Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA)

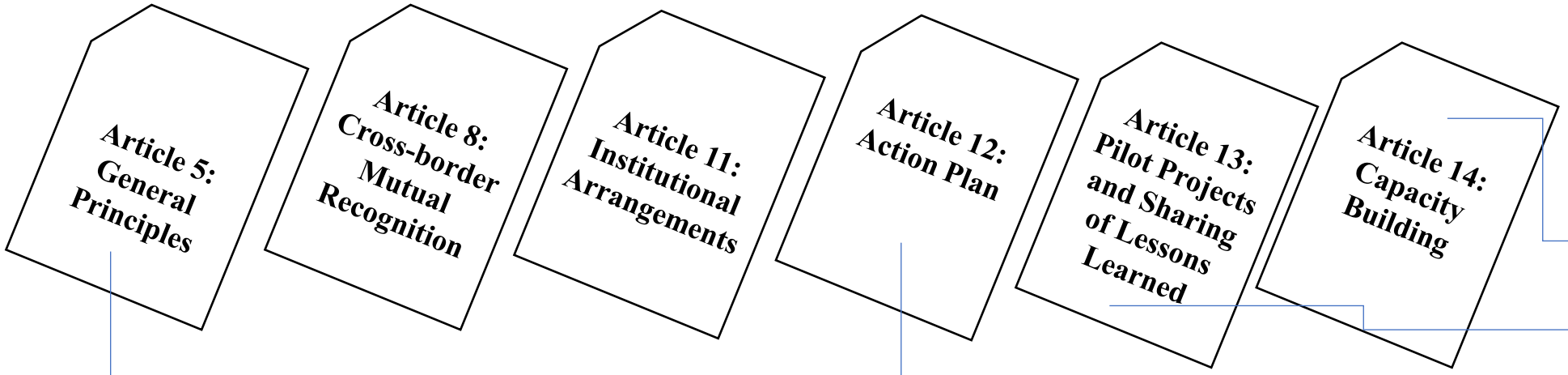
An urgency for Kazakhstan’s accession

Key Provisions of CPTA

Article 1: Objective

The objective of the present Framework Agreement is **to promote cross-border paperless trade** by enabling the exchange and mutual recognition of trade-related data and documents in electronic form and facilitating interoperability among national and subregional single windows and/or other paperless trade systems, for the purpose of **making international trade transactions more efficient and transparent while improving regulatory compliance**.

- No requirement to exchange data and documents with (all) parties



- **Strong emphasis on capacity building and solutions testing**

- **Fully consistent with UNCITRAL model laws and the G20 trade digitalization principles**

- **Collective action plan + each party sets its own Individual action plan and timeline for implementation once onboard**
- No legal or regulatory changes required

https://www.unescap.org/projects/cpta

All Kazakhstan's neighboring countries have acceded to CPTA

North and Northeast Asia	Central Asia	South Asia	Pacific	Southeast Asia	west Asia
China	Azerbaijan	Bangladesh	Tuvalu	Philippines	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Mongolia	Kyrgyzstan			Cambodia**	
Republic of Korea	Tajikistan			Timor Leste	
Russian Federation	Turkmenistan				
	Uzbekistan				

CPTA is identified as a “standout” example

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High costs, low returns

One of the most persistent challenges they face is geography itself.

Without direct access to seaports, they must rely on neighbouring transit countries to move goods – often through outdated or inefficient infrastructure.

This translates into trade costs that are, on average, 1.4 times higher than those of coastal countries, according to UNCTAD. In some cases, export procedures can stretch into weeks or months due to border delays, fragmented regulations and limited digital systems.

Ms. Grynspan highlighted that **in customs procedures, digital tools can cut waiting times at borders from three days to three hours**. To that end, regional agreements and digital initiatives have emerged as lifelines.



UNCTAD head Rebeca Grynspan speaking to *UN News*.

One standout example is the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade, championed by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Now in force among several Asia-Pacific countries, it helps reduce paperwork, automate customs and harmonise standards, making processes faster, cheaper and more transparent.

Paperless trade also has the potential to reduce corruption and ease language-related challenges.

ESCAP estimates that implementing cross-border paperless trade measures could reduce trade costs by up to 30 per cent for countries in the region without direct sea access and increase export potential for the whole of Asia and the Pacific by nearly $260 billion.

Infrastructure and integration

Even when goods reach border crossings, weak domestic transport networks further slow trade down. Roads and railways are often underdeveloped, underfunded or vulnerable to climate shocks.



Urgency of acceding to CPTA

- The expansion of the CPTA membership means that implementation of CPTA will be accelerated
- During the Paperless Trade Week from 9 to 13 June 2025, the parties took stock of the progress of implementing CPTA and prioritized the areas of work such as certificate of origin, phytosanitary certificate, invoice, and bills of lading
- Each party is also progressing its individual action plan in line with collective action plan



Timely accession to the UN treaty will support Kazakhstan to work with other parties/countries on trade digitalization solutions