U.S Comments on Geneva Protocol ref. ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2012/3

The United States of America Department of Agriculture (USDA) submits the following response to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Working Party Seven (WP. 7) and its Specialized Sections on the Geneva Protocol ref. ECE/TRADE/C/WP.7/2012/3 dated 7 August, 2012.

With respect to the international nature of UNECE Standards, it is noted that the WTO TBT Committee adopted a Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards in 2000 which include: (1) Transparency; (2) Openness; (3) Impartiality and Consensus; (4) Effectiveness and Relevance; (5) Coherence; and (6) the Development Dimension (G/TBT/1/Rev.10, Annex B.) Therefore, in the context of the WTO TBT Agreement, as long as international standards meet these criteria, Members shall use/guide their standards and regulatory activities on these. The United States believes that UNECE standard development activities related to the Geneva Protocol do not meet these principles and in consequence cannot be considered international in nature. Therefore, the United States expresses its disagreement with the conclusion by UNOG.