

Guatemala´s experience: priorities & strategies to foster private sector participation in TFA implementation

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Introduction

- TFA: a major milestone that will contribute to strengthen global customs practices, reduce time and costs associated with goods crossing borders and foster cooperation between customs authorities worldwide.
- TF: an area in which all parties can obtain benefits (both public and private entities) through easier & faster procedures and more predictability in commercial exchanges.
- TF: a very broad area that requires cooperation of a wide number of stakeholders, particularly the private sector.



AGENDA

- 1) Background on the development of a TF public-private partnership in Guatemala
- 2) Steps taken by Guatemala to implement the WTO TFA
- 3) The role of the private sector: a key element to achieve an effective implementation of the TFA
- 4) Next steps and general recommendations



1) Background on the development of a TF Public-Private partnership

- **2004: Commission on Trade Facilitation (CONAFACIL)**
 - First formal platform where public and private entities could address TF issues
 - Participation based on voluntary basis
 - Very active in implementation of commitments derived from CAFTA-DR
- **2008: Self-Assessment and the creation of the Multi-institutional Group on Trade Facilitation (GIFC)**
 - Recommendation- WTO Self Assessment
 - In charge of following-up on TFA negotiations & implementation
 - Public-private partnership



2) Steps taken by Guatemala to implement the TFA

1) The process of categorizing TFA provisions A,B,C

- Provisions under Cat. A: Guatemala notified in Jul. 2014 commitments under Cat. A (more than 40 provisions)
- The process of defining provisions under Cat. B and C: an ongoing public-private dialogue.
- Joint assessment by UNCTAD & the WB, last quarter of 2014
- Process of identifying projects and donors (provisions under Cat. C)

2) Implementation status

- Pending approval in Congress/ Constant follow-up by Executive branch within its mandate



3) The role of the private sector in TFA implementation: a key element

- The case of Guatemala: a long- standing TF public-private partnership.
 - Combex-IM
 - Single-window for Exports (VUPE)
- Private sector support in TF issues: an essential element
 - Practical feedback on problems encountered on day-to-day operations (as users, they can help identify problems/improvements faster)
 - Practical solutions proposed through the national committee: by keeping an open and continuous dialogue within the group, solutions can be socialized and respond to practical needs
 - Private sector involvement fosters communication within public agencies



4) Next steps

- **Internally:**

- Formalize the National Committee structure to ensure permanent dialogue between public and private sectors as well as participation of high level officials
- Identify donors with the ability to provide assistance for provisions under Cat. C



Conclusions

- **Recommendations:**

- Keep private sector involved during the implementation process (dialogue is a key element)
- In order to maintain consistent participation of all stakeholders, an active agenda is needed, based on a work plan that sets clear goals, within estimated timeframes.