

Annotated CAFTA Labor Chapter

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Chapter Sixteen

Labor

Article 16.1: Statement of Shared Commitment

1. The Parties reaffirm their obligations as members of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and their commitments under the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up (1998) (ILO Declaration).¹ Each Party shall strive to ensure that such labor principles and the internationally recognized labor rights set forth in Article 16.8 are recognized and protected by its law.

No commitment to meet ILO standards. Rolls back U.S. - Jordan standard. Here, commitment is only to "strive". Thus, obligation is met if a country demonstrates it is taking steps, making any effort ie striving regardless of outcomes or what standard is in affect.

2. The Parties affirm their full respect for their Constitutions. Recognizing the right of each Party to establish its own domestic labor standards, and to adopt or modify accordingly its labor laws, each Party shall strive to ensure that its laws provide for labor standards consistent with the internationally recognized labor rights set forth in Article 16.8 and shall strive to improve those standards in that light.

Article 16.2: Enforcement of Labor Laws

See pg 16-5 about enforcement tribunals

1. (a) A Party shall not fail to effectively enforce its labor laws, through a sustained or recurring course of action or inaction, in a manner affecting trade between the Parties, after the date of entry into force of this Agreement.

This guts this

(b) Each Party retains the right to exercise discretion with respect to investigatory, prosecutorial, regulatory, and compliance matters and to make decisions regarding the allocation of resources to enforcement with respect to other labor matters determined to have higher priorities. Accordingly, the Parties understand that a Party is in compliance with subparagraph (a) where a course of action or inaction reflects a reasonable exercise of such discretion, or results from a bona fide decision regarding the allocation of resources.

Art. 16.2(1)(b) "GRAMM" CLAUSE EVISCERATES WEAK ENFORCEMENT STANDARD IN Art. 16.2(1)(a)

2. The Parties recognize that it is inappropriate to encourage trade or investment by weakening or reducing the protections afforded in domestic labor laws. Accordingly, each Party shall strive to ensure that it does not waive or otherwise derogate from, or offer to waive or otherwise derogate from, such laws in a manner that weakens or reduces adherence to the internationally recognized labor rights referred to in Article 16.8 as an encouragement for trade with another Party, or as an encouragement for the establishment, acquisition, expansion, or retention of an investment in its territory.

JURAGENS ZOUS BACK NAFTA

Art. 11.14(2) In NAFTA "striving to ensure" is only requirement

¹ The Parties recall that paragraph 5 of the ILO Declaration states that labor standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes.

WATERS DOWN EVEN NAFTA LANGUAGE which required: "A Party should not waive or otherwise derogate from... Here, commitment is only "to strive to ensure" not to waive!

3. Nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to empower a Party's authorities to undertake labor law enforcement activities in the territory of another Party.

Article 16.3: Procedural Guarantees and Public Awareness

ie. if law does not recognize unions, no problem...

1. Each Party shall ensure that persons with a legally recognized interest under its law in a particular matter have appropriate access to tribunals for the enforcement of the Party's labor laws. Such tribunals may include administrative, quasi-judicial, judicial, or labor tribunals, as provided in the Party's domestic law.

2. Each Party shall ensure that proceedings before such tribunals for the enforcement of its labor laws are fair, equitable, and transparent and, to this end, each Party shall ensure that:

- (a) such proceedings comply with due process of law;
- (b) any hearings in such proceedings are open to the public, except where the administration of justice otherwise requires;
- (c) the parties to such proceedings are entitled to support or defend their respective positions, including by presenting information or evidence; and
- (d) such proceedings do not entail unreasonable charges or time limits or unwarranted delays.

3. Each Party shall provide that final decisions on the merits of the case in such proceedings are:

- (a) in writing and state the reasons on which the decisions are based;
- (b) made available without undue delay to the parties to the proceedings and, consistent with its law, to the public; and
- (c) based on information or evidence in respect of which the parties were offered the opportunity to be heard.

4. Each Party shall provide, as appropriate, that parties to such proceedings have the right to seek review and, where warranted, correction of final decisions issued in such proceedings.

5. Each Party shall ensure that tribunals that conduct or review such proceedings are impartial and independent and do not have any substantial interest in the outcome of the matter.

