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Committee on Trade Facilitation

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**NOTIFICATION OF CATEGORY COMMITMENTS UNDER
THE AGREEMENT ON TRADE FACILITATION**

COMMUNICATION FROM BELIZE

Addendum

The following communication, dated 22 August 2019, is being circulated at the request of the delegation of Belize for Members' information.

Following up from the notification dated 20 February 2018 (G/TFA/N/BLZ/1), Belize hereby makes the following notifications:

(1) Shifting of categories; (2) shifting of categories with extension of definitive implementation dates; (3) extension of definitive implementation dates; and (4) definitive implementation dates for categories B and C designations.

1. Belize hereby notifies that the following provision has been shifted between categories.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category previously notified as	Category shifted to
Article 6.1	General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation	C	B

2. Belize wishes to notify that, based on Articles 17 and 19 of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation, the following provisions are requested to be shifted from category B to category C with extended definitive implementation dates (See table below)

Provision	Heading/Description	Previous category designation	New category designation	Previously notified definitive date for implementation	New definitive date for implementation requested	Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Assistance (TACB) that will be required
Article 7.2	Electronic Payment	B	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2026	<p>The Customs and Excise Department allows electronic payments; it is currently engaged in an effort to include other agencies which require additional assistance and support from donors in implementing.</p> <p><u>Requires the following additional assistance and support not earlier anticipated:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistance and financial support for the development of a wide-area network for BAHA. 2. Assistance for the development of a legal framework that is supportive of electronic payments.
Article 8.2(b)-8.2(e)	Border Agency Cooperation	B	C	22 February 2019	31 December 2030	<p><u>Requires the following additional assistance and support not earlier anticipated:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistance to conduct feasibility study. 2. Technical assistance to learn best practices in countries that have introduced joint border controls and one-stop border post control. 3. Financial assistance for equipment and software. 4. Technical assistance for strengthening the human resources of border agencies. 5. Technical assistance and cooperation for training and awareness building.
Article 10.1	Formalities and Documentation Requirements	B	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<p><u>Requires the following additional assistance and support not earlier anticipated:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial assistance required to conduct a study to determine, on the basis of international best practices, the time-frames and conditions of implementation of this measure.

3. Belize hereby notifies the extension of its definitive implementation dates for the following provisions based on Article 17 of the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Provision	Heading/Description	Previously notified definitive date for implementation	New definitive date for implementation requested	Reasons for extension
Article 6.2	Specific Disciplines on Fees and Charges for Customs Processing Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation	22 February 2020	22 August 2021	The Customs and Excise Department is currently reviewing its draft Customs Harmonized Bill which will be enacted soon.
Article 7.7	Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators	22 February 2022	30 June 2024 (new date requested)	Belize is currently implementing its Trusted Trader Program, but still requires additional time to sensitize exporters/importers on the requirements and benefits of moving to an Authorized Operators System.
Article 10.7	Common Border Procedures and Uniform Documentation Requirements	22 February 2019	22 August 2021 (new date requested)	Belize is partially compliant with the provisions of article 10.7. Additionally, the Customs and Excise Department is currently reviewing its draft Customs Harmonized Bill which will soon be enacted.

4. Belize hereby makes the following notifications of the definitive dates for its additional category B commitments and its category C commitments pursuant to Article 16 of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WT/L/931).

