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(Acts whose publication is obligatory)

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 2041/2004
of 15 November 2004
on the import of certain steel products originating in the Russian Federation

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 133 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) On 9 July 2002, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the Government of the Russian Federation concluded an Agreement on trade in certain steel products⁽¹⁾ (hereinafter referred to as the Agreement). The necessary implementing measures have been adopted by Commission Decision 2002/602/ECSC of 8 July 2002 on administering certain restrictions on imports of certain steel products from the Russian Federation⁽²⁾. Following the expiry of the ECSC Treaty, the European Community took over all rights and obligations under the Agreement.
- (2) Commission Decision 2002/602/ECSC sets quantitative limits on the imports into the Community.
- (3) Given the important increase in the demand worldwide for certain steel products and the ensuing comparable difficulty for some Community users to source those steel products in the Community market, it is necessary to authorise more imports into the Community than originally agreed in the Agreement. The steel products in question (hot-rolled coils for re-rolling) are classified under TARIC codes 7208 37 00 10, 7208 38 00 10 and 7208 39 00 10.
- (4) It is important that the additional quantities be available as soon as possible. The renegotiation of the Agreement and the subsequent implementation of it as amended would require too much time. It is therefore preferable to recur to an autonomous measure.

- (5) The completion of the internal market requires that the formalities to be accomplished by Community importers be identical wherever the goods may be cleared.
- (6) Products placed in a free zone or imported under the arrangements governing customs warehouses, temporary importation or inward processing (suspension system) should not be counted against the limits established for the products in question.
- (7) The effective application of this Regulation requires the introduction of a requirement of a Community import licence for the entry into free circulation in the Community of the products in question together with a system for administering the grant of such Community import licences.
- (8) In order to ensure that the quantitative limits established by this Regulation are not exceeded, a procedure should be followed whereby the competent authorities of the Member States will not issue import licences before obtaining prior confirmation from the Commission that appropriate amounts remain available within the quantitative limit in question,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Without prejudice to Decision 2002/602/ECSC, the importation into the Community of additional quantities of the steel products mentioned in the second subparagraph originating in the Russian Federation shall be authorised up to 200 000 tonnes.

The steel products are classified under the TARIC codes 7208 37 00 10, 7208 38 00 10 and 7208 39 00 10. The classification of the products is based on the tariff and statistical nomenclature of the Community (hereinafter called the 'combined nomenclature', or in abbreviated form 'CN'). The origin of the products covered by this Regulation shall be determined in accordance with the rules in force in the Community.

Article 2

1. The release for free circulation in the Community of the steel products set out in Article 1 originating in the Russian Federation shall be subject to the presentation of an import licence issued by the Member States' authorities in accordance with the provisions of Article 4.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 195, 24.7.2002, p. 55. Agreement as last amended by the Agreement between the European Community and the Government of the Russian Federation (OJ L 255, 31.7.2004, p. 33).

⁽²⁾ OJ L 195, 24.7.2002, p. 38. Decision as last amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 1386/2004 (OJ L 255, 31.7.2004, p. 1).

2. In order to ensure that quantities for which import licences are issued do not exceed at any moment the total quantitative limits, the competent authorities of the Member States listed in Annex II shall issue import licences only upon confirmation by the Commission that there are still quantities available within the quantitative limits.

3. For the purposes of this Regulation and as from the date of its application, shipment of products shall be considered as having taken place on the date on which they were loaded on to the exporting means of transport. Shipment must take place no later than 31 December 2004.

Article 3

1. The quantitative limits referred to in Article 1 shall not apply to products placed in a free zone or free warehouse or imported under the arrangements governing customs warehouses, temporary importation or inward processing (suspension system).

2. Where the products referred to in paragraph 1 are subsequently released for free circulation, either in the unaltered state or after working or processing, Article 2(2) shall apply and the products so released shall be counted against the quantitative limit set out in Article 1.

Article 4

1. For the purpose of applying Article 2(2), before issuing import licences, the competent authorities of the Member States listed in Annex II shall notify the Commission of the amounts of the requests for import licences which they have received. By return, the Commission shall notify whether the requested amounts of quantities are available for importation in the chronological order in which the notifications of the Member States have been received (first-come, first-served basis). The import licence shall then be issued within five working days of the positive confirmation of the Commission.

