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Rules of origin

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

The UNCTAD secretariat has received the following communication from the European Commission:

"UNCTAD amended the notes on the back of Form A in 2004 and 2005, on the first occasion to take account of EU enlargement and on the second occasion to take account of Turkey. In so doing it laid down a transitional provision for the acceptance of forms bearing older versions of the notes. Point 3 of document TD/B/EX(37)/3 of 19 July 2005 stated:

"3. As agreed at the twenty-first special session of the Trade and Development Board on 10-11 May 2004 (TD/B/S-XXI/2), remaining stocks of GSP Form A with 1996 notes will be accepted until 31 May 2006 – The same will apply to remaining stocks of Form A with notes 2004."

However, it has become apparent that many GSP beneficiary countries were unaware of the approaching deadline until it happened, and that they still hold large stocks of forms bearing the 1996 or 2004 version of the notes.

The European Union recognizes both the expense which the administrations of beneficiary countries could face and the potential problems for operators. Consequently, the European Union wishes to make it known that it has decided to continue to accept Form A bearing older versions of the notes, provided everything else is in order. The European Union has not set any time limit for this continued acceptance. Moreover, it is pointed out that Form A bearing the 1996 version of the notes on the back have been valid in all Member States since 1 May 2004...".