



Customs Flash

Belgium

Countries losing GSP status from 1 January 2017

Introduction

Published on 28 August 2015, the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/1979 amends the list of beneficiary countries in the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) that will apply as of 1 January 2017. Consequently, some countries will lose their GSP status.

Facts

There are 2 non-cumulative criteria for granting tariff preferences under the GSP. Firstly, the country may not be classified as a high-income or upper-middle income country during three consecutive years immediately preceding the World Bank's update of the beneficiary countries list. Secondly, the country may not benefit from a preferential market access arrangement which provides the same tariff preferences as the scheme, or even more so, for substantially all trade.

Fiji, Iraq, The Marshall Islands and Tonga have been classified as upper-middle income countries by the World Bank. Georgia, Cameroon and Fiji started to apply preferential market access arrangements in 2014. As a result, the above countries no longer qualify for a GSP beneficiary status.

What does it mean for you?

The tariff preferences scheme under the GSP status will no longer apply as of 1 January 2017 when importing goods from the above mentioned countries. It should be noted however that other tariff preferences may be applicable upon import into the EU, based on bilateral agreements.

What to do?

Businesses should verify whether the goods previously imported under the GSP status can still benefit from a preferential tariff based on a bilateral agreement concluded between the EU and the country concerned.

Contacts

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