2. The requests included in the notifications to the Commission shall be valid if they establish clearly in each case the exporting country, the amounts to be imported, the quota period, the Member State in which the products are intended to be put into free circulation and the specific code to identify the products referred to in Article 1. The necessary technical modalities for the proper management of these quantitative limits shall be agreed within the Steel Liaison Committee.

3. The notifications referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be communicated electronically within the integrated network set up for this purpose, unless for imperative technical reasons it is necessary to use other means of communication temporarily.

4. As far as possible, the Commission shall confirm to the authorities the full amount indicated in the requests notified.

5. The import licences or equivalent documents shall be issued in accordance with Annex I.

6. Import licences issued in accordance with this Regulation shall be valid throughout the customs territory of the Community. A Community importer may apply for an import licence with any of the competent authorities.

7. The importer's application shall be made no later than 31 December 2004 and shall include the following elements:

- (a) the name and full address of the applicant (including telephone and fax numbers, and possible identification number used by the competent national authorities) and VAT registration number, if subject to VAT;
- (b) if applicable, the name and full address of the declarant or representative of the applicant (including telephone and fax numbers);
- (c) the full name and address of the exporter;
- (d) the exact description of the goods, including:
 - their trade name,
 - the combined nomenclature (CN) code(s),
 - the country of origin,
 - the country of consignment;
- (e) the net weight expressed in kg, and the quantity in the unit prescribed where other than net weight, by combined nomenclature heading;
- (f) the cif value of the goods in euro at the Community frontier by combined nomenclature heading;
- (g) whether the products concerned are seconds or of substandard quality⁽¹⁾;
- (h) the proposed period and place of customs clearance;
- (i) whether the application is a repeat of a previous application concerning the same contract;

⁽¹⁾ Under the criteria given in OJ C 180, 11.7.1991, p. 4.

- (j) a copy of the contract of sale or purchase and of the *pro forma* invoice;
- (k) the following declaration, dated and signed by the applicant with the transcription of his name in capital letters:

'I, the undersigned, certify that the information provided in this application is true and given in good faith, and that I am established in the Community.'

8. The period of validity of the import licence is hereby fixed at four months. Upon duly motivated request by an importer, the competent authorities of a Member State may extend the duration of validity for a period of two months.

9. The competent national authorities may allow the submission of declarations or requests to be transmitted or printed by electronic means, under the conditions fixed by them. However, all documents and evidence shall be available to the competent national authorities.

10. The import licence may be issued by electronic means, as long as the customs offices involved have access to the document via a computer network.

11. The importers shall be under no obligation to import in one consignment the total quantity mentioned in an import licence.

Article 5

1. A finding that the unit price at which the transaction is effected varies from that indicated in the import licence by less than 5 % in either direction or that the total quantity of the products presented for import exceeds the quantity given in the import licence by less than 5 % shall not preclude the release for free circulation of the products in question.

2. Applications for import licence and the documents themselves shall be confidential. They shall be restricted to the competent national authorities and the applicant.

Article 6

This Regulation shall enter into force on the third day following its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply until 31 December 2004.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 15 November 2004.

For the Council

The President

M. VAN DER HOEVEN

ANNEX I

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IMPORT LICENCE

1 Holder's copy	1. Consignee (name, full address, country, VAT number)	2. Issue number
		3. Period
		4. Authority responsible for issue (name, address and telephone No)
	5. Declarant/representative as applicable (name and full address)	6. Country of origin (and geonomenclature code)
		7. Country of consignment (and geonomenclature code)
		8. Last day of validity
1	9. Description of goods	10. CN code
		11. Quantity expressed in quota unit
		12. Security/guarantee (as applicable)
13. Further particulars		
14. Competent authority's endorsement		
Date: (Signature) (Stamp)		

15. ATTRIBUTIONS Indicate the quantity available in part 1 of column 17 and the quantity attributed in part 2 thereof			
16. Net quantity (net mass or other unit of measure stating the unit)		19. Customs document (form and number) or extract No and date of attribution	20. Name, Member State, stamp and signature of the attributing authority
17. In figures	18. In words for the quantity attributed		
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Extension pages to be attached hereto.			

