

Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation Annual Meeting 2015 Summary

19 October 2015, Wuhan, China

The fourth annual meeting of the [Regional Organizations Cooperation Mechanism for Trade Facilitation](#) (ROC-TF) was held in Wuhan, China as a side-event of the Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF) 2015. Representatives from thirteen international and regional organizations attended the meeting and provided brief updates on their organization's activities in trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region. The meeting also discussed ways to improve information sharing and collaboration within the mechanism. The meeting began with an update by Ms. Maame Agyeben on the ROC-TF activities since the [last meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand in September 2014](#). She noted that two [ROC-TF newsletters](#) had been released as well as an annual calendar of activities, which had been circulated amongst member organizations. She also welcomed ROC-TF member organizations to suggest methods of improving information sharing and cooperation amongst organizations.

Mr. Mahmood Zargar, General Secretary of [AFACT](#) presented the key trade facilitation objectives and programme of AFACT. He highlighted the work of the AFACT Committees as well as the annual [eAsia Award](#). He noted the work of the SHARP working group which outlines the properties of trusted communication platforms for exchanging electronic documents between businesses via the Internet. Furthermore, Mr. Zargar elaborated on the work of the Technology and Methodology Committee in promoting the implementation of e-Business technologies and e-Trade in the Asia-Pacific region. He noted the AFACT Plenary meeting to be held on 13-16th December 2015 in Tehran, Iran as well as the mid-term meeting to be held in May 2016 in Tokyo, Japan.

Ms. Hiswani Harun, Deputy Secretary General (Trade), [Ministry of International Trade & Industry, Malaysia](#) and Chair of ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC) provided insight into the ASEAN trade facilitation initiatives as well as the work of the ASEAN Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee (ATF-JCC). It was noted that the ATF-JCC comprised of public and private sector actors working to strengthen trade facilitation reforms in ASEAN Member States. She provided information on the ongoing work of the ATF-JCC, which included developing ASEAN Trade Facilitation Indicators based on OECD trade indicators; establishing National Coordinating Committees; and developing the strategic plan of action on trade facilitation for the ASEAN Economic Community post-2015 document. Ms. Harun stated that ASEAN would continue to work towards removing barriers within the region to facilitate trade and economic activities.

Mr. Ho Quang Trung, Director, Market Integration Directorate, [ASEAN Secretariat](#), presented the Trade Facilitation Work Programme of the Secretariat, including work on: eliminating tariffs and non-tariff barriers enhancing Rules of Origin; Customs Integration and [ASEAN Single Window](#); and Harmonization of Standards and Conformance Procedures. Mr. Trung highlighted key tools and mechanisms within ASEAN, including: the ASEAN Trade Repository, a web portal providing a single access point to national trade repositories of ASEAN Member States; the reactivation of the ATF-JCC with participation of the private sector; and the revitalization of the consultation mechanism through the establishment of the ASEAN Solutions for Investments, Services and Trade (ASSIST). He also highlighted the work amongst ASEAN member states

towards Customs integration, such as: ASEAN Harmonized Tariff Nomenclature; ASEAN Customs Transit System; and the ASEAN Single Window.

Mr. Seve Paeniu, Head of the [OCO Secretariat](#), provided an overview of OCO's work on trade facilitation, border security and revenue management. He highlighted the focus of OCO's trade facilitation work was to bring alignment of the member administrations to international standards and promote the uptake of instruments of the WTO and WCO. He also noted the work being done on customs modernization and the strengthening of customs data and trade statistics. Mr. Paeniu highlighted that the OCO Secretariat also sought to strengthen coordination and leverage cooperation with its partners. Furthermore, OCO promotes regional coordination to assist member administrations, in particular smaller administrations to achieve their national priority outcomes. He invited collaboration with ROC-TF organizations to meet these objectives.

Mr. Yann Duval, Chief of the Trade Facilitation Unit of ESCAP, presented the key areas of work of the ESCAP trade facilitation programme. In particular he highlighted the newly updated [ESCAP-World Bank Trade Cost Database](#) (July 2015) and the newly developed [Trade Process Analysis Database \(TPAD\)](#). He also highlighted the [UNRC Joint Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation 2015](#) launched during [APTFF 2015](#). In terms of capacity building activities, Mr. Duval informed the meeting of the annual UNNExT Masterclass on Single Window Implementation with WCO and Korea Customs as well as recent capacity building workshops on paperless trade facilitation systems for SMEs and the agricultural sector. He informed that ESCAP was supporting ongoing negotiations of a region-wide [intergovernmental agreement \(UN Treaty\) on the Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade](#).

