Taiwan Practices in the WTO Main Activities: 2002-2015

Der-Chin Horng

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a Ph.D. in Laws, University College London. Research Fellow at the Institute of European and American Studies, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, R.O.C.; Professor (part-time) of the WTO Law and the EU Economic Law at both National Taiwan University and National Chengchi University; and Member of the International Protection of Consumers Committee, International Law Association. The Author would like to thank invaluable comments by anonymous referees, and research assistance by Yi-Chu Niu, Minfang Tsai and Jeffrey N.C. Cuvilier. E-mail: dchorng@sinica.edu.tw.
I Introduction

This special report examines Taiwan practices in the main areas of WTO activities since 2002, which include: (1) Ministerial Conferences; (2) Trade Policy Review Mechanisms; (3) Doha Development Agenda negotiations; (4) Dispute Settlement procedures; and (5) Regional Trade Agreements. In line with legal interpretations and policy analyses, this special report also makes use of many cases and trade data for undertaking empirical research. Taiwan’s trade and economy have evidenced positive growth since its WTO accession, and Taiwan is generally considered a good model for WTO’s new accession members. This special report also proposes that Taiwan leverage WTO multilateralism to diversify its export markets and to ensure the sustainable development of its trade in the future.

II Taiwan’s Participation in the WTO

Taiwan’s accession to the WTO was approved at the WTO Doha Ministerial Conference on November 11, 2001, and Taiwan became the 144th member of the WTO on January 1, 2002 under the name of “Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu” (Chinese Taipei).1 Taiwan’s membership, as former WTO Director-General Mike Moore pointed out, is significant as it demonstrates that “the WTO is taking yet another step towards achieving universal membership [which] will enhance even further economic cooperation and will promote trade exchanges in a very dynamic region of the world.”2

Taiwan has actively participated in WTO activities since it become a formal member. The Committee on Government Procurement adopted a decision inviting Taiwan to accede to the Agreement after the completion of the negotiations on December 9, 2008, and Taiwan became the 41st Party to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement on July 15, 2009.3 Former Director-General Pascal Lamy stated Taiwan’s participation could “further advances the important principles of transparency, openness, efficiency and value-for-money in government procurement.”4 Moreover, Taiwan approved the Trade

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1 World Trade Organization (WTO), Accession of the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, WT/L/433, paras. 1-7 (Nov. 23, 2001).