



SAARC AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL STANDARDS

PREAMBLE

The Governments of SAARC Member States

Appreciating the importance of Standardization with reference to trade within and outside the Member States;

Recognising the need to improve cooperation and coordination amongst Member States in implementation of SAARC Standards in respect of products and/or processes;

Aspiring to facilitate intra-Regional trade within Member States; and

Desiring to enhance their access to the Global markets.

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1 Terms and Definitions

The terms used in this agreement shall have the same meaning as given in the definitions contained in the Agreement on the Establishment of South Asian Regional Standards Organisation (SARSO). For the terms which are not defined in the SARSO Agreement, the definitions shall be the same as given in ISO/IEC Guide 2.

Article 2 Objective

The objective of this agreement is to provide the framework as well as the guiding principles for implementation of the SAARC Standards.

Article 3 General Provisions

- 3.1 The National Standards Bodies of the Member States will follow the Code of Good Practice for preparation, development, adoption and application of Standards as given in the Annex 3 of the WTO Agreement on the Technical Barriers to Trade.
- 3.2 For SAARC to emerge as a single market and to strengthen the trade position of the region with reference to the global supply chain, the Member States shall take either or both the following measures:

- a) Harmonize the National Standards with the relevant SAARC Standards, subject to Article 4.3, on priority.
- b) Participate actively in the development of those International Standards that are related to the products and/or processes having trade implications for the Member States.

Article 4
Adoption of SAARC Standards

- 4.1 While preparing a new standard or revising an existing National Standard, the Member States shall adopt the relevant SAARC Standard, in case it is available.
- 4.2 Latest version of ISO/IEC Guide 21-1: Regional or National Adoption of International Standards or other International Deliverables - Part 1: Adoption of International Standards, shall be the basis for harmonization of the existing National Standards with the SAARC Standards.
- 4.3 To fulfill legitimate objectives which may include *inter alia* national security requirements, prevention of deceptive practices, protection of human health and safety, animal or plant life or health, or the environment, the National Standards can differ from the relevant SAARC Standards, but in such an eventuality, the concerned Member State shall provide to the other Member States the details of such differences along with the reasons thereof.
- 4.4 The Member States shall ensure that:
 - a) No modification is made in any National Standard so that it becomes more stringent than the corresponding SAARC Standard and thus creating technical barriers to trade.
 - b) The National Standards that differ from the SAARC Standards are not more restrictive than necessary to fulfil legitimate objectives.

Article 5
Implementation of SAARC Standards

- 5.1 SAARC Standards are formulated by the South Asian Regional Standards Organisation (SARSO). They constitute a collective contribution by the Member States to harmonize National Standards amongst themselves on the basis of consensus.
- 5.2 SAARC Standards are "Regional Standards" within the sense of the ISO/IEC Guide 2 definition.
- 5.3 SAARC Standards exist in their own right and are issued in the operational language, English.

- 5.4 The SARSO Secretariat shall be the guardian of the authoritative versions of the SAARC Standards and shall be responsible for keeping master texts of SAARC Standards, both in hard and soft form.
- 5.5 The SARSO Secretariat shall be responsible for making SAARC Standards available to the Member States, countries other than the SAARC Member States and international and regional standards organizations, etc.
- 5.6 Member States shall be responsible for making SAARC Standards available for sale, distribution, etc, at the national level.
- 5.7 Member States shall be responsible for implementing the SAARC Standards.
- 5.8 Approval of a SAARC Standard implies that Member States have an obligation to give it the status of a National Standard.
- 5.8.1 If a Member State is prevented from implementing a SAARC Standard by regulations or in any other situation outside its competence, it shall try to bring about such changes necessary to allow implementation of the SAARC Standard.
- 5.8.2 In urgent cases relating to safety, health, etc, if a Member State publishes an amendment to an existing national Standard, it shall notify this action to SARSO Secretariat immediately.
- 5.9 SARSO Secretariat shall arrange for taking actions to provide technical assistance for implementation of SAARC Standards amongst the Member States.
- 5.10 For implementation of the SAARC Standards through Conformity Assessment, the SAARC Agreement on Multilateral Arrangement on Recognition of Conformity Assessment shall be referred.

Article 6

Official Language

English shall be the official language for operation of this Agreement.

Article 7

Entry into Force of the Agreement

This Agreement shall enter into force on completion of formalities, including ratification, by all Member States and upon issuance of notification thereof by the SAARC Secretariat.

Article 8

Depositary

This Agreement shall be deposited with the Secretary General of SAARC.

Article 9

Reservations

This Agreement shall not be subject to reservations either at the time of signature or

at the time of notification to the SAARC Secretariat of the completion of formalities.

Article 10 Amendment

This Agreement may be amended by consensus amongst the Member States on the recommendation of the SARSO Governing Board. Any Member State proposing amendment(s) shall notify the other Member States through the SAARC Secretariat. Such amendment(s) shall become effective upon the notification issued by the SAARC Secretariat on completion of formalities, including ratification, by all the Member States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments have signed this Agreement on Implementation of Regional Standards.

Done in Addu, Maldives On This Eleventh Day of November Two Thousand Eleven in Ten Originals In The English Language, All Texts Being Equally Authentic.

Dr. Zalmi Rassoul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Dr. Dipu Moni, MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
People's Republic of Bangladesh

Khandu Wangchuk
Minister-in-Charge of Foreign Affairs
Kingdom of Bhutan

S.M. Krishna
Minister of External Affairs
Republic of India

Ahmed Naseem
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Maldives

Narayan Kaji Shrestha 'Prakash'
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Nepal

Hina Rabbani Khar
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris
Minister of External Affairs
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka