept their proposed import measures for horticultural products and to align its approval measures for the import of meat and meat products to its WTO obligations.

4.91. Indonesia expressed appreciation to the Philippines for their bilateral engagement and ongoing work. Regarding the procedure for the registration of accredited laboratories, Indonesia had adopted Ministry of Agriculture Regulation No. 1329 of 2019 on 31 May 2019, which amended prior scope and parameters of laboratory testing for pesticide residues and heavy metal contents in shallots, pineapple, and bananas from the Philippines. Indonesia further reiterated that it was in the process of harmonizing its regulations to provide a detailed timeline of its auditing process.

4.2.14 China's AQSIQ official certification requirements for food imports (G/TBT/N/CHN/1209) – Concerns of the United States (No. 184)

4.92. The United States requested an update on the status of the draft measure notified as G/TBT/N/CHN/1209, which required official certificates to accompany a range of imported food products on a shipment-by-shipment basis, including processed, shelf-stable foods. In response to concerns raised by trading partners on the burden it would impose and its lack of scientific justification, China notified an extension of the entry into force until 30 September 2019. Given that there were pending concerns regarding the measure, the United States requested a confirmation that the measure would not enter into force on that date. It recalled China's statement made to the TBT Committee on 5 July 2019, that the measure would "not affect existing trade after October, even though other Members could not provide certificates for processed food", until a mutually agreed solution was found. The United States would welcome a notification by China of an addendum indefinitely postponing the implementation of the measure.

4.93. Japan supported the concern, and requested information on the risk analysis and the revised draft, as well as sufficient time to prepare for any new measure.

4.94. Guatemala sought clarification on the implementation of the measure and queried whether its entry into force would be postponed.

4.95. The European Union referred to the Codex recommendations that official certificates should only be required when attestation and essential information were necessary to ensure food safety.

4.96. China clarified that the objective of the measure was not restrict trade, but to ensure the safety and complete traceability of products, through a strengthened supervision and the responsibility of exporting parties' authorities. China assured Members that the measure would not affect existing trade after October 2019, even when Members could not provide a certificate for processed food. To enhance communication and cooperation with Members, China had joined the electronic working group (EWG) on Food Integrity and Food Authenticity of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Certification and Inspection (CCFICS), addressing Members' concerns on

the safety problems of low-risk foods in the international food trade through the formulation of Codex standards or guidelines. China remained open to maintaining close communication with the United States to resolve the issue.

4.2.15 China's proposed amendments to the implementation regulations on safety assessment of agricultural GMOs – Concerns of the United States (No. 395)

4.97. The United States reiterated its concerns about the delays and the lack of predictability, transparency, and scientific justification in China's pre-market approval procedures for the products of biotechnology. It was especially concerned with China's new requirements that applicants had to submit materials for tests to be conducted in China, instead of accepting packages from tests conducted outside of China. These new in-country data and testing requirements did not differentiate – in terms of exposure or risk – between imported products used for food, feed and processing or domestic products for cultivation. The requirements also decreased regulatory transparency and predictability and had not been notified to the SPS Committee. The United States requested China to publish precise and complete information on processing periods and information requirements, to publish in advance schedules for meetings of its National Biosafety Committee and to respond to applicants in a timely manner to explain any delays in processing a request. They also requested that China notify all changes to its SPS measures to the SPS Committee, allow comments from its trading partners, and to take such comments into account in finalizing changes to its measures.

4.98. China replied that its approval of biotechnology products was transparent and science-based. China attached great importance to the safe management of GMOs. China's National Agricultural Genetically Modified Organisms Safety Committee (NAGMOS) was responsible for the safety evaluation of GMOs in China. Applicants were notified when their products were not approved, and they could always resubmit their applications for review with additional required data and materials.

4.2.16 US import restrictions on apples and pears – Concerns of the European Union (No. 439)

4.99. The European Union regretted that the United States had concluded the necessary risk assessment for the import of apples and pears from the European Union several years ago, but that trade had not been allowed to resume. The final administrative step of publishing the relevant rule, had been blocked. The United States had previously noted that the European Union had been exporting apples and pears to the United States since 2013, but the European Union regretted that those exports had only been authorised under a pre-clearance approach, which was costly and trade-restrictive, and only allowed small amounts of apples into the US market.

4.100. The United States responded that considerable progress had been made on requests by the European Union to expand access for their apples and pears to the US market. The final step in the process was the publication of a final notice by the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

4.3 Information on resolution of issues in G/SPS/GEN/204/Rev.19

4.3.1 The Russian Federation's import restrictions on certain animal products from Germany – Concerns of the European Union (No. 411)

4.101. The European Union reported that STC No. 411 had been solved and that the bans from 2013 had been lifted. The European Union thanked the Russian Federation for its cooperation on this matter. It also acknowledged progress made in relation to STC No. 449 on import restriction on ruminants, the formal resolution of which it hoped to announce soon.

4.102. The Russian Federation thanked the European Union and looked forward to further fruitful cooperation.

4.4 Update on the project for the online submission of STCs

4.103. The WTO Secretariat updated Members on the eAgenda project launched at the end of 2018, supported by the WTO Information Technology Solutions Division (ITSD) and carried out for both the TBT and SPS sections. The eAgenda built upon the existing tools for the online submission of

notifications, SPS NSS and TBT NSS; and the online information management systems, the SPS IMS and the TBT IMS.

