



Trade Negotiations Committee

**REPORT BY AMBASSADOR STEFFEN SMIDT
FRIEND OF THE TNC CHAIRMAN
ON PREFERENTIAL RULES OF ORIGIN FOR LDCs**

GENERAL COUNCIL ON 7 DECEMBER 2015

1.1. At the request of the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), I have undertaken consultations with Members to take forward the submission by the Least-developed countries (LDCs) on a proposal for a draft decision by Ministers on preferential rules of origin (JOB/TNC/53).

1.2. The proposal was first presented at an open ended meeting on 20 October 2015. At the end of that meeting, I invited all interested Members to join a process of informal consultations in a smaller group. The delegations of Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, European Union, India, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Lao PDR, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Switzerland, Chinese Taipei, Tanzania, Thailand, and United States have taken an active part in these consultations. In addition, the coordinators of the African Group, the SVEs and the ACP groups were also invited to our consultations.

1.3. The result of our discussions is contained in a draft text which has not yet been circulated to or discussed by the wider membership. While we have made considerable progress on most items of the draft decision, there are still significant divergences on some areas of the text. I have therefore scheduled additional consultations for Monday afternoon.

1.4. I believe that with some effort by all Members we can obtain a consensus in time for consideration by Ministers at MC10.
