

## **Minutes of the 7 February 2014 meeting of the Commission's expert group on the Generalised Scheme of Preferences**

### **Point 1. Adoption of the agenda**

The draft agenda circulated by the Commission prior to the meeting was adopted.

### **Point 2. Update on GSP+ monitoring mechanism**

On the basis of documents circulated in advance of the meeting, the Commission services outlined the features of monitoring of the GSP+ beneficiaries' compliance with their binding undertakings, in particular on the basis of the GSP+ "scorecards" discussed during the last meeting of the Group. Experts overall supported the Commission services' approach, while they had comments and questions on adjustments of the monitoring methodology to real developments in the course of time, frequency and modalities of dialogues on GSP+ compliance between the Commission services and beneficiaries, frequency and modalities of exchange of information on the matter between the Commission services and Member States experts, role of Member States and other third parties in the monitoring and assessment of the beneficiaries' progress in addressing shortcomings. The Commission services took note of the comments and responded to the questions. Update on GSP+ monitoring will be regularly on the agenda of the Group's meetings.

### **Point 3. Status of beneficiary countries which provisionally apply a bilateral trade agreement with the EU**

Based on documents circulated prior to the meeting, the Commission services presented their ideas for a delegated act deferring GSP preferences from the beneficiaries which had recently started to provisionally apply a free trade agreement with the EU. While experts did not raise fundamental objections to the Commission services' suggestions, they had comments and questions regarding transition periods for these countries for exiting the GSP, timetable for preparation of the delegated act and publication of information about the foreseen decision on the Commission's dedicated website. The Commission services took note of the comments and responded to some of the questions. Discussion on this issue will continue during the next meeting of the Group.

### **Point 4. General update**

The Commission services updated the Group on recent developments and next steps planned in the GSP field, in particular delegated acts under preparation or foreseen to be prepared during the year.

The Commission services also recalled the indicative timetable of the Group's meetings during the first half of the year.