4.104. eAgenda was the development of an online platform to help Members manage STCs ahead of SPS and TBT Committee meetings. Access to the platform would be restricted to Members, who would be able to add or support STCs ahead of the circulation of the meeting agenda (SPS's Airgram and TBT's Annotated Agenda). Development of the TBT pilot platform had been progressing well, and was scheduled to be presented at the next TBT Committee meeting in November 2019. Development of the SPS pilot platform was scheduled to begin after September 2019, and Members would be updated on its progress, including the possible pilot testing of the platform by Members.

5 OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPS AGREEMENT

5.1 Equivalence

5.1. No Member provided any information under this agenda item.

5.2 Pest-and disease-free areas (Regionalization)

5.2.1 Annual report in accordance with G/SPS/48 (G/SPS/GEN/1711)

5.2. The annual report covering the period from 1 April 2018 until 31 March 2019 was circulated as document G/SPS/GEN/1711. The Secretariat gave the Committee an update regarding the annual report on Members' requests for recognition of pest or disease-free areas or areas of low pest or disease prevalence, their determinations on whether to recognize such an area, and Members' experiences in the implementation of Article 6, based on information provided in notifications and at SPS Committee meetings under this and other agenda items. The Secretariat sought feedback and suggestions from Members on the structure of the document. Comments were welcomed by 6 September 2019, or before the preparation of the next annual report in July 2020.

5.2.2 Information from Members

5.2.2.1 Russian Federation – Recovery of the OIE 'FMD-free zone without vaccination' status

5.3. The Russian Federation reported that its "FMD free zone where vaccination is not practiced" status had been suspended on 30 September 2017 due to the immediate notification of a single FMD outbreak in the Republic of Bashkortostan. Based on the strict quarantine measures applied and the documentation submitted, the OIE Scientific Commission by Resolution No. 15 of the 83rd OIE General Session, concluded that the zone could regain its previous status as of 20 May 2019.

5.2.2.2 Russian Federation - Self-declaration of the recovery of zone freedom from highly pathogenic avian influenza in the Russian Federation

5.4. The Russian Federation updated Members that HPAI, observed in Eurasia since the end of 2016, and which had affected the Russian Federation, had been brought under control. Regionalization for this disease (high and low pathogenic AI separately) had been conducted on the territory in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 4.3 of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code. These actions and further disease surveillance procedures allowed the Russian Federation to eradicate outbreaks and maintain a zone free from AI in all 85 Russian administrative regions. In April 2019, the Russian Federation's self-declaration of the recovery of zone free from HPAI was published on the OIE website. Further detailed information was available online on the WAHIS portal of the OIE.

5.2.2.3 Chile – Regionalization regarding quarantine for pests in Chile

5.5. Chile referred Members to document G/SPS/GEN/1716, which reported on its measures to establish criteria for regionalization for quarantine pests. The document was related to plant health and provided an up-to-date list of plagues, as advised by IPPC, as well as the risk analysis for products from certain areas. The document also included weblinks to further online information.

5.2.2.4 Peru – Improvement of national SPS procedures

5.6. Peru updated Members that its National Fisheries Health Services (SANIPES) had undergone the Evaluation of Performance of its Aquatic Animal Health Services (OIE PVS). Peru had received preliminary results of the report, which were being implemented to improve their fisheries health system.

5.3 Operation of transparency provisions

5.3.1 United States – Notification by Members of SPS measures adopted to align with EU SPS Measures

5.7. The United States reminded Members of the obligation to notify changes to their SPS measures. It noted that several Members had national policies to align their SPS standards and regulations to those of the European Union, but did not regularly notify proposed changes to the SPS Committee. The United States pointed to the low notification rate of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and invited Members with national policies aligned with EU SPS Measures, to review their notification practices to ensure that other WTO Members had the opportunity to comment on changes to their SPS measures. The United States reiterated that alignment, approximation, or harmonization with other Members' SPS regulations did not relieve a Member of its transparency obligations under the SPS Agreement, and welcomed other Members' views on the topic.

5.8. Colombia appreciated the inclusion of this item on the agenda. Paraguay and Uruguay expressed their concern that given the increasing importance of transparency in cross-cutting issues in the WTO, some Members were not meeting their WTO obligation to provide information on SPS measures. Paraguay added that information submitted to the European Union did not exempt from notifying measures to the SPS Committee, which was particularly important when those measures related to MRLs and import tolerances, and could have a significant impact on trade and be a matter of concern to other SPS Committee Members.

5.9. Switzerland recalled its uniquely close contractual relationship with the European Union in the TBT and SPS areas. Its economy was closely integrated and it had widely harmonised its technical requirements with those of the European Union in order to reduce unnecessary barriers to trade. Switzerland closely followed the STCs raised in the Committee in areas where their regulations were harmonized, and were conveyed to their competent authorities. Switzerland notified its SPS measures when an international standard, guideline or recommendation did not exist or the content of a proposed SPS regulation was not substantially the same as the content of an international standard, guideline or recommendation. SPS measures adopted by Switzerland were also notified when they might have a significant effect on trade of other Members. Switzerland had taken concerted steps to review its notification practices and procedures and had raised awareness among the Federal Offices with a role in proposing, drafting or reviewing SPS-related regulations. Switzerland remained open to meet bilaterally with Members to discuss this matter further.

