

# **Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2010**

**High-Level Panel on Trade Facilitation for Regional Connectivity**

## **Perspective from Lao PDR**

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# Outline

- ❖ Status and progress of Trade Facilitation in Lao PDR
- ❖ Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade (Aid for Trade Facilitation – Paperless Trade)
- ❖ Challenges
- ❖ Recommendation

# Progress of Trade Facilitation

- Implementing trade facilitation provisions in existing bilateral and regional trade agreements in line with international convention and preparing for accession to the WTO;
- PM Decree on Import Licensing Procedures was approved in July 2009;
- PM Decree on Rules of Origin No 228 was approved on 22 April 2010;
- National Secretariat on Trade Facilitation is being prepared to establish under the National Steering Committee for Economic Integration;

# Progress of Trade Facilitation (con't)

- **Sub-regional and regional Cooperation:** Becoming party to the GMS Agreement for Facilitation of Cross-Border Transport of Goods and People;
- **Cooperation in APTA:** signed the Framework Agreement on Trade Facilitation on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010;
- **ASEAN:** Participated in the Agreement to establish and implement the ASEAN Single Window signed in Kuala Lumpur, 9 December 2005 and committed to operate its National Single Window no later than 2012;

# Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade

## (Aid for Trade Facilitation – Paperless Trade)

- ❖ **Trade Facilitation Component to develop an online trade portal**
  - Under Trade Development Facility;
  - International financial assistance of US \$800,000;
  - 4 years implementation period started from end of 2008 to early 2012;
  - Led by the Department of Import and Export, Ministry of Industry and Commerce.

# Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade

## (Aid for Trade Facilitation – Paperless Trade)

### ❖ The objective:

- To simplify procedures, automate processes and better coordinate to deliver on the Trade Facilitation agenda under the regional and international agreements;
- To envisage the establishment of a trade portal for Lao PDR;
- To centralize all information and data related to trade and
- To support the rationalization and simplification of trade related documents and procedures.

# Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade

## (Aid for Trade Facilitation – Paperless Trade)

### ❖ The ASYCUDA System for Customs

- Under Customs and Trade Facilitation Project;
- The International Development Association Financed in amount of US \$ 6 million from;
- 4 year implementation period started from July 2008;
- Led by Department of Customs, Ministry of Finance.

### ❖ **The objective:** To facilitate trade by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administration by:

- Simplifying customs procedures;
- Eliminating duplication and redundancy;
- Reducing transaction costs and time to clear goods and
- Increasing transparency and accountability.

# Challenges

- Limited information and communication technology;
- A lack of a National Single Window, electronic permit system;
- A Lack of coordination between Government agencies concerned with import and export;
- A lack of comprehensive computer system;
- A lack of capacity in trade policy making and application, particularly in the field of drafting import, export and transit related regulations.



# Recommendations

- Political support and a strong coordination mechanism such as a National Body for Trade Facilitation;
- The introduction of National Single Window;
- Cooperation and partnership among related stakeholders of the international supply chain are crucial for the implementation of Trade Facilitation Work Program in this region;

# Recommendations (Con't)

- ⦿ Regular consultations between government agencies of Regional economic integration members countries;
- Promoting and building capacity on the use/adoption of international standards for Single Window and paperless trade;
- Fully supporting the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade (UNNexT) in Asia and the Pacific initiative;
- Establishing an Advisory group on transit facilitation and agricultural trade facilitation under UNNexT;
- International assistance on Capacity building in legal area;
- strengthening mechanisms for regional coordination of aid on Trade Facilitation and paperless trade.

Thank you