

THE GLOBAL SCRAMBLE FOR PPE AMID COVID-19: LESSONS FROM THE EU EXPORT RESTRICTIONS AND IMPORT FACILITATION THROUGH REGULATORY COOPERATION ON PPE

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ABSTRACT

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread around the world, unprecedented disruption to the global economy and international trade have prompted widespread fears especially when it comes to the scramble for personal protective equipment (hereinafter “PPE”), as a result of critical shortages. Government officials around the world have raised concerns about how to ensure that their countries have adequate access to PPE. Many governments have introduced trade-related measures, such as restricting exports of critical PPE and medical supplies. Governments are also mounting special efforts including temporarily revising import procedures and easing technical barriers to ensure the supply of PPE in response to a crisis-within-a-crisis. Such trade-related measures on both export restrictions and import facilitation in response to COVID-19 have brought considerable attention to the role of the multilateral trading system in promoting stability and predictability of international trade flows in a time of global crisis and have also exposed the existing limits of

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international trade law. This article presents an overview of both the European Union's export restrictions and import facilitation measures on PPE, as an example, and provides analyses of issues associated measures in the international trade law regime.

KEYWORDS: *export restriction, mutual recognition, trade facilitation, COVID-19, PPE regulation*