5.10. Norway explained that the 2018 Trade Policy Review of Norway dealt in detail with the notification of SPS measures adopted by Norway to align with EU SPS measures. The Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) brought together the 28 EU member States and the three EEA EFTA states Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, in an internal market governed by the same basic rules. The principle of free movement of goods ensured that products originating in an EEA state could circulate freely within the internal market. As a member of the EEA, Norway was bound by the adopted EU legislation in the field of SPS measures and food safety, with the exception of plant health, and also to the proceedings leading up to the adoption of new rules. Drafts and proposals were drawn up by the European Union and were notified to the WTO. The basic rule for entry into force of new EU regulations was the same for Norway as for EU members. However, some regulations were subject to negotiations between the EFTA/EEA countries and the European Union. The Official Journal confirmed whether and when Norway had implemented the actual legal act. Norwegian national legislation, legislation not part of the EEA-Agreement, was notified according to WTO SPS procedures. Norway also publicized new regulations through the official web-pages of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and also in the general Official Journal of Norwegian laws and regulations. Any matter regarding SPS issues could also be addressed to the Norwegian Enquiry Point for SPS matters, or directly to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority.

5.4 Special and Differential Treatment

5.11. No Member provided any information under this agenda item.

5.5 Monitoring of the use of International Standards

5.5.1 New issues

5.12. No new issues were raised under this agenda item.

5.5.2 Issues previously raised

5.5.2.1 European Union – ASF restrictions not consistent with the OIE international standard

5.13. The European Union drew the attention of Members to inconsistencies in the application of OIE international standards, in this case regarding ASF. The European Union noted that several WTO Members did not follow the OIE Terrestrial Code recommendations that had been developed and adopted with the support of those same Members, on surveillance, designation of containment and disease-free zones, and for the identification, treatment and certification of tradable products. ASF was a very serious disease but it could be managed effectively to make sure that legitimate trade did not the cause any outbreak. The European Union had demonstrated through its strict regionalisation policy, that the disease had not been transmitted via commercial trade. In addition, the European Union was transparent on its disease control measures and provided information through the web sites of the EU Commission, of the EU member States and of the OIE, and through bilateral contacts with trade partners. The European Union strongly urged WTO Members to align their import measures with the SPS Agreement and with international standards, and stood ready to work with Members to remove country-wide bans.

5.5.2.2 European Union and the United States – Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) restrictions not consistent with the OIE international standard

5.14. The European Union praised those Members that recognised EU regionalization measures, trusting the European Union's effective and transparent system of control and eradication of animal diseases like AI. Regarding regionalisation for HPAI, the European Union highlighted the inconsistency in the application by some WTO Members of the OIE international standards, and their obligations under the SPS Agreement's Article 6 and Annex C. Country-wide bans after a disease outbreak were not scientifically justified, and there was no justification to wait one year or more to restore the disease-free status, instead of the three months defined by the OIE Code. The veterinary services of all EU member States worked in a transparent manner and the audit and analysis service of the European Commission published regular public audit reports. The European Union reiterated its call to all Members to respect their regionalisation obligations; allow trade of all safe products from non-affected zones; lift all bans after regaining freedom three months after the application of stamping-out, cleaning and disinfection of all affected premises; refrain from imposing trade restriction in case of HPAI in wild birds; and refrain from imposing trade restriction in case of detected HPAI.

5.15. The United States underscored the importance of OIE guidelines related to HPAI and their contribution to facilitating safe trade in live poultry and poultry products. The United States highlighted that according to OIE guidelines for HPAI, free status could be regained quicker in a previously free country if it applied a stamping out policy that included disinfection of all affected establishments, provided the country carried out appropriate surveillance. The OIE provided an incentive for Members to implement an effective stamping out policy and to conduct robust surveillance to provide clear evidence and guarantees of eradication of HPAI. The United States expressed concern that restrictions on poultry meat or products subjected to treatment, such as heat treatment that mitigated the HPAI virus, lacked scientific justification. The United States had been free of HPAI per OIE guidelines since August 2017. While many trading partners had lifted their HPAI-related restrictions on US poultry imports, some restrictions remained in place, which the United States urged Members to lift.

5.16. The OIE brought Members attention to Chapter 10.4 of the Terrestrial Animal Health Code, Infection with Avian Influenza Viruses, which was under a comprehensive revision because of a lack of compliance noted by OIE members. The revision sought to remove misunderstandings in the interpretation of standards. A draft of the revised chapter had been circulated to OIE members for comments and the OIE meeting in September 2019 would advance that work. OIE recommended Members to contact their national OIE delegates in order to make comments and follow the progress of the revision before it was proposed for adoption in 2020 or 2021.