6. Each Party shall provide that the parties to such proceedings may seek remedies to ensure the enforcement of their rights under its labor laws. Such remedies may include measures such as orders, fines, penalties, or temporary workplace closures, as provided in the Party's laws.

7. Each Party shall promote public awareness of its labor laws, including by:

- (a) ensuring the availability of public information related to its labor laws and enforcement and compliance procedures; and
- (b) encouraging education of the public regarding its labor laws.

8. For greater certainty, decisions or pending decisions by each Party's administrative, quasi-judicial, judicial, or labor tribunals, as well as related proceedings, shall not be subject to revision or be reopened under the provisions of this Chapter.

Article 16.4: Institutional Arrangements *Blah, Blah, Blah ... Meetings.*

1. The Parties hereby establish a Labor Affairs Council, comprising cabinet-level or equivalent representatives of the Parties, or their designees.

2. The Council shall meet within the first year after the date of entry into force of this Agreement and thereafter as often as it considers necessary to oversee the implementation of and review progress under this Chapter, including the activities of the Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism established under Article 16.5, and to pursue the labor objectives of this Agreement. Unless the Parties otherwise agree, each meeting of the Council shall include a session at which members of the Council have an opportunity to meet with the public to discuss matters relating to the implementation of this Chapter.

3. Each Party shall designate an office within its labor ministry that shall serve as a contact point with the other Parties, and with the public, for purposes of carrying out the work of the Council, including coordination of the Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism. Each Party's contact point shall provide for the submission, receipt, and consideration of communications from persons of a Party on matters related to the provisions of this Chapter, and shall make such communications available to the other Parties and, as appropriate, to the public. Each Party shall review such communications, as appropriate, in accordance with domestic procedures. The Council shall develop general guidelines for considering such communications.

4. Each Party may convene a new, or consult an existing, national labor advisory or consultative committee, comprising members of its public, including representatives of its labor and business organizations, to provide views on any issues related to this Chapter.

5. All decisions of the Council shall be taken by consensus. All decisions of the Council shall be made public, unless otherwise provided in this Agreement, or unless the Council otherwise decides.

6. The Council may prepare reports on matters related to the implementation of this Chapter, and shall make such reports public.

Article 16.5: Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism *Blah, Blah, Blah...*

1. Recognizing that cooperation on labor issues can play an important role in advancing development in the territory of the Parties and in providing opportunities to improve labor standards, and to further advance common commitments regarding labor matters, including the principles embodied in the ILO Declaration and *ILO Convention No. 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)* (ILO Convention 182), the Parties hereby establish a Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism, as set out in Annex 16.5. The Mechanism shall operate in a manner that respects each Party's law and sovereignty.

2. While endeavoring to strengthen each Party's institutional capacity to fulfill the common goals of the Agreement, the Parties shall strive to ensure that the objectives of the Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism, and the activities undertaken through that Mechanism:

- (a) are consistent with each Party's national programs, development strategies, and priorities;
- (b) provide opportunities for public participation in the development and implementation of such objectives and activities; and
- (c) take into account each Party's economy, culture, and legal system.

Article 16.6: Cooperative Labor Consultations *More unenforceable Blah, Blah*

1. A Party may request consultations with another Party regarding any matter arising under this Chapter by delivering a written request to the contact point that the other Party has designated under Article 16.4.3.

2. The consultations shall begin promptly after delivery of the request. The request shall contain information that is specific and sufficient to enable the Party receiving the request to respond.

3. The consulting Parties shall make every attempt to arrive at a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter, taking into account opportunities for cooperation relating to the matter,

and may seek advice or assistance from any person or body they deem appropriate in order to fully examine the matter at issue.

4. If the consulting Parties fail to resolve the matter pursuant to paragraph 3, a consulting Party may request that the Council be convened to consider the matter by delivering a written request to the contact point of each of the other Parties.²
5. The Council shall promptly convene and shall endeavor to resolve the matter, including, where appropriate, by consulting outside experts and having recourse to such procedures as good offices, conciliation, or mediation.
6. If the matter concerns whether a Party is conforming to its obligations under Article 16.2.1(a), and the consulting Parties have failed to resolve the matter within 60 days of a request under paragraph 1, the complaining Party may request consultations under Article 20.4 (Consultations) or a meeting of the Commission under Article 20.5 (Commission – Good Offices, Conciliation, and Mediation) and, as provided in Chapter Twenty (Dispute Settlement), thereafter have recourse to the other provisions of that Chapter. The Council may, as appropriate, provide information to the Commission on consultations held on the matter.
7. No Party may have recourse to dispute settlement under this Agreement for any matter arising under any provision of this Chapter other than Article 16.2.1(a).
8. No Party may have recourse to dispute settlement under this Agreement for a matter arising under Article 16.2.1(a) without first pursuing resolution of the matter in accordance with this Article.
9. In cases where the consulting Parties agree that a matter arising under this Chapter would be more appropriately addressed under another agreement to which the consulting Parties are party, they shall refer the matter for appropriate action in accordance with that agreement.

