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Article — Manuscript Version (Preprint)

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Global Trade and Customs Journal

Suggested Citation: Weerth, Carsten (2009) : New Countries Are Applying the Harmonized System Nomenclature: Update 2009, Global Trade and Customs Journal, ISSN 1569-755X, Kluwer Law International, Alphen aan den Rijn, Vol. 4, Iss. 9, pp. 293-294

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/168468>

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New Countries Are Applying the Harmonized System Nomenclature: Update 2009

Carsten Weerth*

More and more countries and economic regions are applying the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (Harmonized System Convention). This paper examines, in the update 2009, the new countries which are using the worldwide uniform language of trade since 2007 and 2008 and which are going to apply the tariff scheme from 2009, 2010 and 2011.

I. HS-APPLICATION SINCE 2008

The Nomenclature which is governed by the Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (Harmonized System Convention, Brussels 14 June 1983) is effective in three new countries since January 2008.

The HS-Nomenclature is being applied by three new countries:¹

- Benin,
- Dominican Republic, and
- Tanzania.

All new contracting parties of the Harmonized System (HS) have agreed to apply the HS-headings (four-digit code) and HS-subheadings (six-digit code) within their customs tariff schemes.

2. HS-APPLICATION SINCE 2007

The following four countries are applying the HS-Nomenclature since 2007:

- Bhutan,
- Chile,

- Montenegro (23 March 2007), and
- Tajikistan.

The World Customs Organization (WCO) has verified these data.²

3. HS-APPLICATION FROM 2009

Five new contracting parties of the HS have agreed to apply the HS-Nomenclature from January 2009:³

- Ghana,
- Kyrgyzstan,
- Paraguay,
- Republic of Congo, and
- Syria.

4. HS-APPLICATION FROM 2010

Two new contracting parties of the HS have agreed to apply the HS-Nomenclature from January 2010:⁴

- Cap Verde, and
- Ecuador.

Notes

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1 See WCO, HS Contracting Parties (July 2008), <www.wcoomd.org/ie/En/Conventions/conventions.html>, viewed on 14 Feb. 2009, 2008; WCO, Press Releases, <www.wcoomd.org/ie/En/Press/press.html>, viewed on 14 Feb. 2009, 2009a; and WCO, Position of Contracting Parties to the Harmonized System Convention and Non-contracting Party Administrations, <www.wcoomd.org/files/1.%20Public%20files/PDFandDocuments/Harmonized%20System/Situation%2020090201.pdf>, viewed on 14 Feb. 2009, 2009d.

2 See *ibid.*

3 See WCO (2009a, 2009d); I. Wind, 'HS 2007: What's It All About?', GTCJ 2, no. 2 (2007): 79–86; and C. Weerth, 'Basic Principles of Customs Classifications under the Harmonized System', GTCJ 3, no. 2 (2008): 61–67.

4 See WCO (2009a, 2009d).

However, these parties may apply the HS-Nomenclature from an earlier date.

5. HS-APPLICATION FROM 2011

Armenia, the new contracting party of the HS, has agreed to apply the HS-Nomenclature from January 2011.⁵

However, this party may apply the HS-Nomenclature from an earlier date.

6. HS-APPLICATION ALL IN ALL

The HS-Nomenclature is being applied by 136 contracting parties⁶ and more than 200 countries, customs, and economic unions worldwide, which apply the Nomenclature for their customs tariff schedules.⁷ That means that over 98% of the merchandise in international trade is classified in terms of the HS.⁸

7. FURTHER HS-CONTRACTING PARTIES?

Two further states have signed the HS-convention but their accession is not yet confirmed and the date of application of the HS-Nomenclature is not yet verified from the WCO: Burundi and Liberia.⁹

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Notes

5 See *ibid.*

6 See *ibid.*

7 See WCO, Harmonized System – List of Countries Applying the HS, <www.wcoomd.org/ie/En/Topics_Issues/HarmonizedSystem/List%20of%20countries%20applying%20HS-Eng.pdf>, viewed on 14 Feb. 2009, 2009b; Wind; and Weerth (2008).

8 See WCO, Harmonized System – General Information, <www.wcoomd.org/ie/En/Topics_Issues/HarmonizedSystem/HS%20General%20Information-Eng.htm>, viewed on 14 Feb. 2009, 2009c.

9 See WCO (2008).