5.5.2.3 United States – Use of the Codex international standard on glyphosate

5.17. The United States drew attention to Members' restrictions or proposed restrictions on the use of glyphosate. It noted that scientific and regulatory authorities worldwide had re-evaluated and reconfirmed the authorization status of glyphosate as a crop protection tool, including at the May 2016 JMPR special session to re-evaluate glyphosate due to concerns resulting from the hazard report of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and the availability of new toxicology and epidemiology studies. JMPR concluded that dietary exposure to glyphosate did not present a risk to consumers and reaffirmed existing Codex MRLs for glyphosate. In April 2019, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published its proposed interim registration review decision for glyphosate, concluding that there were no risks to public health when glyphosate was used in accordance with its current label, and that glyphosate was not likely to be carcinogenic to humans. The United States urged Members to base their regulatory actions on glyphosate on sound science and risk-based principles.

5.18. Canada agreed with the United States on the importance of basing measures on international standards, guidelines and recommendations and specifically Codex standards. Establishing science-based pesticide MRLs helped ensure that pesticides were being used properly by growers and provided consumers with access to a safe food supply. Canada noted that JMPR had conducted a thorough toxicological evaluation and had found that glyphosate was unlikely to be genotoxic at anticipated dietary exposure, and was also unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans from exposure through diet. Similar reviews had been undertaken by a number of Members, including Canada, making glyphosate one of the most rigorously evaluated pesticides in the world. Canada's findings supported the continued registration and safe use of products containing glyphosate. Canada underlined the importance of Members taking timely regulatory decisions based on science and risk, taking into account the advice of the international standards setting bodies, in particular Codex.

5.19. Brazil, Paraguay, Senegal, the Russian Federation and Uruguay encouraged Members not to deviate from established Codex standards for glyphosate.

5.20. Paraguay also elaborated that Codex standards enabled developing countries, without the resources to carry out their own risk analysis, to meet their international requirements in terms of safety. Uruguay urged Members to adhere to the available scientific evidence, in order to avoid creating unjustified barriers to international trade.

5.21. Australia informed Members that the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) had undertaken a review of recent evidence presented in formal legal actions around the world, and found no grounds to take regulatory action in Australia. Australia's risk-based scientific approach to regulation ensured that each agricultural chemical was thoroughly and independently assessed taking into account extensive scientific information. The APVMA had considered the WHO IARC report, along with an examination of many other scientific trials and studies. Like other regulators, the APVMA had determined that glyphosate was safe to use when used in accordance with label directions. The APVMA advised Australian stakeholders that discussions in the media did not represent the facts or the science accurately.

5.22. Codex noted that Members were well informed of the JMPR evaluation outcomes in May 2016 and the CCPR decision based on JMPR's scientific advice.

5.5.3 Annual report in accordance with G/SPS/11/REV.1 (G/SPS/GEN/1710)

5.23. The annual report on the Procedure to Monitor the Process of International Harmonization had been circulated as document G/SPS/GEN/1710. The WTO Secretariat explained that the report

summarized the discussions under this agenda item over the past year, as reported in the summary report of each meeting.

5.6 Fifth Review

5.6.1 Fifth Review Report on the workshop on transparency and coordination

5.24. The Secretariat reported on the Workshop on SPS transparency and coordination that had taken place on 15-16 July (programme in document G/SPS/GEN/1694/Rev.2). The WTO, with the financial assistance of the Doha Development Agenda Global Trust Fund, had sponsored the participation of 34 government officials from developing country Members and Observers. In addition, the United States and the African Union (AU) had made it possible for eight and five participants, respectively, from Africa and Central America to attend the workshop and the meetings of the Committee.

5.25. The objective of this workshop had been to bring together Members' officials responsible for the implementation of the SPS Agreement, as well as experts from regional and international organizations, to exchange experiences with transparency-related coordination, and with broader domestic coordination mechanisms. An area of focus had been the difference in scope between the SPS and TBT Agreements, and notification of measures containing both SPS and TBT elements.

5.26. The workshop had begun with an overview of the key SPS and TBT transparency provisions. It had reviewed the objectives and coverage of the SPS and TBT Agreements, related discussions in the respective Committees and examples of measures notified under both agreements, including the SPS Committee recommendation to notify cross-cutting measures under both Agreements. Through an interactive exercise, participants had been challenged to define whether a measure fell within the scope of one or both Agreements. A brief report on the TBT Committee Thematic Session on Transparency held in June 2019, which had also addressed SPS and TBT notifications, had completed the introductory session.

5.27. Brazil, Canada, Japan, Chinese Taipei, and Uganda had presented experiences in handling and coordinating SPS and TBT notifications. Speakers had discussed their experiences with various institutional arrangements, including having separate SPS and TBT agencies or one single agency covering both SPS and TBT matters, thus creating a "single window" for the transparency requirements. Several speakers had encouraged the notification of measures that contained SPS and TBT elements under both Agreements, inserting an indication that the regulation had been notified under another Agreement, and submitting both in synchrony, for greater transparency and harmonized comment periods.

5.28. The Secretariat had provided an overview of SPS and TBT sources of information, including that WTO Documents Online and the e-Subscription service for delegates to receive official WTO documents; the SPS and TBT Gateways on the WTO website; and the SPS and TBT Information Management Systems (SPS IMS and TBT IMS) for searches and reports on notifications, STCs, and contact details of Enquiry Points and Notification Authorities. In addition, the Secretariat had provided an update on the ePing alert system, which included two main functionalities: an email alert mechanism to track relevant notifications; and a communication platform to facilitate domestic and international discussions and coordination of distributed notifications. Enquiry Points and Notification Authorities had been encouraged to request admin rights to administer ePing at the domestic level. Further training on ePing functionalities could be provided on the margins of the November 2019 SPS Committee meetings, in case of interest.