Provision	Heading/Description	Definitive Date for Implementation
Article 1.1	Publication	31 December 2023
Article 1.2	Information Available through Internet	31 December 2023
Article 1.3	Enquiry Points	31 December 2024
Article 1.4	Notification	31 December 2023
Article 2.1	Opportunity to Comment and Information Before Entry into Force	31 December 2023
Article 2.2	Consultations	31 December 2024
Article 3	Advance Rulings	31 December 2023
Article 4	Procedures for Appeal or Review	31 December 2024
Article 5.1	Notification for Enhanced Controls or Inspections	31 December 2024
Article 5.2	Detention	31 December 2030
Article 5.3	Test Procedures	31 December 2024
Article 6.3	Penalty Disciplines	31 December 2024
Article 7.1	Pre-arrival Processing	31 December 2026
Article 7.4	Risk Management	31 December 2024
Article 7.5	Post-clearance Audit	31 December 2024
Article 7.6	Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times	31 December 2024
Article 7.8	Expedited Shipments	31 December 2023
Article 7.9	Perishable Goods	31 December 2030
Article 10.3	Use of International Standards	31 December 2023
Article 10.4	Single Window	31 December 2026

Provision	Heading/Description	Definitive Date for Implementation
Article 10.9	Temporary Admission of Goods and Inward and Outward Processing	31 December 2023
Article 11.1-11.3	Freedom of Transit	31 December 2024
Article 11.16-11.17		31 December 2024

For ease of reference, Belize's full list of category commitments can be found in the table attached herewith.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
Article 1 Publication and Availability of Information					
Article 1.1	Publication	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. External Financial assistance to implement electronic version of Belize's Customs tariffs and nomenclature and the electronic Customs Procedure Manual. 2. Development of systems to safeguard and protect the authenticity of documents that are uploaded to avoid unauthorized use and manipulation. 3. Diagnostic study on the relevance of the import licensing regime by product categories, so as to provide the scope for a modern policy/legal framework. Legal aid is required to proceed. 4. Develop a trade portal requiring a functioning website for the Directorate General for Foreign Trade. 5. Technical assistance to assess current infrastructure and recommendations for the development and implementation of an electronic trade management information system. Assistance should be inclusive of equipment and requisite training at all levels. 6. External financial and technical assistance for a comprehensive information system for BAHA which will allow for electronic transactions and information sharing. 7. External financial and technical assistance for the review and drafting of Sanitary and Phytosanitary regulations and bills. 8. Technical assistance to ensure that the policy for the provision of trade and trade related information is in line with Government policies and regulations. 9. Technical assistance needed to design a communications framework that meets the needs of BAHA and its stakeholders. 10. Training and IT development/advancement.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
					11. Technical and financial assistance to develop and implement a wide-area network for BAHA.
Article 1.2	Information Available through Internet	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<p>1. Legal aid required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop policy (guided by international standards) and guidelines. - Revise/Amend or Repeal the existing laws to take into considerations publication provisions as prescribed under the AILP. <p>2. Training on NTBs/WTO AILP.</p> <p>3. Technical assistance and financial support in area of IT for safeguarding and protecting the authenticity of documents that are uploaded to avoid unauthorized use and manipulation.</p> <p>Note: TACB identified in Art. 1.1 also applicable here.</p>
Article 1.3	Enquiry Points	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<p>1. Develop within the Directorate General for Foreign Trade a Trade Portal for the amalgamation of enquiries and responses.</p> <p>2. Legally establish Trade information enquiry point designated as the Central authority within the Government.</p> <p>3. Legal drafter to amend/revise the existing legislation to identify the Supplies Control Unit as the official contact point with functions and responsibilities clearly defined in all matters relevant to import licensing.</p>
Article 1.4	Notification	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	1. Training on WTO notification.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
Article 2 Opportunity to Comment, Information before Entry into Force and Consultations					
Article 2.1	Opportunity to Comment and Information Before Entry into Force	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide more links through other trade related websites where all traders can have access to proposed changes to laws and regulations. 2. Legal aid/advice required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise/Amend or Repeal the existing laws to take into considerations publication of procedures/administration etc. as prescribed under the AILP. - To proceed with compliance to the AILP. 3. Training on NTBs/WTO AILP.
Article 2.2	Consultations	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical Assistance to develop a Consultation policy; specific areas should include developing skills in regulatory impact assessment. 2. Technical Consultancy to develop the strategy/ policy for consultations and designate unit for implementation. 3. Legal Counsel to determine a standardized approach to consultations.
Article 3 Advance Rulings					
		C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Draftsperson needed with expertise in British common law to establish binding rulings. 2. Training in binding rulings. 3. 'Train the trainer' program.
Article 4 Procedures for Appeal or Review					
		C	22 February 2022	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consultancy to determine the legal framework for Appeal or Review process. 2. Legal Counsel to determine the framework for the institutionalization of the review and appeals process. 3. Legal assistance is necessary to develop structure of appeals tribunal. 4. Technical Assistance/Guidance to determine the human resource needs. 5. Financial and technical resources for equipment and software and expertise in