Mr. Daehyun Kang, Programme Advisor of the [Greater Tumen Initiative \(GTI\)](#) highlighted the work of the recently established GTI trade facilitation committee. He noted that GTI sought to enhance cooperation and linkages with regional development initiatives such as: the One Belt and One Road Initiative (China), Eurasia Initiative (RoK), Steppe Road plan (Mongolia), and Far Eastern development (Russia). Mr. Kang also highlighted the recent capacity building activities in collaboration with ESCAP and Korea Customs Organization. He informed the meeting of the upcoming restructuring of the current GTI Trade Facilitation Committee into a Trade and Investment Committee. It was also noted that the upcoming capacity building activities would focus on AEO, paperless trade, and Single Window implementation. Mr. Kang indicated that he would share the GTI activity calendar and invited ROC-TF member organizations to participate and collaborate.

Mr. Jeff Procak, Regional Cooperation Specialist, [ADB](#), presented the work done by ADB through their [CAREC programme](#). He noted the work done on customs cooperation, including: capacity building and technical assistance on the Revised Kyoto Convention; coordinated border management; risk management (AEO, SAFE Framework) and regional transit trade. He highlighted ADB CAREC's work on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Assessments and [Common Agenda for SPS Modernization](#), which addresses regulatory issues, laboratory capacity and SPS border services management. He informed the meeting of on-going regional investment projects, such as support to National Single Window in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and the construction of Border Crossing Points in Tajikistan (Guliston) and in the Kyrgyz Republic. He also noted the work being done in Mongolia to update the SPS systems and measures.

Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos, Director, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, [UNECE](#), highlighted the work of UNECE and [UN/CEFACT](#) in developing global trade facilitation and electronic Business

recommendations and standards. Ms. Cram-Martos highlighted the ongoing work on UNECE in WTO TFA implementation support, through the [Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide \(TFIG\)](#) and the Trade Facilitation Implementation Roadmap. Her presentation outlined the support to the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia ([SPECA](#)) Working Group on Trade and support to Central Asia economies in collaboration with partners such as ITC, UNCTAD and UNESCAP. Ms. Cram-Martos highlighted some possible areas of collaboration and partnership such as developing trade facilitation implementation roadmaps, harmonization of regulatory standards and procedures, and a multilingual glossary of trade facilitation terms.

Mr. Adegboyega Ajani, Industrial Development Officer of the [UNIDO Regional Office, Beijing, China](#), highlighted UNIDO's trade facilitation activities in the Asia-Pacific region, which focused on preparing goods for export, namely through capacity building on the inspection, certification and accreditation processes. He highlighted some specific projects, such as in Sri Lanka on the cinnamon value chain, quality standards and SPS compliance and the UNIDO-FAO work on agro-processing in Mongolia. UNIDO's systematic approach to trade facilitation work was noted, including support to countries in the development of risk management systems, support to SMEs in TBT/SPS related issues; strengthening existing WTO TBT/SPS enquiry points. He also notified the meeting of [UNIDO's Trade Standards Compliance Report](#), which provided analysis on the issues and challenges confronted by developing countries in meeting trade standards.

Mr. Kazunari Igarashi, Head, [WCO Asia-Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building](#) (ROCB) gave a presentation on the [WCO](#)'s work in the Asia-Pacific region. He highlighted the recent development of trade facilitation-related tools and guidelines and reviewed and updated [WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Trade](#) (SAFE). His presentation summarized the planned capacity building programs of 2015/16. In particular, he provided an overview of the WCO activities in relation to the WTO TFA and noted the technical assistance provided to WCO members under the '[Mercator Program](#)'. Furthermore, it was noted that the upcoming work of the ROCB A/P would also focus on capacity building on: Coordinated Border Management, Revenue Package and Advance Ruling, Corridor-Transit in GMS, and TFA Single Window.

Ms. L. Savithri, Director, Economic, Trade, and Finance, [SAARC Secretariat](#), provided an overview of the existing instruments with SAARC in the area of trade, namely the South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) and SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). The SAARC's trade facilitation work has focused on the harmonization of standards through the South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO). She highlighted the work on Customs Cooperation which looked at the simplification and harmonization of customs documentation. Furthermore, it was noted that work in this area was supplemented by SASEC and CAREC. She informed the meeting of the recently established SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) for dispute settlement. In order to assess the prospects of moving towards a South-Asian Economic Union the SAARC Secretariat conducted, with support from ADB, a Study on the Regional Economic Integration in SAARC.