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY IMPORT LICENCE

Copy for the issuing authority	2	1. Consignee (name, full address, country, VAT number)	2. Issue number
			3. Period
			4. Authority responsible for issue (name, address and telephone No)
		5. Declarant/representative as applicable (name and full address)	6. Country of origin (and geonomenclature code)
			7. Country of consignment (and geonomenclature code)
	2		8. Last day of validity
9. Description of goods		10. CN code	
		11. Quantity expressed in quota unit	
		12. Security/guarantee (as applicable)	
13. Further particulars			
14. Competent authority's endorsement			
Date: (Signature) (Stamp)			

15. ATTRIBUTIONS Indicate the quantity available in part 1 of column 17 and the quantity attributed in part 2 thereof			
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ANNEX II

LISTA DE LAS AUTORIDADES NACIONALES COMPETENTES
SEZNAM PŘÍSLUŠNÝCH VNITROSTÁTNÍCH ORGÁNŮ
LISTE OVER KOMPETENTE NATIONALE MYNDIGHEDER
LISTE DER ZUSTÄNDIGEN BEHÖRDEN DER MITGLIEDSTAATEN
PÄDEVATE RIIKLIKE ASUTUSTE NIMEKIRI
ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΑΡΧΩΝ ΕΚΔΟΣΗΣ ΑΔΕΙΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΩΝ ΜΕΛΩΝ
LIST OF THE COMPETENT NATIONAL AUTHORITIES
LISTE DES AUTORITÉS NATIONALES COMPÉTENTES
ELENCO DELLE AUTORITÀ NAZIONALI COMPETENTI
VALSTU KOMPETENTO IESTĀŽU SARAKSTS
KOMPETENTINGŲ NACIONALINIŲ INSTITUCIJŲ SĄRAŠAS
AZ ILLETÉKES NEMZETI HATÓSÁGOK LISTÁJA
LISTA TA' L-AWTORITAJIET KOMPETENTI NAZZJONALI
LIJST VAN BEVOEGDE NATIONALE INSTANTIES
LISTA WŁAŚCIWYCH ORGANÓW KRAJOWYCH
LISTA DAS AUTORIDADES NACIONAIS COMPETENTES
ZOZNAM PŘÍSLUŠNÝCH VNÚTROŠTÁTNÝCH ORGÁNOV
SEZNAM PRISTOJNIH NACIONALNIH ORGANOV
LUETTELO TOIMIVALTAISISTA KANSALLISISTA VIRANOMAISISTA
FÖRTECKNING ÖVER BEHÖRIGA NATIONELLA MYNDIGHETER

BELGIQUE/BELGIË

Service public fédéral économie, PME, Classes moyennes et énergie
Administration du potentiel économique
Politiques d'accès aux marchés, Services Licences
Rue Général Leman 60
B-1040 Bruxelles
Télécopieur: (32-2) 230 83 22

Federale Overheidsdienst Economie, KMO, Middenstand & Energie
Bestuur Economisch Potentieel
Markttoegangsbeleid, Dienst Vergunningen
Generaal Lemanstraat 60
B-1040 Brussel
Fax (32-2) 230 83 22

ČESKÁ REPUBLIKA

Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu
Licenční správa
Na Františku 32
CZ-110 15 Praha 1
Fax: + 420-22421 21 33

DANMARK

Erhvervs- og Boligstyrelsen
Økonomi- og Erhvervsministeriet
Vejløsvej 29
DK-8600 Silkeborg
Fax (45) 35 46 64 01

DEUTSCHLAND

Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle
(BAFA)
Frankfurter Straße 29-35
D-65760 Eschborn 1
Fax: + 49-61-969 42 26

EESTI

Majandus- ja Kommunikatsiooniministeerium
Harju 11
EE-15072 Tallinn
Fax: + 372-6313 660

