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## **12. Pakistan - labelling, shelf-life and halal certification**

The United States and the European Union raised concerns with a new regulation introduced by Pakistan, which requires mandatory labelling, halal certification and shelf-life for all consumer food and beverage products. While the EU and the US recognize the importance of ensuring that products are halal for Pakistani consumers, they urged Pakistan to develop halal policies that meet the needs of consumers without being overly burdensome or trade prohibitive.

The US encouraged Pakistan to not only recognize halal certifiers accredited by the International Halal Accreditation Forum and the Standards and Metrology Institute for the Islamic Countries but also to recognize halal certificates from other US-based halal certifiers recognized by other Islamic countries. The EU was concerned that the use of stickers, overprinting, stamp or scratched labelling is prohibited. The EU and the US stressed the importance of notifying any future revisions to the WTO at the draft stage, providing WTO members with an opportunity to comment.

Pakistan said that the shelf life and other labelling requirements are not new and existed previously at the sub-federal and provincial levels. Pakistan said that the new measure is meant to incorporate and streamline the existing measures with national laws. The measures are applicable on a non-discriminatory basis and Pakistan remains open to bilateral discussions with concerned members.