Article 16.7: Labor Roster **SYSTEM FOR ENFORCING LABOR PROVISIONS**

1. The Parties shall establish within six months after the date of entry into force of this Agreement and maintain a roster of up to 28 individuals who are willing and able to serve as panclists in disputes arising under Article 16.2.1(a). Unless the Parties otherwise agree, up to three members of the roster shall be nationals of each Party, and up to seven members of the roster shall be selected from among individuals who are not nationals of any Party. Labor roster members shall be appointed by consensus, and may be reappointed. Once established, a roster shall remain in effect for a minimum of three years, and shall remain in effect thereafter until the Parties constitute a new roster. The Parties may appoint a replacement where a roster member is no longer available to serve.

See This
Provision
AND
Article
20-17
on page
20-10
attached.

² For purposes of paragraphs 4, 5, and 6, the Council shall consist of the cabinet-level representatives of the consulting Parties or their high-level designees.

UNLIKE ENFORCEMENT OF ALL
CAFTA COMMERCIAL PROVISION,
LABOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL
VIOLATIONS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO
TRADE SANCTIONS - AND FINES CAPPED AT \$15 million per year

2. Labor roster members shall:

- (a) have expertise or experience in labor law or its enforcement, international trade, or the resolution of disputes arising under international agreements;
- (b) be chosen strictly on the basis of objectivity, reliability, and sound judgment;
- (c) be independent of, and not affiliated with or take instructions from, any Party; and
- (d) comply with a code of conduct to be established by the Commission.

3. Where a Party claims that a dispute arises under Article 16.2.1(a), Article 20.9 (Panel Selection) shall apply, except that the panel shall be composed entirely of panelists meeting the qualifications in paragraph 2.

Article 16.8: Definitions

For purposes of this Chapter:

labor laws means a Party's statutes or regulations, or provisions thereof, that are directly related to the following internationally recognized labor rights:

- (a) the right of association;
- (b) the right to organize and bargain collectively;
- (c) a prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor;
- (d) a minimum age for the employment of children and the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor; and
- (e) acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health.

For greater certainty, the setting of standards and levels in respect of minimum wages by each Party shall not be subject to obligations under this Chapter. Each Party's obligations under this Chapter pertain to enforcing the level of the general minimum wage established by that Party.

statutes or regulations means:

- (a) for Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, laws of its legislative body or regulations promulgated pursuant to an

act of its legislative body that are enforceable by action of the executive body;
and

- (b) for the United States, acts of Congress or regulations promulgated pursuant to an act of Congress that are enforceable by action of the federal government.

Annex 16.5

Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism

Organization and Principal Functions

1. The Labor Affairs Council working through each Party's contact point shall coordinate the activities of the Labor Cooperation and Capacity Building Mechanism. The contact points shall meet within six months after the date of entry into force of this Agreement and thereafter as often as they consider necessary.
2. The contact points, together with representatives of other appropriate agencies and ministries, shall cooperate to:
 - (a) establish priorities, with particular emphasis on those subjects identified in paragraph 3 of this Annex, for cooperation and capacity building activities on labor issues;
 - (b) develop specific cooperative and capacity building activities in accordance with such priorities;
 - (c) exchange information regarding each Party's labor laws and practices, including best practices, as well as ways to strengthen them; and
 - (d) seek support, as appropriate, from international organizations such as the International Labor Organization, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Organization of American States, to advance common commitments regarding labor matters.