5.29. UNCTAD had presented its Non-Tariff Measures (NTM) programme, covering a broad spectrum of measures including but not limited to SPS and TBT measures. Data collection was comprehensive, but represented a stocktaking exercise at a certain point in time, including information from SPS and TBT notifications. ITC had also introduced the Global Trade Helpdesk, a single entry point for trade-related information, which aimed to combine in one online platform dispersed and complex information, contained in other international organizations' databases, and translate it into business language. A beta version was publicly available, and the final version would be launched at the 2020 WTO Ministerial Conference.

5.30. Australia and Uganda had participated in the pilot testing phase of ePing's coordination functions and presented on its advantages, as compared to prior notification distribution mechanisms, and on the efforts undertaken to promote the system and engage the private sector through newsletters, partnering with private sector associations, and presenting at existing events. China had presented institutional efforts undertaken to improve compliance with SPS transparency provisions, and their coordination challenges. New Zealand had explained how training could contribute to better transparency and coordination, highlighting the need of a training strategy, the importance of building trust with stakeholders and using technology.

5.31. The second day had begun with a panel discussion, broadening the perspective to incorporate experiences from the trade facilitation area, and from the use of STDF's P-IMA tool. It had been recalled that unlike the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), the SPS Agreement did not require the establishment of national committees. However, many Members had found it useful. While committees were easy to create, they were difficult to maintain. National SPS committees could play a role in facilitating implementation of the SPS Agreement, by creating awareness and promotion. Some challenges had included engaging the private sector and building trust. Lessons learnt had included being inclusive, developing long-term planning, allowing for quick successes and making use of the wealth of resources available, for example through the TFA Facility. Speakers had stressed the need of political backing and of a formal structure. SPS agencies had an important role to play in setting workplans and streamlining procedures. While the P-IMA tool primarily aimed to help SPS officials prioritize SPS-related investment decisions, coordination played an important role in ensuring an efficient allocation of SPS resources. Belize had recounted its experience with both P-IMA and UNCTAD's national trade facilitation committee programme, and how these projects had complimented each other, allowing for sustained and fruitful public-private dialogue. Panellists and participants had noted the synergies between capacity building for trade facilitation committees and national SPS committees.

5.32. The workshop had also benefited from presentations by Canada, Kenya, Peru, Senegal and the United States about domestic coordination mechanisms for purposes broader than transparency, such as coordinating positions to prevent and resolve specific trade concerns. Diverse approaches to domestic coordination included joint SPS and TBT national authorities, interdepartmental coordination mechanisms, increasing transparency in the rule-making process itself through public notice and comments, among other. To take advantage of the abundant expertise in the room, participants had also had a chance to brainstorm on successes, challenges, and lessons learnt. They had highlighted the difficulties of engaging the private sector for feedback on draft measures; how Members' processes could be improved; and the commonalities between the TFA and SPS Agreements, underscoring the importance of transparency and coordination.

5.33. The workshop had ended with presentations by the African Union, ECOWAS, IICA, Chile and APEC on the successes and challenges of various regional and international initiatives to support domestic coordination. Speakers had commented on the benefits of various approaches and highlighted the importance of training, resource and experience-sharing, as well as engaging academia and the private sector.

5.34. Before concluding, given the large amount of useful information shared, one Member had suggested that relevant resources be submitted to the Secretariat to be compiled and made available in a single document. In addition, the Secretariat informed Members that presentations from all sessions of the workshop were available on the SPS Gateway.

5.35. In response to the report, Chinese Taipei recommended that Members consider how to improve the Committee's work on transparency in the future. Chinese Taipei mentioned that the workshops were useful and valuable for Members' reference. Therefore, it recommended that SPS workshops and thematic sessions be put on the website as webinars for capitals and the public, like the TBT Committee did for its June 2019 workshop. This would benefit those who were unable to attend these events. The better use of online webcast technology could contribute to greater transparency.

5.36. The WTO Secretariat noted that webcasting was possible. However, in March, one delegation had not been comfortable with the proposal. The Secretariat noted it would consider it again, if the Committee was in agreement.

5.6.2 Report of the Informal Meeting

5.37. The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the draft report of the informal meeting held on 17 July 2019[2] and invited Members to make comments on the draft report during the meeting, or to send them to the Secretariat by 26 July 2019.

5.38. The WTO Secretariat reminded the Committee of the structure of the document and noted that proposals were grouped by topic, starting with equivalence. It explained that the document did not necessarily follow the order of the informal meetings, since it kept the same structure as the last meeting's report. The WTO Secretariat clarified that it had circulated a track changes version, so that changes could be easily identified.

5.39. Argentina expressed the usefulness of the new format and noted its use as an essential tool for its work. Argentina also requested a correction to JOB/SPS/2/Rev.3, and raised a question on document G/SPS/W/313. The Secretariat clarified that a corrigendum had been circulated to correct an earlier omission.

