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OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF THE BASEL  
CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF  
TRANSBOUNDARY MOVEMENTS OF  
HAZARDOUS WASTES AND  
THEIR DISPOSAL

First session  
Geneva, 28 April to 2 May 2003

Item 7 of the provisional agenda \*

COOPERATION WITH THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

1. Pursuant to operational paragraph 1 of decision VI/30 on Cooperation with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the secretariat sent an official communication to the Director-General and Chair of the Trade Negotiations Committee of the WTO on 28 January 2003 to seek observer status for the secretariat in the Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session (copy of correspondence is annexed).

2. On 17 February 2003, the secretariat was informed by the secretariat of WTO that at its meeting in February, the Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session agreed to invite to its next meeting scheduled 1-2 May 2003, UNEP as well as the following multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs):

- (a) The Basel Convention;
- (b) The Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (c) The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora;
- (d) The International Tropical Timber Organization;
- (e) The Montreal Protocol;

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\* UNEP/CHW/OEWG/1/1

(f) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

3. The secretariat was also informed that this decision was taken on an ad hoc basis, with the provision that it would be without prejudice to the outcome of the negotiations currently under way in the Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session, in particular with regard to the criteria for granting observer status to MEAs in the relevant WTO committees (ref. Paragraph 31 (ii) of the Doha Declaration).

## Annex

Geneva, 28 January 2003

Dear Dr. Panitchpakdi,

At the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in December 2002, the Parties to the Basel Convention adopted decision VI/30 (attached) on collaboration with the World Trade Organization. As requested by the Conference, I am writing to you to seek observer status for the secretariat of the Basel Convention in the Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session

In the view of the Parties to the Convention, participation of the secretariat of the Basel Convention as observer in the Committee on Trade and the Environment (CTE) Special Session would strengthen the collaboration between our two secretariats, particularly in light of the mandate of negotiations contained in Paragraph 31 of the Doha Declaration. Expertise developed over the years in implementing the Basel Convention would be of value to the work of the CTE Special Session.

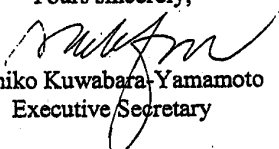
Since 1997, the secretariat of the Basel Convention has been invited by WTO to participate in MEA Information Sessions of the Committee on Trade and Environment where it has briefed WTO Members on relevant aspects of the Basel Convention.

In accordance with the established practices of the Basel Convention, WTO has also been regularly invited to be represented as observer to meetings of the Conference of the Parties and its relevant subsidiary bodies. The participation of representatives from WTO has always been welcome and proven to be useful. The WTO Secretariat briefed delegates attending the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties on developments in the negotiations on aspects of the relationship between multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and WTO.

The participation of MEAs, as observers, in meetings of the CTE Special Session would contribute to the objective of enhancing the mutual supportiveness between trade and environment, which was highlighted at the Doha Ministerial Conference as well as at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

I look very much forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Sachiko Kuwabara Yamamoto  
Executive Secretary

Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi  
Director-General  
Chair of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC)  
World Trade Organization  
Geneva  
Switzerland

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