

Friends for E-Commerce for Development: Mapping e-Trade for All Development Objectives into a WTO Framework for E-Commerce

1. E-commerce readiness and strategy

- In addition to national assessments to identify strengths and weaknesses in e-commerce readiness, the FEDs will identify actions that countries can take in our own interest and at our own initiative in the context of international trade rules to improve the overarching legal and regulatory Framework for E-Commerce.
- We support expansion of UNCTAD's e-T.Ready programme, currently available only to LDCs, to all developing countries so they may benefit from it. We call upon the partners in eTrade for All to ensure they allocate adequate resources to programmes that support the priorities herein so that developing countries can maximise their ability to benefit from the potential of Ecommerce and, where necessary, to allocate additional resources as relevant.

2. ICT infrastructure and services

- Affordable and reliable ICT infrastructures, including, *inter alia*, affordable access to broadband delivered via various technologies especially for underserved populations in rural, remote or urban areas is of paramount importance for inclusive e-commerce. Bridging the digital divide is an objective of the Sustainable Development Goals and the FEDs affirm that trade policy must support reaching Goals 9(c) and 17.11 in this regard.
- The FEDs will explore how the multilateral trading system can provide a Framework to achieve these objectives through, *inter alia*, effective competition and regulation, especially in services central to e-commerce like basic and value-added telecommunications, computer and related services, and relevant distribution services. The FEDs also support investigation into trade policy-related barriers that may exist to the flow of goods integral to bridging the digital divide, *inter alia*, ICT hardware and software in relevant classifications.
- The FEDs, like all other WTO Members and UN Member-states, supports universal affordable Internet access delivered via high-speed broadband. Such access, in turn, depends upon the regular upgrading of infrastructures, deployment of new technologies to enhance international connectivity, increased access to and innovation in spectrum allocation, the provision of technical assistance, and reduction of artificial and burdensome regulatory barriers to e-commerce.

3. Trade logistics

- Since effective and competitive movement of goods in national and international trade is vital for reducing e-commerce friction and enhancing competitiveness, especially for developing country MSMEs, the FEDs will promote identifying a Framework of trade rules and commitments to promote effective transportation and logistics and cross-border trade facilitation measures in order to advance goods-related e-commerce for development.
- The Trade Facilitation Agreement's implementation is a key foundational element that trade policy has for delivering improvements in this area. Ensuring rapid, widespread implementation of it, especially for and by developing countries, is a shared priority.

4. Payment solutions

- Because e-payment systems are crucial to taking advantage of new possibilities for consumers and corporate buyers and sellers, and are central to meeting national targets for financial inclusion, the FEDs will identify trade policies and commitments that help transition away from a reliance on cash and facilitate access to e-commerce and financial services for all citizens of developing and least developed countries. The FEDs objective is a world where anyone, anywhere can access and use any licit good or service offered by anyone else on a level playing field as and between countries at all levels of development.
- The FEDs will encourage expansion resources for capacity-building efforts under the of e-Trade for All initiative to ensure that e-commerce users in developing and least developed countries can make payments safely, easily, and affordably using effective solutions involving banking and non-banking operators, with greater interoperability and universal connectivity.

5. Legal and regulatory frameworks

- In order for e-commerce to be fully supportive of economic development, the FEDs will promote security, trust and certainty for consumers and businesses alike, both within our countries and across borders.
- We will help identify key legal and regulatory steps to promote this underlying environment for consumer protection, data protection, secure cross-border data transfers, open platforms to facilitate trade, the prevention of cybercrime, and other relevant issues.
- The FEDs will work towards the reduction of artificial and burdensome regulatory barriers to e-commerce.

6. E-commerce skills development and technical assistance

- The FEDs will promote efforts to expand capacities and technical skills of enterprises, individuals and policy makers to harness e-commerce, with a particular focus on removing barriers that inhibit SMEs from engaging in and benefiting from e-commerce. All partners in the e-Trade for All initiative must contribute to this goal, preferably in close collaboration with private sector members of Business for eTrade Development.

7. Access to financing

- The FEDs call on all international development partners, including the relevant institutions engaged in e-Trade for All, to develop reliable financing solutions for early stage start-ups and growth-oriented businesses in the e-commerce ecosystem in order to facilitate the growth of e-commerce and entrepreneurship at all points across the e-commerce value-chain in developing countries.