5.40. The Chairperson recalled the deadlines in the context of the Fifth Review:

- **Friday, 27 July 2019** for submitting comments on the draft report of the informal meeting JOB/SPS/2/Rev.3;
- **Friday, 6 September 2019** for submitting comments on the draft programme and suggest speakers for the Thematic Session on Approval Procedures, to be held on 5 November 2019;
- **Friday, 6 September 2019** for submitting comments (including possible recommendations) for the draft report of the Fifth Review (G/SPS/W/313 and G/SPS/W/313/Corr.1).

5.41. The Secretariat also informed the Committee that a compilation of Members' comments on the draft report of the Fifth Review would be prepared by the Secretariat in September 2019, and a revised version including recommendations would be circulated in October 2019. Members were invited to submit comments about scheduling of thematic sessions and the Committee workshop for 2020, to the Secretariat, before to the next Committee meeting.

5.42. The Chairman advised Members to submit comments about scheduling dates and deadlines to the Secretariat directly.

6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

6.1. Chile took the floor to comment on the annotated agenda that had been circulated by the Secretariat. Chile supported the initiative and added that it would contribute to improving its domestic coordination and enhancing its participation in the SPS Committee.

6.2. Paraguay thanked the Secretariat for the document and requested a correction to add it to the list under STC No. 382 on endocrine disruptors.

6.3. Argentina also supported the initiative and requested further information on its use.

6.4. The Chairman responded providing with an overview of the document, and explained that it was meant to complement the official Airgram. The document that had been circulated had been a pilot. A similar document would be circulated as a Job document for the November SPS Committee meeting after the circulation of the formal agenda, with translations to be circulated soon after. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the table of STCs in the Annex and hoped Members presenting STCs would provide a brief description of the STC to fill in the respective column of the table. The Chairman requested Members to share their comments on the annotated agenda.

6.5. The Secretariat further clarified that in the TBT Committee, this type of document replaced the Convening Airgram. The Secretariat proposed circulating both the Convening Airgram and the translated annotated agenda as a supplement to it, until Members were used to the annotated agenda. The Secretariat took note of Paraguay's comment and explained that the annotated agenda

[2] Subsequently circulated as JOB/SPS/2/Rev.3.

had been compiled manually, as it was not yet automated as STC table attached to the TBT annotated agenda.

6.6. In response to a question from Chinese Taipei regarding the agenda format of informal meetings, the Chairman clarified that informal meetings did not have an Airgram, but that further information could be circulated before the following informal meeting.

7 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION

7.1 Information from the Secretariat

7.1.1 WTO SPS activities

7.1. The WTO Secretariat had informed Members that it was organizing a session for delegates to clarify doubts about the work of the SPS Committee as well as on the SPS Agreement. The session would be scheduled for September and be taught in English. The Secretariat would send more information and request Members to indicate their interest in participating. The Secretariat had also informed Members that the Regional Workshop on SPS measures for Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, organized with the Vienna Multilateral Institute, which had been scheduled for September 2019, had been postponed to 2020. The new date would be announced as soon as possible.

7.2. The Secretariat had also presented information on the technical assistance activities related to SPS measures carried out since the last meeting of the SPS Committee in March 2019. The Secretariat had held SPS workshops in Turkey and Jamaica in May and a Thematic Workshop on Transparency and Coordination that had taken place that week in Geneva. There had also been training on the SPS Agreement and other more general trainings including in the Advanced Trade Policy Courses for African-speaking Members in Mauritius (15-17 May) and for the Caribbean countries in Trinidad and Tobago (week of June 24), the Advanced Trade Policy Course in French (17-18 June), a joint event with the World Bank on the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, and the Netherlands internship program; to groups of graduate students from the University of Minnesota, from the *École Nationale des Services Vétérinaires*, from Duke University, and from the Russian Federation; and to government officials of Mozambique. Upcoming activities in 2019 were national workshops in Guatemala (29-30 August); China (10-12 September); Uzbekistan (October); and Peru (19-21 November).

7.3. The Secretariat highlighted the follow-up session of the Advanced SPS Course that had begun on 10 July, the fourteenth consecutive year in which the Course had been offered; this edition held in Spanish. The participants of the Course were 19 government officials from nine WTO Members, who had returned to Geneva to present the action plans they prepared during the first part of the Course and had implemented in their countries during nine months. The Secretariat expressed its appreciation to the participants for their involvement and hard work.

7.4. The Advanced Course had also received the special support of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), through its specialist in Agricultural Health and Food Safety, Mr Eric Bolaños, who had been working with the Secretariat as one of the three Course coaches. The Secretariat had expressed appreciation to Mr. Bolaños and IICA for the close collaboration. The Secretariat had also thanked the Chairman of the SPS Committee and all the delegates who had participated as speakers in the Advanced SPS Course and who had shared their knowledge and experiences with the participants, as well as the external consultants who had been coaches in the Course, Mr João Magalhães and Mr Kevin Walker; and to ITTC for their collaboration in coordinating this Course.

