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giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



Concept Note

Second Regional Meeting of National Trade Facilitation Committees in Central Asia

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) are organizing a regional meeting to support regional cooperation among the National Trade Facilitation Committees in Central Asia, to be held online on 3-4 November 2020.

Background

In February 2019 GIZ organized a regional meeting of National Trade Facilitation Committees (NTFCs) from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The meeting provided an opportunity to present the national trade facilitation implementation plans. For two days representatives of the committees shared their respective trade facilitation objectives and implementation plans and discussed technical aspects and experiences, namely in the area of monitoring of border crossing times, trade information portals and transit simplification. Participants expressed their interest in continuing this information exchange between NTFC.

The regional GIZ project “Trade Facilitation in Central Asia” is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented in four Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The main objective of the project is to improve implementation of trade facilitation measures in the region by providing technical assistance on how to make border crossing and transit faster, more efficient and transparent. The project is implemented in cooperation with national ministries responsible for trade policy, customs authorities and border control agencies, as well as business associations. The regional GIZ project “*Trade facilitation in Central Asia*” (TFCA) supports regional consultation and coordination mechanisms and national trade facilitation committees / working groups in the four countries.

UNECE has supported the establishment and functioning of National Trade Facilitation Committees since 1970, when the first version of UNECE’s Recommendation 4 was adopted. For decades national trade facilitation bodies have represented their countries in the work of UNECE and its subsidiary body - the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) on the facilitation of international trade procedures. UNECE has provided advisory services on the establishment and functioning of trade facilitation for the transition economies, including in the countries of the region (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan). It provided substantial support for the regional network of national trade facilitation bodies in Southeastern Europe SECIPRO.

Objective of the regional meeting

The meeting will provide an opportunity to:

- exchange experiences on progress in the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and trade facilitation in general
- agree on a sustainable mechanism for cooperation between the NTFCs in the subregion
- discuss the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on cross-border trade;
- build awareness and capacity on technical issues in trade facilitation.

Method

The meeting will be conducted virtually using the Webex in two channels and interpretation to be provided. The meeting will include presentations by each country, presentations by the organizing agencies, plenary discussions, and thematic interventions by external speakers.

Links to the meeting at the Webex platform are:

Registration of participants

DAY 1

[Russian](#) – [Registration](#) – Password: RegionNTFCDay1RU

[English](#) – [Registration](#) – Password: RegionNTFCDay1EN

DAY 2

[Russian](#) – [Registration](#) – Password: RegionNTFCDay2RU

[English](#) – [Registration](#) – Password: RegionNTFCDay2EN

Draft Agenda

Second Regional Meeting of National Trade Facilitation Committees in Central Asia

3 of November 2020		
DAY 1 – Central Asian day (KZ, KG, TJ, UZ)		
Time	Content	Speaker
14:00 – 14:10 (Tashkent and Dushanbe time)	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome speeches Introduction of the meeting 	Ms. Felicitas Siek , GIZ TFCA Project Manager Mr. Mario Apostolov , UNECE Regional Adviser on trade facilitation Mr. Edil Kalashev Moderator of the meeting
14:10 – 15:40 10 min per country and Q&A after each session 10 min for each speaker	Session 1: Updates on trade facilitation implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of key elements of work plans and overall implementation initiatives by each NTFC followed by short discussion. Presentation by GIZ on project activities and activities of other programs (Coordination Matrix) – 10 min. Presentation by UNECE on activities in implementation of the SPECA Strategy for Trade Facilitation and its implementation roadmap Presentation of the OSCE's analysis on NTFCs' needs in Central Asia 	Presentation from NTFC's: - KZ - KG - TJ - UZ Ms. Asel Uzagalieva GIZ/TFCA Component Manager Mr. Mario Apostolov Ms. Eni Gjergji (OSCE Economic Adviser) and Mr. Nurat Mamatov (local expert)
15:40 – 15:50	Break	
15:50 – 16:50	Session 2: Problems and challenges in trade facilitation in CA and Regional Network of NTFCs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Auto Rally" transport corridors – barriers during export of perishable goods to Russia. Experience of regional NTFC cooperation networks 	Ms. Larisa Kislyakova Head of the Transport and Logistics Partnership in CA Mr. Mario Apostolov Moderator

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of how to set up a sustainable cooperation mechanism in the region • Presentation of a Cooperation Agreement for cooperation 	Ms. Birgit Viohl GIZ expert
16:50 – 17:00	Discussion. Closing results of the day	Moderator
4 of November 2020		
DAY 2 – SPECA day (KZ, KG, TJ, UZ, TM, AZ, AFG)		
Time	Content	Speaker
14:00 – 15:00 (Tashkent and Dushanbe time)	Session 3: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade: Impact on Cross-border trade and transport and government responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the scene. Overview of measures adopted and recommendations. Digitalisation of information flows for multimodal corridors • UN project on standardized digitalization of information flows along multimodal transport corridors (the role of NTFCs) • Presentation of the study on state of play and harmonization of border crossing procedures in time of COVID-19 • Input from other SPECA Countries • Discussion: What is the role of NTFCs in addressing the impact of the pandemic crisis and the trade restrictive measures? 	Mr. Mario Apostolov Ms. Birgit Viohl Ms. Larisa Kislyakova Moderator
15:00-15:10	Break	
15:10 – 15:50	Session 4: Transit / Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eTir • Piloting eTIR Corridor in Central Asia (UZ-KZ) • Q&A 	Representative of UNECE (name TBC by Mario) Ms. Tatiana Rey-Bellet, Director TIR & Transit Services
15:55 – 16:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of Transit and National Transit Coordinator TFA Article 11 • Q&A 	Mr. Poul Hansen Chief Trade Facilitation, DTL, TLB, UNCTAD
16:45 – 17:00	Conclusion	Moderator Representatives of GIZ and UNECE