



***ADVANCING TRANSPARENCY IN
REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS***

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With the large number of RTAs currently in place or being negotiated, G20 members are committed to ensuring full compliance with RTA existing transparency obligations under the WTO and as agreed under the WTO Transparency Mechanism for Regional Trade Agreements.

G20 members fully appreciate WTO Members' efforts to provide for a transparent environment for RTAs that supports the multilateral trading system. We emphasize the central role of the WTO in this work and call on its Members to continue these efforts in particular with a view to:

- ensuring consistency of RTAs with WTO principles and rules;
- supporting the contribution of new RTAs to liberalization of international trade, economic growth and job creation;
- provision of public information on a public website by the negotiating parties regarding which RTAs are under negotiation, including information on the domestic process;
- sharing information on the legislation to implement an RTA once the legislation is adopted, including through web-sites containing the relevant comprehensive information;

We further reaffirm that RTAs should remain complementary to, not a substitute for, the multilateral trading system.

We support the WTO Transparency Mechanism for RTAs adopted in 2006 and implemented on a provisional basis. In order to strengthen the system of WTO surveillance of RTAs, we propose to discuss at the WTO making this mechanism permanent. We call for full adherence to the WTO rules and procedures in respect of RTA notifications and stress the significance of this work:

- once the RTA has entered into force, member governments will promptly notify the full text of the RTA to the WTO, and make it public, through relevant websites, in any of the three official WTO languages;
- at the end of the RTA's implementation period, members governments will promptly notify the WTO;
- member governments will make the texts of RTAs, including any annexes or schedules, readily available so that the business community could easily get access to the texts and understand the terms of RTA to benefit from open trade opportunities.

We urge WTO members to advance their discussions of the systemic implications of the increasing number of RTAs on the multilateral trading system.