Cooperation and Capacity Building Priorities

3. The Mechanism may initiate bilateral or regional cooperative activities on labor issues, which may include, but need not be limited to:
 - (a) *fundamental rights and their effective application*: legislation and practice related to the core elements of the ILO Declaration (freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining, elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor, the effective abolition of child labor, and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation);
 - (b) *worst forms of child labor*: legislation and practice related to compliance with ILO Convention 182;

- (c) *labor administration*: institutional capacity of labor administrations and tribunals, especially training and professionalization of human resources, including career civil service;
- (d) *labor inspectorates and inspection systems*: methods and training to improve the level and efficiency of labor law enforcement, strengthen labor inspection systems, and help ensure compliance with labor laws;
- (e) *alternative dispute resolution*: initiatives aimed at establishing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms for labor disputes;
- (f) *labor relations*: forms of cooperation and dispute resolution to ensure productive labor relations among workers, employers, and governments;
- (g) *working conditions*: mechanisms for supervising compliance with statutes and regulations pertaining to hours of work, minimum wages and overtime, occupational safety and health, and employment conditions;
- (h) *migrant workers*: dissemination of information regarding labor rights of migrant workers in each Party's territory;
- (i) *social assistance programs*: human resource development and employee training, among other programs;
- (j) *labor statistics*: development of methods for the Parties to generate comparable labor market statistics in a timely manner;
- (k) *employment opportunities*: promotion of new employment opportunities and workforce modernization;
- (l) *gender*: gender issues, including the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and
- (m) *technical issues*: programs, methodologies, and experiences regarding productivity improvement, encouragement of best labor practices, and the effective use of technologies, including those that are Internet-based.

Implementation of Cooperative Activities

4. Pursuant to the Mechanism, the Parties may cooperate on labor issues using any means they deem appropriate, including, but not limited to:

- (a) technical assistance programs, including by providing human, technical, and material resources, as appropriate;
- (b) exchange of official delegations, professionals, and specialists, including through study visits and other technical exchanges;
- (c) exchange of information on standards, regulations, and procedures, and best practices, including pertinent publications and monographs;
- (d) joint conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, training sessions, and outreach and education programs;
- (e) collaborative projects or demonstrations; and
- (f) joint research projects, studies, and reports, including by engaging independent specialists with recognized expertise.

Public Participation

5. In identifying areas for labor cooperation and capacity building, and in carrying out cooperative activities, each Party shall consider the views of its worker and employer representatives, as well as those of other members of the public.

Chapter Twenty

Dispute Settlement

Section A: Dispute Settlement

Article 20.1: Cooperation

The Parties shall at all times endeavor to agree on the interpretation and application of this Agreement, and shall make every attempt through cooperation and consultations to arrive at a mutually satisfactory resolution of any matter that might affect its operation.

Article 20.2: Scope of Application

Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, the dispute settlement provisions of this Chapter shall apply:

- (a) with respect to the avoidance or settlement of all disputes between the Parties regarding the interpretation or application of this Agreement;
- (b) wherever a Party considers that an actual or proposed measure of another Party is or would be inconsistent with the obligations of this Agreement or that another Party has otherwise failed to carry out its obligations under this Agreement; and
- (c) wherever a Party considers that an actual or proposed measure of another Party causes or would cause nullification or impairment in the sense of Annex 20.2.

Article 20.3: Choice of Forum

1. Where a dispute regarding any matter arises under this Agreement and under another free trade agreement to which the disputing Parties are party or the WTO Agreement, the complaining Party may select the forum in which to settle the dispute.
2. Once the complaining Party has requested a panel under an agreement referred to in paragraph 1, the forum selected shall be used to the exclusion of the others.

Article 20.4: Consultations

1. Any Party may request in writing consultations with any other Party with respect to any actual or proposed measure or any other matter that it considers might affect the operation of this Agreement.
2. The requesting Party shall deliver the request to the other Parties, and shall set out the reasons for the request, including identification of the actual or proposed measure or other matter at issue and an indication of the legal basis for the complaint.
3. A Party that considers it has a substantial trade interest in the matter may participate in the consultations on delivery of written notice to the other Parties within seven days of the date

3. The requesting Party shall deliver the request to the other Parties, and shall set out the reasons for the request, including identification of the actual or proposed measure or other matter at issue and an indication of the legal basis for the complaint.

4. Unless it decides otherwise, the Commission shall convene within ten days of delivery of the request and shall endeavor to resolve the dispute promptly. The Commission may:

- (a) call on such technical advisers or create such working groups or expert groups as it deems necessary;
- (b) have recourse to good offices, conciliation, mediation, or such other dispute resolution procedures; or
- (c) make recommendations,

as may assist the consulting Parties to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the dispute.