Ms. Christina Busch of the Trade and Competitiveness Global Practice at the World Bank outlined the scope of the World Bank's work on trade facilitation, which includes: customs and border management, trade infrastructure and efficiency, logistics and transport services, regional trade facilitation and corridors, as well as multimodal transport. Ms. Busch provided an excerpt of on-going and upcoming trade facilitation projects in the Asia-Pacific region. Her presentation highlighted some of the World Bank's trade facilitation related indicators and monitoring frameworks, namely the: [Logistics Performance Index \(LPI\)](#), [Doing Business](#)

[Trading Across Borders](#), [ESCAP-World Bank Trade Costs Database](#), and [Services Trade Restrictiveness Index](#). Ms. Busch also requested the ROC-TF members to provide relevant contact details for freight forwarders in the Asia-Pacific region, in order to update the contacts for LPI data collection. She also highlighted the Multi-Donor Trade Facilitation Support Program (TFSP) which provides technical assistance on TFA implementation and will run until June 2019.

Mr. Poul Hansen, Economic Affairs Officer of [UNCTAD](#) highlighted the six key components of their trade facilitation programme, including: UNCTADs working in assisting developing countries in drafting national trade facilitation plans for the implementation of the WTO TFA and supporting [National Trade Facilitation Committees](#); UNCTAD's work on customs automation, particularly through the [Automated System for Customs Data \(ASYCUDA\)](#); and UNCTAD's support to transit and landlocked developing countries. He presented UNCTAD's [online portal for foreign trade procedures](#). The presentation provided information about the [TrainForTrade](#), which includes trade programmes on: port management, e-commerce law, and e-commerce promotion. In conclusion, Mr. Hansen highlighted the complementary assistance provided to developing countries on WTO Accession, competition law and work on non-tariff measures.

During the discussion the participants stated that ROC-TF is a unique and useful mechanism. Furthermore, it was agreed that coordination by regional and international organizations working on trade facilitation was beneficial to the countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The participants offered some of the following recommendations to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the organizations. The meeting agreed:

- That a study on the linkages and synergies of regional development initiatives on trade facilitation in the Asia-Pacific region would be beneficial;
- That organizations would circulate amongst each other their ongoing work and guidelines on National Trade Facilitation Committees;
- To share more information sharing on national level activities to foster collaboration and avoid duplication;
- To expand the membership of ROC-TF to include other international organizations, such as the WTO, APEC, bilateral development partners/donors, and private sector actors in the region such as ICC and Pan-Asian Alliance (PAA);
- To explore the possibility of expanding the yearly meetings to more than one day;
- To consider new mechanisms to improve coordination and exchange of information, such a group e-mail, interactive calendar, more frequent emails and event reminders;
- To continue the dissemination of the ROC-TF annual calendar and bi-annual newsletter. The ROC-TF Organizations are encouraged to provide timely input (regarding their projects, activities, publications, achievements) for the ROC-TF newsletter and calendar.

All presentations from the meeting are available here: <http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-organizations-cooperation-mechanism-trade-facilitation-roc-tf-annual-meeting-2015>

Links to Relevant Websites

ROC-TF: <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment/trade-facilitation/roc-tf>

ADB: ADB Industry and Trade: <http://www.adb.org/sectors/industry-and-trade/main>

CAREC Program: <http://www.carecprogram.org/index.php?page=trade-facilitation>

ASEAN Secretariat: <http://www.asean.org/asean/asean-secretariat>

AFACT: <http://afact.ecommerce.gov.ir/>

GTI Secretariat: <http://www.tumenprogramme.org/>

OCO Secretariat Website: <http://www.ocosec.org/>

SAARC Secretariat: <http://www.saarc-sec.org/>

UNCTAD Transport and Trade Logistics: <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DTL/Trade-Logistics-Branch.aspx>

UNECE Trade: <http://www.unece.org/tradewelcome/trade-home.html>

UNESCAP Trade Facilitation Unit: <http://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment/trade-facilitation>

United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNEXT):
<http://unnxt.unescap.org/>

UNIDO Asia Pacific: <http://www.unido.org/asiaandthepacific.html>

UNIDO Trade: <http://www.unido.org/trade.html>

WCO: <http://www.wcoomd.org>

WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB A/P): <http://rocb.wcoasiapacific.org/>

World Bank Trade Facilitation and Logistics:
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/brief/tradefacilitation-and-logistics>

GFP Website: www.gfptt.org

Trade Facilitation Agreement Coordination: www.tfacoordination.org

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预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

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