



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 2022¹.

During the second session of the Paperless Trade Council held on 22-23 June 2023, the Council noted the importance of initiating pilot projects on cross-border paperless trade. It recommended that the Secretariat conduct a comparative analysis of the benefits of exchanging selected trade-related documents electronically and the readiness of all parties to undertake such an initiative, as well as to identify differences in the policies, laws, and infrastructure capabilities of each member State as a basis for narrowing those gaps and present the results of that analysis to the Standing Committee at its third session.

Subsequently, this issue was discussed at the ad-hoc session of the Standing Committee held on 23 and 24 January 2024. Considering the large number of trade-related documents to be studied, it is essential to prioritize them. In this connection, the Secretariat proposed four selection criteria: 1) The documents (paper or paperless) should be commonly used by all or most of the Parties; 2) The electronic documents, ideally, should have been adopted by at least one Party of CPTA (so that the operation can potentially be expanded to other Parties); 3) Low hanging fruit: the paperless solution should be relatively easily acceptable by the Parties; 4) The documents, ideally, should also be recommended by ICC and other development partners so that synergies can be explored. Based on these criteria, the Secretariat proposed that the first phase of the studies should cover three documents, namely, a Certificate of Origin (including preferential and non-preferential), a Phytosanitary certificate, and a Commercial Invoice. The

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

Secretariat invited the Parties to join the studies depending on the willingness and readiness of each Party.

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.

3. Programme

Modality: Hybrid, in UN-House Meeting Room #111 and online via Zoom (Meeting ID: 977 1255 6769 Passcode: 866533)

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

Moderator: Mr. Tengfei Wang, Economic Affairs Officer, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP

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09:00 - 09:20	Opening Yann Duval , Chief of Trade Policy and Facilitation, ESCAP Dmitry Shlapachenko , UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan 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 <i>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</i>

10:30 - 10:45	Break
	<p>Session 2. Synergy among development partners</p> <p><i>In this session, development partners are invited to showcase their work on paperless and cross-border paperless trade in Turkmenistan.</i></p>
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 – 14:45	<p>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)</p> <p><i>The key results of the readiness assessment will be presented to the participants in this session.</i></p>
14:45 - 15:00	Break
15:00 - 16:30	<p>Session 4. Introduction of the key outcomes and recommended follow-up actions of the readiness assessment (legal aspect)</p> <p><i>The key results of the readiness assessment will be presented to the participants in this session.</i></p>
16:30 - 17:00	<p>Summary of the day</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>

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09:00 - 10:00	<p>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)</p> <p><i>In this session, the preliminary findings of the national consultant will be presented to the meeting. The participants are invited to provide comments. International consultant(s) will be connected online to provide an overview of the document internationally.</i></p>
10:00 - 11:00	<p>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)</p>

	<i>In this session, the preliminary findings of the national consultant will be presented. The participants are invited to provide comments. International consultant(s) will be connected online to provide an overview of the document internationally.</i>
11:00 - 11:15	Break
11:15 - 12:15	<p>Session 7. Review the benefits of exchanging selected trade-related documents electronically and the readiness of all parties to undertake such an initiative (tentatively commercial invoice certificate)</p> <p><i>In this session, the preliminary findings of the national consultant will be presented to the meeting. The participants are invited to provide comments. International consultant(s) will be connected online to provide an overview of the document internationally.</i></p>
12:15 - 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 - 15:00	<p>Session 8. Towards a national strategy on advancing cross-border paperless trade and implementation of CPTA</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 - 16:30	<p>Session 9. Presentations by the participants</p> <p><i>In this session, the participants will present their work on a national strategy for advancing cross-border paperless trade and implementation of CPTA</i></p>
16:30 - 17:00	Conclusion