

2. Any time limit referred to in this Chapter may be modified by mutual agreement of the Parties to the dispute. The arbitration panel may at any time propose to the Parties to modify any time limit referred to in this Chapter, stating the reasons for the proposal.

Article 15.26

Review and Modification

The Trade Committee may decide to review and modify Annexes 15-A (Rules of Procedure), 15-B (Code of Conduct for Arbitrators and Mediators) and 15-C (Mediation Mechanism).

CHAPTER 16

Cooperation and capacity building

Article 16.1

Objectives and Scope

1. The Parties affirm the importance of cooperation and capacity building for the efficient implementation of this Agreement, which supports the continued expansion of and creates new opportunities for trade and investment between them.
2. The Parties commit to deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest taking into consideration the different levels of development between the Union and Viet Nam. That cooperation shall foster sustainable development in all its dimensions, including sustainable growth and the reduction of poverty.
3. This Chapter applies to all provisions on cooperation of this Agreement.

Article 16.2

Areas and Means of Cooperation

1. The Parties acknowledge that cooperation shall be carried out within the existing legal and institutional framework and according to the rules and procedures governing the relations between the Parties.
2. To achieve the objectives referred to in Article 16.1 (Objectives and Scope), the Parties attach particular importance to cooperating in the following areas:
 - (a) regional cooperation and integration;
 - (b) trade facilitation;
 - (c) trade policy and regulations;
 - (d) trade-related aspects of agriculture, fishery and forestry;
 - (e) sustainable development, in particular in its environmental and labour dimensions;
 - (f) small and medium-sized enterprises;
 - (g) other areas identified under specific Chapters of this Agreement; and

(h) other areas of mutual interest related to this Agreement.

3. Cooperation between the Parties shall primarily be carried out by means of exchange of information, experience and best practices as well as by means of policy cooperation. Where appropriate, seminars, workshops, training, studies, technical assistance and capacity building may be considered.

4. The Parties acknowledge the potentially important role of the private sector in cooperation and shall support its involvement in order to contribute to maximising this Agreement's benefit for economic growth and development.

Article 16.3

Animal Welfare

The Parties agree to cooperate on animal welfare as necessary, including technical assistance and capacity building for the development of animal welfare standards. For the purpose of this Article they shall consult the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures established pursuant to Article 17.2 (Specialised Committees).

Article 16.4

Institutional Mechanism

1. Cooperation issues shall be discussed in the relevant specialised committees established pursuant to Article 17.2 (Specialised Committees). In areas of cooperation outside the remit of the specialised committees, those issues shall be discussed within the Trade Committee.

2. Each Party shall designate a contact point within its administration to liaise with the other Party on matters related to the implementation of this Chapter.

CHAPTER 17

Institutional, general and final provisions

Article 17.1

Trade Committee

1. The Parties hereby establish a Trade Committee comprising representatives of the Parties.

2. The Trade Committee shall meet once a year, unless otherwise decided by the Trade Committee, or in urgent cases at the request of a Party. The meetings of the Trade Committee shall take place alternately in the Union and in Viet Nam, unless otherwise agreed by the Parties. The Trade Committee shall be co-chaired by the Minister of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam and the Member of the European Commission responsible for Trade, or their respective delegates. The Trade Committee shall agree on its meeting schedule and set its agenda.

3. The Trade Committee shall:

(a) ensure the proper operation of this Agreement;

(b) supervise and facilitate the implementation and application of this Agreement, and further its general aims;

(c) supervise and coordinate the work of all specialised committees, working groups and other bodies established under this Agreement, recommend to those bodies any necessary action, and evaluate and adopt decisions, where provided for in this Agreement, regarding any subject matter referred to it by those bodies;