

WTO establishes panel to examine Turkish complaint over Moroccan steel duties

The WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) has agreed to establish a panel to examine Turkey's complaint regarding 11 pct anti-dumping duties imposed by Morocco on imports of Turkish hot-rolled steel.

For the second time, Turkey requested the establishment of a panel to examine its complaint. Turkey said the anti-dumping duties imposed by Morocco on the Turkish steel imports were WTO-inconsistent. Turkey said it had hoped the matter could have been resolved without recourse to a



panel, but that it had to protect its rights under the Anti-Dumping Agreement.

Meanwhile, Morocco said it regretted Turkey's decision to request the establishment of a panel. Morocco remained willing to move forward with consultations in order to find a mutually acceptable solution to this dispute. In this

regard Morocco had officially requested the continuation of consultations with Turkey, but did not receive a proposal in response. Morocco said it considered the duties in question to be in accordance with its domestic laws and with its WTO commitments, and that it was prepared to defend the consistency of its measures before a panel. Turkey alleges the Moroccan measures are inconsistent with a number of procedural and substantive provisions of the WTO's Anti-Dumping Agreement.

Iran's Mobarakeh Steel undeterred by EU dumping allegations

Iran's largest producers of flat steel is nonchalant in the face of European threats to limit Iranian steel imports, as Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC) enjoys a diverse range of products and export destinations.

The Brussels-based steel lobby group Eurofer, whose members account for more than a quarter of European Union iron and steel products, declared that Iranian steel exports had become a threat to European markets.

The group and its members seem startled by the latest data showing Iranian exports, especially hot-rolled coil shipments, growing nearly eightfold between 2013 and 2016 to just over 1 mln tons annually, placing Iran third behind India (1.9 mln tons) and China (5.7 mln tons).

"We have other markets and we do not just export HRC. Mobarakeh Steel other exported products include cold-rolled, galvanized, tinplate and color-coated coils, the company's Managing Director Bahram Sobhani was quoted as saying by Bourse Press.

The hot-rolled coil market in Europe is worth about USD11.1 billion. The key product is used in everything from auto manufacturing to construction and is monopolized by companies like ArcelorMittal and ThyssenKrupp.

"Other countries facing EU's preventive measures include China and India," said Karl Tachelet, external



relations and trade director at Eurofer.

The group had also accused Russia, Ukraine, Serbia and Brazil of dumping back in August 2016.

The European Commission has up until April to decide whether to impose anti-dumping duties for six months and after 15 months decide whether to apply "definitive" levies for five years.

According to Deputy Minister of Industries, Mining and Trade, Mehdi Karbasian, Iran is preparing to fight its case, having hired an attorney to counter the dumping allegations.

Together with its subsidiaries, MSC is the largest flat steel producer in the Middle East and North Africa and Iran's largest

steelmaker, accounting for 1% of Iran's GDP. The company accounts for approximately 50% of the country's total steel output and also holds around the same share of domestic flat steel consumption, which stood at around 7.5 mln tons in the last fiscal year (March 2015-16). MSC produced around 5.5 mln tons of flat products during the period.

Iran's top steel export markets in Europe during the eight months to November 20 were Italy, Spain and Belgium. Italy accounted for 486,000 tons valued at USD265.7 mln, Spain for 144,000 tons valued at USD107.4 mln and Belgium for 37,000 tons valued at USD34.8 mln.

By the end of 2015, Iran's steel output stood at 16.1 mln tons, putting it 14th among steel-producing countries, according to the World Steel Association.

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