5. Unless it decides otherwise, the Commission shall consolidate two or more proceedings before it pursuant to this Article regarding the same measure or matter. The Commission may consolidate two or more proceedings regarding other matters before it pursuant to this Article that it determines are appropriate to be considered jointly.⁴

Article 20.6: Request for an Arbitral Panel

1. If the consulting Parties fail to resolve a matter within:

- (a) 30 days after the Commission has convened pursuant to Article 20.5;
- (b) 30 days after the Commission has convened in respect of the matter most recently referred to it, where proceedings have been consolidated pursuant to Article 20.5.5;
- (c) 30 days after a Party has delivered a request for consultations under Article 20.4 in a matter regarding perishable goods, if the Commission has not convened pursuant to Article 20.5.4;
- (d) 75 days after a Party has delivered a request for consultations under Article 20.4, if the Commission has not convened pursuant to Article 20.5.4; or
- (e) such other period as the consulting Parties may agree,

any consulting Party that requested a meeting of the Commission with regard to the measure or other matter in accordance with Article 20.5 may request in writing the establishment of an arbitral panel to consider the matter. The requesting Party shall deliver the request to the other

⁴ For purposes of this paragraph, the Commission shall consist of the cabinet-level representatives of the consulting Parties in the relevant proceedings, as set out in Annex 19.1 (The Free Trade Commission), or their designees.

- (c) be independent of, and not be affiliated with or take instructions from, any Party; and
- (d) comply with a code of conduct to be established by the Commission.

Article 20.8: Qualifications of Panelists

All panelists shall meet the qualifications set out in Article 20.7.2. Individuals may not serve as panelists for a dispute in which they have participated pursuant to Article 20.5.4.

Article 20.9: Panel Selection

1. The Parties shall apply the following procedures in selecting a panel:
 - (a) the panel shall comprise three members;
 - (b) the disputing Parties shall endeavor to agree on the chair of the panel within 15 days of the delivery of the request for the establishment of the panel. If the disputing Parties are unable to agree on the chair within this period, the chair shall be selected by lot within three days from among the roster members who are not nationals of a disputing Party;
 - (c) within 15 days of selection of the chair, the complaining Party or Parties shall select one panelist and the Party complained against shall select one panelist;
 - (d) if the complaining Party or Parties or the Party complained against fail to select a panelist within this period, the panelist shall be selected by lot within three days from among the roster members who are nationals of such Party or Parties, as the case may be; and
 - (e) each disputing Party shall endeavor to select panelists who have expertise or experience relevant to the subject matter of the dispute, as appropriate.
2. Panelists shall normally be selected from the roster. Any disputing Party may exercise a peremptory challenge against any individual not on the roster who is proposed as a panelist by a disputing Party within 15 days after the individual has been proposed.
3. If a disputing Party believes that a panelist is in violation of the code of conduct, the disputing Parties shall consult and if they agree, the panelist shall be removed and a new panelist shall be selected in accordance with this Article.

Article 20.10: Rules of Procedure

1. The Commission shall establish by the date of entry into force of this Agreement Model Rules of Procedure, which shall ensure:
 - (a) a right to at least one hearing before the panel, which, subject to subparagraph (c), shall be open to the public;

Article 20.13: Initial Report

1. Unless the disputing Parties otherwise agree, the panel shall base its report on the relevant provisions of this Agreement, the submissions and arguments of the disputing Parties, and on any information before it pursuant to Article 20.12.
2. If the disputing Parties request, the panel may make recommendations for resolution of the dispute.
3. Unless the disputing Parties otherwise agree, the panel shall, within 120 days after the last panelist is selected or such other period as the Model Rules of Procedure established pursuant to Article 20.10 may provide, present to the disputing Parties an initial report containing:
 - (a) findings of fact, including any findings pursuant to a request under Article 20.10.6;
 - (b) its determination as to whether a disputing Party has not conformed with its obligations under this Agreement or that a Party's measure is causing nullification or impairment in the sense of Annex 20.2, or any other determination requested in the terms of reference; and
 - (c) its recommendations, if the disputing Parties have requested them, for resolution of the dispute.
4. When the panel considers that it cannot provide its report within 120 days, it shall inform the disputing Parties in writing of the reasons for the delay together with an estimate of the period within which it will provide its report. In no case should the period to provide the report exceed 180 days. The panel shall inform the disputing Parties of any determination under this paragraph no later than seven days after the initial written submission of the complaining Party or Parties and shall adjust the remainder of the schedule accordingly.
5. Panelists may furnish separate opinions on matters not unanimously agreed.
6. A disputing Party may submit written comments to the panel on its initial report within 14 days of presentation of the report or within such other period as the disputing Parties may agree.
7. After considering any written comments on the initial report, the panel may reconsider its report and make any further examination it considers appropriate.

