

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

AGENDA ITEM 6(B): UPDATING BY OBSERVERS

Information provided by the OIML at the TBT Committee Meeting of 23 March 2004

1. The OIML works for international harmonization in the field of legal metrology. The following developments in its work are of interest to the work of the TBT Committee:

1. Mutual Acceptance Arrangement

2. At its 38th meeting in Kyoto, in November 2003, the International Committee of Legal Metrology voted to approve a Mutual Acceptance Arrangement (MAA), which aims to enable test data obtained in legal metrology testing laboratories in one OIML Member State to be accepted and used by responsible bodies in other OIML Member States.

3. The MAA will assist manufacturers in obtaining national pattern (type) approval certificates in other participating Member States or at least towards obtaining some other authorization to market and sale the corresponding instruments in such countries. Such an arrangement would complement the existing OIML Certificate System for Measuring Instruments which has enjoyed a high degree of success during its 13 years of operation, and will benefit manufacturers of measuring instruments by eliminating the requirements for repeated testing.

4. The MAA will serve as the framework for developing a set of signed "Declarations of Mutual Confidence" (DoMCs) for given categories of measuring instruments covered by OIML Recommendations which are implemented within the OIML Certificate System. The signature of a declaration of mutual confidence would not create any binding obligation, except that once a participant had accepted the test data, this data would have the same legal value as if they were coming from the participant's own test laboratories.

2. Joint Committee for the coordination of assistance to Developing Countries in Metrology, Accreditation and Standardization (JCDCMAS)

5. The OIML participates in this Committee, which aims to coordinate the technical assistance programmes of its member organizations (BIPM, OIML, ILAC, IAF, ISO, IEC, ITU and UNIDO). The World Bank has also expressed interest in the activities of the JCDCMAS. The JCDCMAS is currently working on the completion of the information obtained in the WTO survey of technical assistance needs and activities, as well as developing information modules for awareness raising activities in metrology, accreditation and standardization. The Committee will be holding its fourth meeting on 25 March 2004 in Geneva.