ΕΛΛΑΔΑ

Υπουργείο Οικονομίας και Οικονομικών
Διεύθυνση Διεθνών Οικονομικών Ροών
Κορνάρου 1
GR-105 63 Αθήνα
Φαξ: (30-210) 32 86 094

ESPAÑA

Ministerio de Economía
Secretaría General de Comercio Exterior
Subdirección General de Productos Industriales
Paseo de la Castellana, 162
E-28046 Madrid
Fax (34) 913 49 38 31

FRANCE

SETICE
8, rue de la Tour-des-Dames
F-75436 Paris Cedex 09
Télécopieur (33-1) 55 07 46 69

IRELAND

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Import/Export Licensing, Block C
Earlsfort Centre
Hatch Street
Dublin 2
Ireland
Fax: (353-1) 631 25 62

ITALIA

Ministero delle Attività produttive
Direzione generale per la Politica commerciale e per la gestione del
regime degli scambi
Viale America 341
I-00144 Roma
Fax (39-06) 59 93 22 35/59 93 26 36

ΚΥΠΡΟΣ

Υπουργείο Εμπορίου, Βιομηχανίας και Τουρισμού
Υπηρεσία Εμπορίου
Μονάδα Έκδοσης Αδειών Εισαγωγής/Εξαγωγής
Οδός Ανδρέα Αραούζου αρ.6
CY-1421 Λευκωσία
Φαξ: (357-22) 37 51 20

LATVIJA

Latvijas Republikas Ekonomikas ministrija
Brīvības iela 55
LV-1519 Rīga
Fakss: + 371-728 08 82

LIETUVA

Lietuvos Respublikos ūkio ministerija
Prekybos departamentas
Gedimino pr. 38/2
LT-01104 Vilnius
Faks. (370-5) 262 39 74

LUXEMBOURG

Ministère des affaires étrangères
Office des licences
BP 113
L-2011 Luxembourg
Télécopieur (352) 46 61 38

MAGYARORSZÁG

Magyar Kereskedelmi Engedélyezési Hivatal
Margit krt. 85.
H-1024 Budapest
Fax: (36-1) 336 73 02

MALTA

Diviżjoni għall-Kummerċ
Servizzi Kummerċjali
Lascaris
MT-Valletta CMR02
Fax: + 356 2569 0299

NEDERLAND

Belastingdienst/Douane centrale dienst voor in- en uitvoer
Postbus 30003, Engelse Kamp 2
9700 RD Groningen
Nederland
Fax (31-50) 523 23 41

ÖSTERREICH

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Arbeit
Außenwirtschaftsadministration
Abteilung C2/2
Stubenring 1
A-1011 Wien
Fax: + 43-1-711 00/83 86

POLSKA

Ministerstwo Gospodarki, Pracy i Polityki
Społecznej
pl. Trzech Krzyży 3/5
PL-00-507 Warszawa
Fax: (48-22) 693 40 21/693 40 22

PORTUGAL

Ministério das Finanças
Direcção-Geral das Alfândegas e dos Impostos
Especiais sobre o Consumo
Rua Terreiro do Trigo
Edifício da Alfândega de Lisboa
P-1140-060 Lisboa
Fax: (351-21) 881 42 61

SLOVENIJA

Ministrstvo za gospodarstvo
Področje za ekonomske odnose s tujino
Kotnikova 5
SI-1000 Ljubljana
Fax: + 386-1-478 36 11

SLOVENSKÁ REPUBLIKA

Ministerstvo hospodárstva SR
Odbor licencií
Mierová 19
SK-827 15 Bratislava 212
Fax: + 421-2-43 42 39 19

SVERIGE

Kommerskollegium
Box 6803
S-113 86 Stockholm
Fax (46-8) 30 67 59

SUOMI/FINLAND

Tullihallitus
PL 512
FIN-00101 Helsinki
Faksi (358) 20 492 28 52

Tullstyrelsen
PB 512
FIN-00101 Helsingfors
Fax (358) 20 492 28 52

UNITED KINGDOM

Department of Trade and Industry
Import Licensing Branch
Queensway House - West Precinct
Billingham TS23 2NF
United Kingdom
Fax: (44-1642) 36 42 69
