Towards a National Strategy in advancing cross-border paperless trade in Turkmenistan

Meeting with national stakeholders

20-21 May 2024

CONCEPT NOTE AND PROGRAMME

1. Introduction

Turkmenistan acceded to the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA) on 4 May 2022. Since then, Turkmenistan has been actively engaged in implementing CPTA. In this endeavor, the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Turkmenistan, with the support of national and international consultants, have carried out a readiness assessment for cross-border paperless trade and study report was published on 21 December 2022[1].

To implement the Framework Agreement, each Party is invited to make a national action plan. This meeting will review the progress on paperless trade in Turkmenistan, share the experiences of developing paperless trade in other countries, and discuss the key elements to be included in the national action plan.

2. Objectives

To support Turkmenistan in further advancing cross-border paperless trade and effectively implementing CPTA, this meeting with national stakeholders has several objectives.

- To enhance awareness of different stakeholders, including different government agencies, business sector and other pertinent stakeholders on the nature and importance of CPTA.
- To identify short-, medium-, and long-term national cross-border paperless trade plans.
- To support Turkmenistan in identifying the benefits of exchanging selected trade-related documents electronically and the readiness of the country to undertake such an initiative as per recommendation by the paperless trade council.

[1] https://www.unescap.org/kp/2022/readiness-assessment-cross-border-paperless-trade-turkmenistan

3. Programme

Modality: Hybrid, in UN-House Meeting Room #111 and online via Zoom

Language: Russian with simultaneous interpretation into English and vice-versa

20 May 2024

09:00 - 09:20	**Opening** **Ms. Rupa Chanda**, Director, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP **Mr. Dmitry Shlapachenko**, UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan **Mr. Myrat Myradov**, Head of Legal Regulations and Coordination, Foreign Economic Relations Division, Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations of Turkmenistan
09:20 - 10:30	**Session 1. Review of the key initiatives by different ministries and other stakeholders, such as development partners on trade facilitation** *In this session, government officials from different ministries and agencies will introduce their initiatives in trade and transport facilitation. Development partners are also invited to present their work. This session will enable the participants to understand better the current status of trade facilitation in the country*
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:00	**Session 2. Synergy among development partners** *In this session, development partners are invited to showcase their work on paperless and cross-border paperless trade in Turkmenistan.* **Speakers**: • **Mr. Artur Andrysiak**, Country Director, Turkmenistan Resident Mission, Central and West Asia Department, Asian Development Bank • **Mr. Jeff Skarin**, Country Representative to Turkmenistan, USAID Central Asia • **Mr. Rustam Alymov**, Project Manager, International Trade Centre • **Mr. Akmyrat Danatarov**, Programme Analyst, UNDP
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 – 14:45	**Session 3. Introduction of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (CPTA) of the key outcomes and recommendations of the readiness assessment (technical aspect)**

	The key results of the readiness assessment will be presented to the participants in this session. Furthermore, international experiences will be shared to provide useful references • International experience: **Dr Leonila Guglya**, Counsel, International TradeCounsel, International Trade, SwissLegal Rouiller & Associés (online) • CPTA: **Mr. Tengfei Wang**, Economic Affairs Officer, UNESCAP • Experience of Singapore: **Mr. Jonathan Koh**, Managing Director, Trade Facilitation Pte Ltd, Singapore (Online)
14:45 - 15:00	Break
15:00 - 16:30	**Session 4. Introduction of the key outcomes and recommended follow-up actions of the readiness assessment (legal aspect)** *The key results of the readiness assessment will be presented to the participants in this session. Furthermore, international experiences will be shared to provide useful references* • Experience of China: **Professor Hong Xue**, Law Professor of Beijing Normal University, China (online) • Experience of Singapore: **Mr. Bryan Tan**, Partner, Reed Smith, Singapore (online) • • Experience of Australia: **Professor David Widdowson**, Chief Executive Officer, the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies, Charles Sturt University, Australia (online)
16:30 - 17:00	**Summary of the day** *This session will summarize the discussion of the day with a possible outline of agreed priority follow-up actions. It will also provide an opportunity for the participants to ask questions and provide comments.*

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09:00 - 10:00	**Session 5. Review the benefits of exchanging selected trade-related documents electronically and the readiness of all parties to undertake such an initiative (tentatively certificate of origin)** *In this session, international experience of exchanging certificate of origin will be presented. The participants are invited to provide comments and discuss whether this document is important for Turkmenistan's cross-border paperless trade.*

	• Experience from Republic of Korea: **Mr. Sung Heun Ha**, Director of International Business and Cooperation, Korea Trade Network, Republic of Korea
10:00 - 11:00	**Session 6. Review the benefits of exchanging selected trade-related documents electronically and the readiness of all parties to undertake such an initiative (tentatively phytosanitary certificate)** *In this session, international experience of exchanging certificate of origin will be presented. The participants are invited to provide comments and discuss whether this document is important for Turkmenistan's cross-border paperless trade.* • Experience of IPPC ePhyto and implication: **Mr. Craig Fedchock**, Senior Advisor to the North American Export Grain Association and the Innovation Emissary of the International Grain Trade Coalition and a former senior manager at the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) Secretariat
11:00 - 11:15	Break
11:15 - 12:15	**Session 7. Selection of the most important documents for cross-border paperless trade** *There are a large number of trade-related documents, which can be challenging for countries to prioritize for cross-border paperless trade. This session will look at the methodology for prioritizing documents for cross-border paperless trade.*
12:15 - 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 - 15:00	**Session 8. Towards a national strategy on advancing cross-border paperless trade and implementation of CPTA** *In this session, the participants will be divided into three groups and work on different aspects related to the short-, medium- and long-term national strategy on advancing cross-border paperless trade and implementation of CPTA. Each group will be given a specific task to prepare the presentation.*
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 - 16:30	**Session 9. Presentations by the participants** *In this session, the participants will present their work on a national strategy for advancing cross-border paperless trade and implementation of CPTA*
16:30 - 17:00	**Conclusion**