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
					developing an efficient electronic filing system. 6. Assistance with developing an appeal policy and relevant procedures.
Article 5 Other Measures to Enhance Impartiality, Non-Discrimination and Transparency					
Article 5.1	Notification for Enhanced Controls or Inspections	C	22 February 2019	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal advice due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of legal provision for import control purposes to be shared among border agencies. - Lack of established procedures to notify border authorities with respect to enhancing controls and inspections. - Lack of established procedures to ensure publication of a notice of termination of an import alert in a non-discriminatory and easily accessible manner. 2. Technical Assistance and financial support needed to set up an alert system of notification for BAHA. 3. A Systems Administrator has been hired in the interim to assist with updating BAHA's website however we lack an information and alert system to notify other agencies and service users regarding enhanced controls and inspections.
Article 5.2	Detention	C	22 February 2022	31 December 2030	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is need for quarantine holding facilities at all major points of entry inclusive of treatment facilities and refrigeration units.
Article 5.3	Test Procedures	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical assistance in acquisition of equipment for the National Forensic Laboratory which performs testing for Customs. 2. All BAHA diagnostic units require more human and material resources to improve testing capacity and to meet ISO 17025 accreditation. 3. Capacity Building of officers.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
Article 6 Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation and Penalties					
Article 6.1	General Disciplines on Fees and Charges Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	1. Technical assistance needed for regulatory impact assessment for BAHA. Output would provide the necessary justifications to obtain support for enactment of amended regulations and draft bills. 2. Undertake a feasibility study for BAHA.
Article 6.2	Specific Disciplines on Fees and Charges for Customs Processing Imposed on or in Connection with Importation and Exportation	B	22 February 2020	22 August 2021	-
Article 6.3	Penalty Disciplines	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	1. There is a need for formal training.
Article 7 Release and Clearance of Goods					
Article 7.1	Pre-arrival Processing	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2026	1. Upgrade agencies to full electronic systems for connectivity to ASYCUDA WORLD. Revision of current systems, updating existing systems and creation of new systems (Single-window approach). 2. BAHA need financial and technical assistance to implement an information system for the entire organisation. This would then address both import and export procedures and facilitate recall mechanism when necessary. Training of personnel required in this aspect.
Article 7.2	Electronic Payment	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2026 (new date requested)	The Customs and Excise Department allows electronic payments; it is currently engaged in an effort to include other agencies which require additional assistance and support from donors in implementing. <u>Requires the following additional assistance and support not earlier anticipated:</u> 1. Assistance and financial support for the development of a wide-area network for BAHA. 2. Assistance for the development of a legal framework that is supportive of electronic payments.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
Article 7.3	Separation of Release from Final Determination of Customs Duties, Taxes, Fees and Charges	A	-	-	-
Article 7.4	Risk Management	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquire a legal draftsman. 2. Acquire the necessary external technical assistance to develop a risk management strategy. 3. Acquire the necessary external technical assistance to establish operating procedures due to lack of standardized criteria. 4. Acquire the necessary external technical assistance in areas of risk management analysis in data gathering and criteria building.
Article 7.5	Post-clearance Audit	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide specialized training to Post-Audit Unit. Secure specialized training from external sources. (WCO, EU and CCLEC). 2. Request technical assistance to develop and implement the necessary systems. Secure technical assistance from EU. 3. Restructuring of the Post-Audit Unit and acquiring the proper audit software and other analytical tools. Secure technical assistance for training, software and analytical tools funding.
Article 7.6	Establishment and Publication of Average Release Times	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical assistance to develop TRS policy and procedures. 2. Technical assistance for training in the use of TRS software. 3. Assistance in conducting a study on the aspects that contribute to average release times for commodities regulated by BAHA.
Article 7.7	Trade Facilitation Measures for Authorized Operators	B	22 February 2020	30 June 2024 (new date requested)	-
Article 7.8	Expedited Shipments	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building to develop and administer single document processing for expedited shipment (based on 2014 Needs Assessment).

