Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade: Way Forward

(a side event of the Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation)

Country Experience: The Philippines

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Strategic Areas of Trade Digitalization

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Performance Highlights - Percentage of Digitalization

91.18%

155 out of the 170 Customs Processes were automated as of June 2022

The BOC continues to streamline customs processes through the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to digitalize and automate many of its frontline transactions.
Importance of Implementing Cross-border Paperless Trade: The Philippines

- Serves as a foundation for elaborating more detailed activities at the national and agency levels in the electronic exchange of documents, with identifiable timelines and potential key agencies through a customizable approach.

- Supports the continuous development and enhancement of trade-related electronic systems and other trade IT projects.

- Promotes interoperability, wherein trade-related data exchanged in commercial documents may be reused for submission and ensure high data quality with respect to its origin, integrity, accuracy, completeness, and other characteristics.

- Enhance trade facilitation and efficiency through streamlined and digitalized trade.

- Open opportunities for the electronic exchange of cross-border documents outside ASEAN.
AREAS OF COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Conduct of National Readiness Assessments

- ESCAP Legal and Technical Readiness Checklists
- Readiness Assessment Guide
- Cross-border Paperless Trade Toolkit developed by WTO in collaboration with ESCAP, EIF, and UNCITRAL, based on the checklists and the guide
• Assessed the degree to which the technical environment is ready to support cross-border paperless trade, identified existing technical gaps, and designed actions to improve the technical environment.

• Identified potential legal gaps and highlighted what may need to be done to ensure the laws support engagement in cross-border paperless trade, as envisaged in the Framework Agreement.
AREAS OF COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Virtual Launching of the National Readiness Assessment Report

- “The BOC believes that the readiness report may support the paradigm shift in the way cross-border paperless trade transactions are carried out, and how trade-related operations are modernized, standardized, and harmonized. Further, it strengthens the benefits of having an operational Single Window system as a pivotal prerequisite in accelerating digital connectivity within the region.” – Bureau of Customs

- “The publication of the latest report on the Philippines’ Readiness Assessment for Cross-Border Paperless Trade provides a benchmark of the country’s preparedness to do business based on electronic data. It does not only highlight what we have done well towards improving trade facilitation but provides meaningful insights on what we can do better in the future.” – Department of Foreign Affairs

- “Cross-border trading is an intricate process and is highly dependent on the exchange of data and documents. The challenge is to streamline the process, reduce pre-border and border costs, minimize trade disruptions as well as human interactions, and encourage the competitiveness of our importers and exporters, especially the Small- and-Medium-Enterprises.” – Department of Information and Communications Technology
AREAS OF COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

NSW Summit: Towards the Next Generation of the Philippine National Single Window, 22 September 2022
AREAS OF COOPERATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cross-Border Paperless Trade Feasibility (CBPT) Study Framework

- The Philippines is conducting a feasibility study with ESCAP on the electronic exchange of trade-related data and documents with focus on five actors in the supply chain:

1. Customs Authority Survey
2. Trader (_exporter, Importer and Customs Broker/Agent) Survey
3. National Trade Facilitation Council (NTFC) Survey
4. Freight Forwarder/Transport Operator/Carrier and Seaport and Airport Authority Survey
5. Trade Regulatory Government Agencies (TRGAs) Survey
Key Findings and Ways Forward: The Philippines

• Continue with trade-related electronic systems and other trade IT projects of the government

• Update the National Single Window system to handle all types of documents in cross-border trade and the utilization of its routing platform for information/data exchange

• Support the enactment of a law related to the management of the NSW, and the rights and obligations attached to the use of that system.

• Maintain active participation and cooperation with UN ESCAP and other Parties to the Framework Agreement.

• Increase awareness at the national level of the Framework Agreement, and conduct similar stakeholder engagements in partnership with ESCAP.
Thank you