7.5. The Secretariat had reminded Members that the e-learning course on the SPS Agreement was available throughout the year in the three official languages of the WTO, and that it was working on a new, more interactive version of the electronic course, which should be online in 2020. Finally, more information on SPS technical assistance activities could be found on the WTO website (under trade-related technical assistance or in the section dedicated to the SPS Agreement).

7.6. Guatemala thanked the Secretariat for supporting the technical assistance activity organized for August, to work with its competent authorities on SPS notifications.

7.7. Turkey thanked the Secretariat for the workshop that had been organized in Turkey in May. It had scheduled activities to disseminate the tools shared, including the ePing alert system, through trainings within the country in the month of August.

7.1.2 STDF (G/SPS/GEN/1713)

7.8. The STDF Secretariat provided a brief overview of its most recent activities, as detailed in document G/SPS/GEN/1713. The fourth evaluation of the STDF had been issued in July. It had been positive, and underlined the continued relevance of STDF building developing countries' SPS capacity. It also set out recommendations on the future direction of the STDF to meet emerging challenges. The new strategic plan was being developed and would be reported on at the November SPS Committee meeting. The STDF Secretariat also referred to the event organized at the Global Aid for Trade Review, on STDF capacity building in Guatemala, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. Attention was also brought to the 2018 STDF Annual Report. It highlighted its main achievements of the year, and was available in hard copy and on the STDF website. The STDF Secretariat thanked its 14 donors for their support. Regarding STDF briefing notes on the impact of trade-related food safety projects on the domestic health situation, they sought to answer the question of whether investing in food safety capacity for exports also lead to improved food safety in the domestic market. The results would be discussed at the next STDF working group meeting in October 2019, but notes were already available on the STDF website. Members were also informed about the participation of STDF at the SPS Workshop on Transparency and Coordination earlier that week, and reminded Members of its 2012 publication on national SPS coordination mechanisms, focused on African countries, which included a checklist for establishing a national SPS Committee. Finally, three STDF projects had been recently externally evaluated, the results would be presented at a side event during the November SPS Committee meeting.

7.9. Guatemala thanked the STDF for its assistance and noted the progress made in public private partnerships and helping SMEs internationally.

7.10. Burkina Faso thanked the STDF and donors for the funding of projects to reduce aflatoxin in maize, which would contribute to food security in the country, and noted that two projects would be launched on 29 July 2019.

7.11. Mali thanked the STDF for funding its standards and development projects on tea and mango. Mali emphasised its capacity building needs for laboratories, tools and kits to be able to comply with pesticide MRLs; and of technical assistance to comply with international standards harmonization.

7.12. Nigeria thanked the STDF for its assistance; and Peru took the floor to note it would seek the assistance of STDF.

7.2 Information from Members

7.2.1 Japan - Technical assistance to developing countries

7.13. Japan drew Members' attention to document G/SPS/GEN/1160/Add.7, which detailed Japan's SPS-related technical assistance from April 2018 to March 2019; and explained that its SPS-related technical assistance aimed to facilitate the enhancement and implementation of SPS measures in developing countries, based on sound science. Its assistance for the period amounted to approximately 630 million Japanese yen (approximately 5.8 million USD), with an accumulated amount of assistance since April 2009 of approximately 6.8 billion Japanese yen (approximately 62.6 million USD). Most of Japan's overseas aid projects were carried out by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). In addition, SPS-related technical assistance for Asia and the Pacific region was provided through the Official Development Assistance. Japan invited Members interested in participating in these training courses, workshops, or any other projects, to contact its Enquiry Point, the International Trade Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

7.14. Mali took the floor to express its appreciation to Japan for the assistance received through JICA.

7.2.2 Chile

7.15. Chile highlighted its technical assistance activities under Article 9 of the SPS Agreement. First, Chile had provided assistance to Honduras, Cuba and Belize, though triangular projects with the United States, the European Union and El Salvador, respectively. Second, Chile had been the beneficiary of assistance together with Mexico, aimed at strengthening their SPS regulatory systems, early warning system and electronic certification. Third, Colombian officials had visited Chile's SPS services through the cooperation of the Inter-American Development Bank. Fourth, through the IICA Codex Twinning Project, Chile was working to build capacity in Latin American and Caribbean countries.

8 CONCERNS WITH PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL STANDARDS

8.1. No Member took the floor under this agenda item.

9 OBSERVERS

9.1 Information from observer organizations

9.1.1 ECOWAS

9.1. ECOWAS reported on recent activities, as detailed in document G/SPS/GEN/1702. ECOWAS had provided training on strengthening the monitoring, prevalence and impact of fall armyworm (FAW) with the financial and technical support of FAO; which had led to additional targeted funding. In addition, with the support of USDA, ECOWAS provided a training workshop on development and monitoring of phytosanitary inspection and pest identification guides, aimed at harmonizing relevant guidelines. ECOWAS had also provided capacity building in the area of food safety, which led to successful applications to Codex Trust Funds for Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal. ECOWAS thanked donors and technical partners for their continuing support in advancing SPS issues in the ECOWAS sub-region and beyond.

9.1.2 IGAD

9.2. The Chairman drew attention to the report submitted by IGAD on its main activities, contained in document G/SPS/GEN/1705.

