

**Report of
The 4th Working Group on Standards for Trade
1 December 2014
Istanbul - Turkey**

The Government of the Republic of Turkey hosted the 4th Working Group on Standards for Trade on 1 December 2014 in Istanbul. The Republic of Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Islamic Republic Pakistan and the Republic of Turkey attended the meeting. Somalia was also present as observer. The list of participants is enclosed in **Annex I**.

1. Opening

The representative of the Host Country delivered a welcome address to the participants and hoped that the meeting would have fruitful discussions and deliberations. The participants introduced themselves.

2. Election of the Chairman and Appointment of the Rapporteur(s)

Mr. Aykud Ucalli from the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey was elected as the Chairman. In addition, Mr. Rismawan Farid Lufianto from the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia was appointed as rapporteur.

3. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as appeared in **Annex II**.

4. Review on the Work Program and Development based on the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group on Standards for Trade (WGST)

The Report on the 3rd Working Group Meeting on Standards on Trade held from 4th – 5th December 2013 at Abuja Nigeria was read and noted.

After deliberations, Turkey mentioned the circulation and development process of TOR, Nigeria emphasized the need to speed up the process of the implementation of the decisions reached at various meetings of the Working Group, Indonesia mentioned the need for discussing general standards rather than the specific commodity standards. The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized the development of the Preferential Trade Agreements among the member countries.

The Working Group noted that the proposed forum comprising of experts and participants of the Working Group from Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey which was supposed to be held between April and June, 2014 to identify and harmonize the positions of member countries did not take place due to insufficiency of returns to the aforementioned request of comments on the update of the Terms of Reference, hereafter TOR.

There is a need to strengthen the secretariat of D-8 in order for it to be more proactive in coordination activities and preparation of the necessary documentation for the future meetings. In addition the Working Group also took note of the importance of more active participation to track the progress of the activities.

Mr. Aykud Ucalli presented the organizational structure of the Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock, Turkey, the Turkish Food Codex Standards and the cooperation with the international organizations. Through the presentation, certain examples on the standards were discussed. The presentation is enclosed as **Annex III**.

The delegates also discussed and finalized the second draft of Terms of Reference (TOR), which were distributed to nominated focal points from Member Countries. After the receipt of comments from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the delegates at the meeting reconsidered and finalized the TOR. The text of the updated TOR is enclosed as **Annex IV**.

The Working Group discussed the importance of the role of the private sector in the harmonization of policies on trade standards when the need arises.

5. New Projects & Area of Cooperation

The Working Group took note that the Islamic Republic of Iran would submit the prototype of the Website linked to the D-8 Secretariat within three months which would require inputs from member countries. The mentioned prototype is an interactive portal which receives processes, classifies and disseminates information among Member Countries.

The Working Group took note that the Rules for Sharing of Information on Standards and Regulations shall be considered in the framework of ethical standards, regulations and transparency.

The Working Group acknowledged Turkey's initiative of Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed among D-8 Member Countries; however the issue was decided to be revisited when the need arises.

The Working Group members expressed willingness to maximize the functions of this group in terms of information sharing to reduce the incidents of rejection of import/export commodities at the borders.

The Working group agreed on creating a list of priority product groups for each Member Country in order to facilitate the trade of these particular products for the avoidance of potential problems at the borders due to non-conformity of standards. Member Countries agreed to submit the list to the D-8 Secretariat by the 1st of January, 2015 to be shared with all Member Countries.

The Working Group agreed that in order to improve trade by eliminating obstacles among D-8 member states, it is necessary to elaborate, propose, and implement a common set of standard rules for specific agricultural produces, fresh or processed, traded within the territories of D-8 member states. For this purpose, supporting joint technical cooperation activities and establishment of rapid information exchange infrastructure shall be realized.

Moreover, the Working Group also agreed that participation in working group meetings shall be increased by D-8 Member States.

6. Date & Venue of the next Meeting

As regards the frequency of the meetings, the Working Group expressed the need for implementation of the decisions reached at the meeting, hence advocated for the need for annual meetings. In principle, in accordance with the adopted TOR, the next meeting would be held in Bangladesh.

7. Closing

In closing, the chairman thanked members for their incisive contributions at the meeting and wished them well.