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Funding for IT equipment for administering expedited shipments (based on 2014 Needs Assessment). 3. TA for the standardization of procedures in expedited shipment.
Article 7.9	Perishable Goods	C	22 February 2021	31 December 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical and financial assistance required to ensure that proper inspection facilities are in place for agricultural and food product at each official point of entry. In addition, for trade in live animals appropriate holding and inspection facilities need to be in place (facilitate quarantine period and treatment where necessary prior to import and export and where applicable even for in-transit consignments).
Article 8 Border Agency Cooperation					
Article 8.1		A	-	-	-
Article 8.2 (a)		B	22 February 2019	22 February 2019	-
Article 8.2 (b)-(e)		C	31 December 2030	31 December 2030 (new date requested)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistance to conduct feasibility study. 2. Technical assistance to learn best practices in countries that have introduced joint border controls and one-stop border post control. 3. Financial assistance for equipment and software. 4. Technical assistance for strengthening the human resources of border agencies. 5. Technical assistance and cooperation for training and awareness building.
Article 9 Movement of Goods Intended for Import under Customs Control					
		A	-	-	-
Article 10 Formalities Connected with Importation, Exportation and Transit					
Article 10.1	Formalities and Documentation Requirements	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023 (new date requested)	-
Article 10.2	Acceptance of Copies	A	-	-	-
Article 10.3	Use of International Standards	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial support to participate in meetings of the International Standard Setting Bodies and the WTO/SPS Committee Meetings.

Provision	Heading/Description	Category	Indicative date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Definitive date for implementation (for categories B and C)	Assistance and Support for Capacity Building Required for Implementation (for category C)
Article 10.4	Single Window	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical Assistance and training for establishing a Single Window facility required. 2. Technical Assistance: equipment for the operation of the single window. 3. Capacity Building: Training for users (authorities, customs brokers, etc.) of the single window. 4. Public awareness campaign on the need and benefits of the single window. A regional approach is being taken towards a regional single window; which will be compatible with international standard; Belize taking a national approach in being fully compliant. (Key issue: compatibility).
Article 10.5	Pre-shipment Inspection	A	-	-	-
Article 10.6	Use of Customs Brokers	A	-	-	-
Article 10.7	Common Border Procedures and Uniform Documentation Requirements	B	22 February 2019	22 August 2021 (new date requested)	-
Article 10.8	Rejected Goods	A	-	-	-
Article 10.9	Temporary Admission of Goods and Inward and Outward Processing	C	22 February 2020	31 December 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical assistance to provide specialized training. Lack of trained officers in supervision and audit of manufacturing operations.
Article 11 Freedom of Transit					
Article 11.1-11.3		C	22 February 2022	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Comprehensive study and review of other fees and charges. Technical assistance needed for comprehensive study and review.
Article 11.4-11.15		A	-	-	-
Article 11.16-11.17		C	22 February 2020	31 December 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical assistance to facilitate comprehensive review/study and draft a Legal text. Comprehensive review and analysis of viability and benefits of membership into SIECA (Include a clause to address cross border transit issues).
Article 12 Customs Cooperation					
		A	-	-	-