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SAC Vice Administrator Talk on China Standardization Reform

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CENELEC



Seconded European Standardization Expert in China Project (SESEC)

Yu Xinli Attended the Media Briefing at the State Council and Introduced the Plan for Deepening Standardization Reforms

SAC Vice-Administrator Yu Xinli attended the media briefing at the State Council on March 20, making a brief introduction to the standardization reform proposal and answering questions from domestic and foreign reporters.

The Standardization Work Reform Proposal, approved at the 82nd Executive Meeting of the State Council on February 11, will soon be officially released and distributed, said Yu Xinli. According to the requirement of CPC Central Committee and the State Council, AQSIQ and SAC jointly with other relevant departments conducted research and drafted the reform proposal, winning the adequate understanding and strong support from various departments and regional governments.

The Reform Proposal puts forward to establish a brand new standards system composed of the standards developed by the government and market entities by 2020.

The reform in standardization sector will be carried out in six aspects:

First, to establish an efficient and authoritative coordinating system, helping the State Council to plan the standardization reform as a whole;

Second, to gradually cut down mandatory standards, integrating national, sectorial and regional standards into mandatory national standards with strict development scope;

Third, to optimize and perfect voluntary standards, gradually decreasing the number and scale of current voluntary standards and highlighting the property of public interest;

Fourth, to cultivate and develop consortium standards, encouraging competent social organizations and industrial consortia to develop consortium standards and increase standards supply;

Fifth, to vitalize enterprise standards, abolishing the government filing system of enterprise standards and establishing the opening and supervision system for Self-declaration and Disclosure System of Enterprise Product Standards;

Sixth, to upgrade the quality of Chinese standards, actively participating in international standardization activities, promoting Chinese standards with authority, credit and reputation internationally.

The Reform Proposal also raises the specific steps in three implementation stages, defining the roadmap and timetable for standardization reform.

On the media briefing, Yu Xinli answered questions from domestic and foreign reporters. (The recording was attached)

Recording:

China News Service:

I read the background material provided by the Standardization Administration, it said that the management of standards is “weak”, the standard system is “confusing”, and standard levels are “low”. I want to ask Ms Yu, which problem of these could be solved through this reform program in order to provide the “pass” for “Made-in China” going globally?

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Yu Xinli:

This reform is aimed at ensuring the market plays the decisive role in allocating standardization resources and make the government better play its role. Premier Li Keqiang proposed a “delegate, manage and administrate” way to solve the problems in the standardization sector. The Reform Program said that we should streamline administration and delegate more powers to lower level governments. There are 100,000 standards at national, sector and local levels in the current standards system, 70 percent of which are for normal products or services. These standards should be decided by the market while the government-oriented standards should be more focused on public benefits. The Reform Program also suggests to develop group standardization which are not decided by the government but by competent associations and alliances to meet the needs of the market and innovation. On the other hand, there are over 1 million enterprise product standards in China and formerly they were registered and managed by the government. The Reform Program said that we will gradually cancel the registration of enterprise product standards as the enterprises themselves will be major players in this regard.

Yu Xinli:

Second, we will adopt accurate management. Currently we have mandatory standards at three levels: the national, the sector and the local level. The Reform Program said that we will use a unified system of mandatory national standards. It will solve the confusion effectively to ensure that there is only one market with one bottom line and one standard, for mandatory standards are related to areas of personal health, safety of life and property, national security and ecological security. Accurate management has another meaning. There are voluntary standards at national, sector and local levels in the current standards system, 70 percent of which are for normal products or services, which should not be decided by the government and should be left to the society. Leaving them to the society, the government will have more resources and be more focused on developing the national standards, as well as voluntary sector standards for key products, important technologies, important services and big industrial programs. Local standards will be made to adapt to local natural conditions, customs and geographical environment. We will manage better and manage with higher accuracy to solve this problem.

Yu Xinli:

Third, we will adopt unified administration. At the government level, based on the unified deployment and requirements of the State Council, we will work with relevant departments and local government standardization departments to push forward the reform. At the market level, we will let the market decide some standards to maintain its vigor. We will also develop group standards, which are decided by competent associations and alliances. At the social level, the media, customers and the whole society will jointly supervise the enterprise product standards.

By then, we will enter a new era of unified administration at the government, market and social level.

Kyodo News:

My question concerns the Chinese standards “going global”. What types of standards are China promoting to be international standards? And what are the key areas for these standards? Please give some examples, thank you.

Yu Xinli:

China’s fast economic growth has offered the chance and timing for the country to

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contribute to international standardization. By referring to Chinese standards “going global”, we mean two levels of connotations.

The first is China’s active role in being part of the making of international standards. The key fields include those with Chinese specific characteristics and those that the international organizations would demand China to contribute to. Actually, China’s involvement in the international standardization is wide and deep.

The internationally acclaimed ISO (International Organization for Standardization), known for being extensive and integrative, has 162 members. China is an active member of 90 percent of ISO’s technical sub-organizations, and is making positive progress toward international standardization.

Like in the area of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which we deem as one of the key areas, China is running the secretariat of its TCM International Technical Committee, and has the final say in many of the relevant standardizations.

Yu Xinli:

The second, we take signing contracts on mutual recognition of standards with other countries as another way of Chinese standards “going global”. The mutual recognition means Chinese standards being recognized and applied by foreign countries, or vice-versa.

It also refers to the consensus on standard technical indicators that China reached with another country, and thus the two countries share the same standardization. We have just reached an agreement on mutual recognition of standards with the UK. Now China and the UK share nearly 100 standards.

In the area of consumer commodities, Chinese standards are 90 percent consistent with international standards.

To participate in the making of international standards is one aspect of Chinese standards “going global”, another aspect is to serve international trade. The premise of importing and exporting bulk commodities lies in the unification of standards. The trade volume with these countries will influence our decisions in the process of standardization.

Thank you.

China Daily:

My question goes to Ms Yu. As is known, there are inconsistencies between national and sector standards as well as between national and local standards. How will this program solve the problem? Thank you.

Yu Xinli:

The problem you mentioned does exist in the current system and that is just what our reform program aims to tackle. Take mandatory standards for example, which are equal to technical regulations to some degree. These standards at various levels should not be in conflict with each other. The program includes one important measure which is to clear up and integrate mandatory national, sector and local standards.

As to the voluntary standards, besides those managed by the government, we encourage competent associations and alliances to develop group standards that meet the needs of the market and innovation. On the government part, it must strictly define the areas of the voluntary national, sector and local standards systems, so as to avoid any inconsistencies.