

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

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Working Party on State Trading Enterprises

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QUESTIONS POSED BY THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING THE ARTICLE XVII NOTIFICATION OF MOROCCO¹

The following communication, dated 18 June 1996, has been received from the Permanent Mission of the United States.

1. We note that Morocco did not include COMAPRA and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in its Article XVII notification. We understand that COMAPRA is charged with procuring domestic oilseed crops in Morocco and that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry oversees the import of oilseeds.

Could Morocco explain the operation of these entities in the oilseed market and why these entities were not included in the notification?

2. We note that Tobacco Board "deals with imports and exports, having a tobacco marketing monopoly".

Could Morocco explain what the Tobacco Board's special right or privilege is, whether it engages in international trade, whether entities are allowed to engage in international trade, and how the fixed domestic prices relate to import, resale and export prices?

3. We note that the National Tea and Sugar Board (ONTS) "has a monopoly in the marketing of sugar, which is due to be abolished. The ONTS provides the market with a regular and appropriate supply of sugar."

Could Morocco explain the criteria used to determine the quantity to be imported?

4. Could Morocco explain the current status of the National Interprofessional Board for Cereals and Pulses (ONICL)? We understand that in the past ONICL conducted import tenders for wheat and barley and issued licences to importers for those commodities. Are other commercial entities allowed to market cereals domestically and/or purchase cereal imports? We understand that Morocco is in the process of redefining ONICL's authority with respect to the procurement and importation of grains. Could Morocco clarify the historic and current practices of ONICL in the wheat and barely market?

¹G/STR/N/1/MAR.

5. We note that the Moroccan Phosphates Board (OCP) maintains a monopoly in the mining of phosphate ore, and that the quantity and price of exports is determined by the market. Domestic prices are fixed by the government. Could Morocco please explain what factors are used by the Government to fix the domestic price level fixed and how the domestic fixed price compares to the export price?

6. Morocco also did not notify its Office Nationale de Recherches et d'Exploitations Pétrolières (ONAREP). We understand that ONAREP manages and coordinates hydrocarbon exploration and production. For example, ONAREP allocates prospecting permits to domestic and foreign oil companies, which share production costs and revenues with ONAREP. In the past, we understand there was a state-owned Société Nationale de Produit Pétroliers that also played an important role in Morocco's hydrocarbon market.

Would Morocco explain the operation on ONAREP and the Société Nationale de Produit Pétroliers and why they are not included in its notification.