Article 20.14: Final Report

1. The panel shall present a final report to the disputing Parties, including any separate opinions on matters not unanimously agreed, within 30 days of presentation of the initial report, unless the disputing Parties otherwise agree. The disputing Parties shall release the final report to the public within 15 days thereafter, subject to the protection of confidential information.

benefits 30 days after the later of the date on which it provides notice under this paragraph or the panel issues its determination under paragraph 3, as the case may be.

3. If the Party complained against considers that:

- (a) the level of benefits proposed to be suspended is manifestly excessive; or
- (b) it has eliminated the non-conformity or the nullification or impairment that the panel has found,

it may, within 30 days after the complaining Party provides notice under paragraph 2, request that the panel be reconvened to consider the matter. The Party complained against shall deliver its request in writing to the complaining Party. The panel shall reconvene as soon as possible after delivery of the request and shall present its determination to the disputing Parties within 90 days after it reconvenes to review a request under subparagraph (a) or (b), or within 120 days for a request under subparagraphs (a) and (b). If the panel determines that the level of benefits proposed to be suspended is manifestly excessive, it shall determine the level of benefits it considers to be of equivalent effect.

4. The complaining Party may suspend benefits up to the level the panel has determined under paragraph 3 or, if the panel has not determined the level, the level the complaining Party has proposed to suspend under paragraph 2, unless the panel has determined that the Party complained against has eliminated the non-conformity or the nullification or impairment.

5. In considering what benefits to suspend pursuant to paragraph 2:

- (a) the complaining Party should first seek to suspend benefits in the same sector or sectors as that affected by the measure or other matter that the panel has found to be inconsistent with the obligations of this Agreement or to have caused nullification or impairment in the sense of Annex 20.2; and
- (b) if the complaining Party considers that it is not practicable or effective to suspend benefits in the same sector or sectors, it may suspend benefits in other sectors.

6. The complaining Party may not suspend benefits if, within 30 days after it provides written notice of intent to suspend benefits or, if the panel is reconvened under paragraph 3, within 20 days after the panel provides its determination, the Party complained against provides written notice to the complaining Party that it will pay an annual monetary assessment. The disputing Parties shall consult, beginning no later than ten days after the Party complained against provides notice, with a view to reaching agreement on the amount of the assessment. If the disputing Parties are unable to reach an agreement within 30 days after consultations begin, the amount of the assessment shall be set at a level, in U.S. dollars, equal to 50 percent of the level of the benefits the panel has determined under paragraph 3 to be of equivalent effect or, if the panel has not determined the level, 50 percent of the level that the complaining Party has proposed to suspend under paragraph 2.

7. Unless the Commission otherwise decides, a monetary assessment shall be paid to the complaining Party in U.S. dollars, or in an equivalent amount of the currency of the Party

Annex 20.17

Inflation Adjustment Formula for Monetary Assessments

1. An annual monetary assessment imposed before December 31, 2005 shall not exceed 15 million dollars (U.S.).
2. Beginning January 1, 2006, the 15 million dollar (U.S.) annual cap shall be adjusted for inflation in accordance with paragraphs 3 through 5.
3. The period used for the accumulated inflation adjustment shall be calendar year 2004 through the most recent calendar year preceding the one in which the assessment is owed.
4. The relevant inflation rate shall be the U.S. inflation rate as measured by the Producer Price Index for Finished Goods published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
5. The inflation adjustment shall be estimated according to the following formula:

$$\$15 \text{ million} \times (1 + \delta_i) = A$$

δ_i = accumulated U.S. inflation rate from calendar year 2004 through the most recent calendar year preceding the one in which the assessment is owed.

A = cap for the assessment for the year in question.