



**REQUEST FOR OBSERVER STATUS BY THE AFRICAN ORGANIZATION FOR
STANDARDIZATION (ARSO) TO THE WTO COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO
TRADE**

SUBMISSION FROM UGANDA

The following submission, dated 22 October 2015, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Uganda.

1. The delegation of Uganda has noted the request for observer status in the WTO TBT Committee by the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) from document G/TBT/GEN/2/Rev.9 circulated by the Secretariat on 12 October 2015.
2. Uganda would like to inform Members that the mandate of ARSO includes the development of tools for formulation, harmonization and implementation of standards with the cardinal objectives of enhancing Africa's internal trade capacity, increasing the global competitiveness of Africa's products and services and uplifting the welfare of consumers in Africa. In according to its vision and mission, ARSO strives to promote trade and industry and facilitate intra-African and global trade through provision and facilitation of the implementation of harmonized standards that are normally used as the basis for technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures.
3. In carrying out its mandate, ARSO seeks to, inter alia, encourage and facilitate the adoption of international standards by its Members Bodies; coordinate the view of its Members at the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML), FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, and other international organizations that provide standardization and related activities; and promote and facilitate exchange of experts, information and cooperation in training in standardization activities. ARSO is also coordinating the continental-wide harmonization of standards to promote intra-African and global trade.
4. In addition, two key strategic objectives of ARSO within the ARSO strategic framework 2012-2017, are to establish a standards harmonization system that supports a sound regulatory framework and disseminate harmonized standards, guidelines and recommendations to support intra-, inter- African and international trade and these closely relate to the discussions held in the TBT Committee.
5. The above attributes of ARSO are in tandem with the Preamble, Article 2.6 and Annex 3, paragraphs F and G of the TBT Agreement.
6. The delegation of Uganda therefore recognizes that ARSO is a relevant standardization organization in the area of harmonization of standards and technical regulations within the African continent and ARSO is especially useful in spearheading the adoption of international standards that are usually incorporated into technical regulations which if not harmonized can create unnecessary obstacles to international trade.
7. On the basis of the attributes of ARSO outlined above, the delegation of Uganda supports the request for observer status of ARSO in the TBT Committee and would like to recommend that the Committee grants the request.