9.1.3 OIRSA

9.3. OIRSA reported on its main activities, as detailed in document G/SPS/GEN/1706. OIRSA highlighted its work on the comprehensive management of citrus huanglongbing (HLB) and on the prevention of the banana fungus Fusarium wilt. OIRSA had also supported countries, like Ecuador, though the InterAmerican Group for Coordination on Plant Protection (GICSV); and had also been working on the prevention of ASF.

9.4. Ecuador clarified that its work was focused on the prevention of the banana fungus, but that it did not face a suspicion of entry or have quarantine measures against it. OIRSA corrected that it was working with Colombia on these issues, instead of Ecuador.

9.1.4 IICA

9.5. IICA drew Members' attention to document G/SPS/GEN/1714, which contained a report on its main activities. IICA continued to support its members to participate more actively in multilateral forums. IICA thanked the WTO for including IICA in the Advanced SPS Course, and described it as an extraordinary training opportunity for its participants. IICA had been involved in some of the Course's action plans, including on transparency and coordination, which contributed to their monitoring and sustainability. IICA thanked the United States for its financial and technical contribution, which enabled IICA to carry out many of its technical assistance activities.

9.6. The Dominican Republic thanked IICA and OIRSA for their work in the region, and highlighted the Risk Analysis Consortium created with the support of IICA and OIRSA, IICA's SPS Leadership Course, and IICA's and OIRSA's support for its participation in multilateral fora.

9.1.5 ECCAS

9.7. ECCAS provided Members with an overview of its main activities, as detailed in document G/SPS/GEN/1718. ECCAS referred to the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) it had been working on, and explained that it had implemented the Common Agricultural Policy, the Regional Agricultural Investment Programme for Food and Nutrition Security (PRIASAN) and related projects, as well as platforms of the stakeholders participating in the implementation of these initiatives. It was working to improve the institutional environment with a view to improving the quantity and quality of farm production throughout its members. On plant health, ECCAS had worked on FAW and on a platform for the coordination of SPS issues. On animal health, it had been setting up an entity for the follow-up of regional animal diseases, including AI. ECCAS had also taken part in OIE activities in Chad as well as in finalizing a draft World Bank project to strengthen surveillance of human disease. ECCAS had also been working on the Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement (REDISSE) Project for Central Africa, with funding from the African Development Bank and World Bank. ECCAS thanked the Inter-African Bureau of the AU for funding its participation in the SPS Committee meeting.

9.2 Requests for observer status

9.2.1 New requests

9.8. There were no new requests for observer status.

9.2.2 Outstanding requests

9.9. The list of organizations whose requests for observer status were pending was contained in G/SPS/W/78/Rev.14, circulated on 31 October 2016. No Member took the floor under this agenda item.

9.10. The Chairperson thanked the representatives of observer organizations for their contributions to the work of the Committee and for their assistance to Members. The Chairperson further encouraged observer organizations to provide written reports on their relevant activities in advance of the November 2019 meeting.

10 OTHER BUSINESS

10.1. No Member took the floor under this agenda item.

11 DATE AND AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

11.1. The Secretariat explained the proposed calendar of meetings of the SPS Committee for 2020, as contained in document G/SPS/GEN/1712. The first meeting of 2020 was scheduled for the week of 17 March, with the formal meeting on 18-19 March; the summer meeting would be held the week of 22 June (noting that the Ministerial Conference would take place in the first half of June); and the last meeting of the year would be held the week of 2 November 2020.

11.2. The Chairman recalled that the next regular meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 7-8 November 2019, preceded by a Thematic Session on Approval Procedures on 5 November, and an informal meeting on 6 November.

11.3. The WTO Secretariat reminded Members of the following deadlines:

- For submitting comments on the draft report of the informal meeting (JOB/SPS/2/Rev.3): **Friday, 26 July 2019**;
- For submitting comments on the draft programme and the proposal of speakers for the Thematic Session on Approval Procedures to be held on 5 November 2019: **Friday, 6 September 2019;**

- For submitting replies to comments from the proponents of the proposal on regionalization(G/SPS/W/311): **Friday, 6 September 2019**;
- For submitting comments on the Secretariat's annual report on regionalization (G/SPS/GEN/1711): **Friday, 6 September 2019**;
- For submitting comments and proposed recommendations for inclusion in the report of the Fifth Review (G/SPS/W/313 and G/SPS/W/313/Corr.1): **Friday, 6 September 2019**;
- For submitting agenda items for the November SPS Committee meeting, including STCs and items under the procedure to monitor the use of international standards: **Thursday, 17 October 2019**;
- For submitting proposals of topics for a thematic workshop to be held in July 2020 and for thematic session(s) to be held during the week of the last SPS Committee meeting of 2020; to be discussed during the November 2019 SPS Committee meeting: **Thursday, 17 October 2019**.

11.4. The Secretariat informed Members that it would compile Members' comments on the report of the Fifth Review and would circulate them in September 2019. The Secretariat also reminded Members of the intention of the Chairman to hold consultations at the end of September. Further, the Secretariat would prepare a revised version of the draft report of the informal meeting, including draft recommendations, to be circulated in October 2019. Finally, the Airgram convening the November SPS Committee meeting would be circulated on 18 October 2019, and the annotated agenda would be circulated shortly after. The deadlines would also be circulated to Members by email.