

Section 5: Institutional requirements

Article 24: Institutions of the Agreement

1. The Foreign Ministers' Committee

- a) A committee of foreign ministers of the Member Countries of the agreement shall be instituted, which shall be concerned with defining the policy measures need to drive forward and expand the Agadir process amongst the Arab Mediterranean countries, and between them and the European Union.
- b) The Foreign Ministers' Committee will meet annually, or as often as necessary, at the initiative of any of the Member Countries, in accordance with the Committee's internal rules of procedure, which it shall establish in accordance with paragraph (d) of this Article.
- c) The presidency of this committee shall be assumed in rotation between the Member Countries, in alphabetical order, and the provisions of the committee's internal rules of procedure.
- d) The Foreign Minister's Committee may set up a committee at the level of senior officials to present its recommendations to the ministerial committee.
- e) The Foreign Minister's Committee shall, upon its establishment, approve its internal rules of procedure, and those of the Senior Officials' Committee.

2. The Committee of Foreign Trade Ministers

- a) A ministerial committee shall be set up at the level of ministers responsible for foreign trade, and shall meet at least annually, or whenever the circumstances require, at the initiative of any one the Member Countries, in accordance with the Committee's internal rules of procedure.
- b) The committee shall be concerned with for supervising the implementation of the Agreement, and with overcoming and difficulties impeding progress, and with defining ways of deepening co-operation and integration between the parties to the Agreement. The committee shall study general questions relating to the Agreement, and any other aspects of joint concern, and shall have power of decision in this respect.
- c) The presidency of this committee shall be assumed in rotation between the Member Countries, in alphabetical order, and the provisions of the committee's internal rules of procedure as specified in paragraph (f) of this Article.
- d) The committee's decisions shall be considered binding for all the Member Countries who may be required to take steps to ensure their implementation.
- e) The Ministerial Committee shall form a technical committee charged with follow-up on the implementation of the agreement, which shall submit its recommendations to the Ministerial Committee. The Ministerial Committee may decide to delegate a part of its responsibilities to the technical committee.
- f) The Ministerial Committee shall adopt its internal rules of procedure, and those of the technical committee.

Article 25: Tasks of the Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee

The Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee shall in particular undertake the following tasks:

- Overall review and performance assessment as regards the implementation of the Agreement.
- Review and assessment of the results of the Agreement in the light of the experience gained through its implementation, and examination of the means to improve the relations between the Member Countries.
- Assistance in avoiding disputes and their resolution through consultations on the basis of Article 28.
- Examination of proposed modifications to the Agreement, and approval of such modifications, observing the legal requirements of each of the parties.

This committee may form permanent or specialized committees or working groups, and may delegate to them any of its competences. The Ministerial Committee shall establish its internal rules of procedure, and shall take all decisions by unanimous agreement.

Article 26: Tasks of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee shall undertake such tasks as may be entrusted to it by the Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee, and in particular the following tasks:

- Follow up on the implementation of the provisions of the agreement.
- Follow up on decisions of the Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee.
- Offering assistance to resolution of disputes, on the basis of Article 28 of this Agreement.

Article 27: The Technical Unit

A Technical Unit shall be set up through this agreement, to deal with matters pertaining to it. It shall in particular offer advice and technical support on all matters concerning the implementation of the Agreement, in accordance with Annex No. III.

Section 6: General provisions and concluding requirements

Article 28: Resolution of disputes

The Member Countries shall consult and co-operate in the application of this Agreement, in order to achieve a concurrence of views on any matters which might have an impact upon the good implementation of the Agreement, and on any measures taken, or which may be taken

by any of the Member Countries, or any other party, at variance with the provisions of this agreement.

In case of the occurrence of any dispute over the interpretation of this agreement, or should any of the Member Countries of the Agreement consider that one of the other members had failed to respect its obligations in the context of this agreement, or in the event that a Member Country should take steps infringing the privileges established under this agreement, it shall be incumbent upon all the concerned parties to make every effort to arrive by consultation at a solution satisfactory to all parties.

In the event that it shall not be possible for the concerned parties to arrive at a satisfactory solution within 45 days from the date of being informed of a request for consultations, the matter shall be referred to the Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee.

The Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee shall study the matter, and shall take the required decisions in order to resolve disputes relating to interpretation and application of the Agreement.

In the event of the Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee being unable to arrive at a solution satisfactory to the parties concerned as regards the resolution of the dispute, the concerned parties may request this committee to nominate a special arbitration committee to issue a judgment on the matter.

The Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee shall study any request for the constitution of a special arbitration committee, and in the event that such a request is accepted, the arbitration committee shall be formed within a period not to exceed 30 days from the date on which the request is accepted. This duration may be reduced to 15 days in the case of goods having a short expiry period.

The Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee shall decide the rules and working procedures of any such special arbitration committee.

Article 29: Review of the Agreement

The Member Countries to this Agreement shall review the agreement in the light of future developments in international and regional economic relations, in particular in the context of the World Trade Organisation Agreement, and in this context and in the light of relevant recent developments shall also undertake studies of the possibilities to develop, deepen and expand co-operation between them in areas not covered by the Agreement. The Member Countries may present proposals to the Foreign Ministers' Committee in order that the appropriate decisions may be taken.

The results of the process specified in the above Article shall be subject to ratification by the Member Countries of this Agreement, in accordance with the legislation in force in each country.

Article 30: Accession to the Agreement

Any Arab state member of the Arab League and the Greater Arab Free Trade area, linked to the EU through an Association Agreement or a free trade agreement, may request to accede to this Agreement. Such a request must be approved by all the Member Countries through the Foreign Affairs Ministers' Committee. The acceding country must agree to implement all the effective obligations of the agreement in full as of the date of accession. The Foreign Trade Ministers' Committee may through consultation set a timetable for the dismantling of customs duties on products from the acceding country on the basis of like treatment.

Article 31: Withdrawal

This Agreement shall continue in effect for an unlimited period. Any of the Member Countries may withdraw from the Agreement, by informing the Foreign Affairs Ministers' Committee of this. The Agreement shall become ineffective with regard to the country withdrawing, after a period of three months from the date of information. The provisions of this agreement as regards specific commitments having a determined duration of validity shall remain in force until expiry of the period of effect of these commitments.

Article 32: Other arrangements

This Agreement shall not prevent the extension or ratification of other agreements setting up customs unions or free trade areas, or the institution of other arrangements concerning cross-border trade, in accordance with Article 24 and Section 4 of the General Agreement on Customs Tariffs and Trade of 1994, and obligation to which this agreement gives rise.

Article 33

The Protocol on Rules of Origin, and the specific annexes to this Agreement shall be considered as integral parts of the Agreement.

Article 34: Ratification and entry into force

The ratification of this Agreement by each of the Member Countries shall take place in accordance with the specific constitutional arrangements of each country. Copies of the ratified texts of the agreement shall be deposited with the Kingdom of Morocco, which shall be responsible for informing the other parties.

This Agreement shall enter into force with effect from the date upon which the informing country shall inform the other countries of the completion by the last ratifying country of the procedures specified in the above paragraph.

This agreement has been prepared in the Arabic language in four original copies, each having legal effect, signed in Rabat on 4 Muharram 1425 H, corresponding to 25 February 2004.

For the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
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For the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco
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For the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Ahmed Maher
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For the Government of the Republic of Tunisia
Alhabib bin Eisa
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