



DTL/TLB/MISC/2014/2
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NOTIFICATION

Ad Hoc Expert Meeting

“National Trade Facilitation Committees”

Room XXVI, Palais des Nations

Geneva, 4 July 2014

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is convening an Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on “**National Trade Facilitation Committees**”. The meeting will be held on 4 July 2014, in room XXVI of the Palais des Nations, Geneva from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Background and purpose of the meeting

National trade facilitation bodies, such as trade facilitation committees, trade facilitation working groups or national trade and transport facilitation committees, have proved to be a useful instrument to establish and maintain communication between government and the private sector, as well as to maintain coordination among public agencies. They are also recognized as knowledge sharing and training platforms. In addition, pursuant to the World Trade Organization Bali Agreement, the Organization’s members commit to set up national trade facilitation committees; that is, it is now an obligation to have such a committee in place.

A major challenge for national trade facilitation committees is their sustainability. Recent research conducted by UNCTAD has shown that there is not one single determinant element to ensure the group’s sustainability, but rather many different aspects and conditions can be identified. There is, however, a healthy recipe based on a series of elements that can influence the effective work of the group. UNCTAD’s research has also shown that the level of development of a country plays a role when identifying the key conditions for achieving sustainability. The type of trade facilitation body and its geographical region can also be important determinants.

Against this background and in line with UNCTAD’s mandate, the Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on National Trade Facilitation Committees will provide a platform for expert discussions on evaluating the preliminary results of UNCTAD’s latest research on the topic, which will be shared with participants during the meeting.¹

Experts will in particular aim at finding answers to the following questions:

- Which elements ensure the sustainability of a national trade facilitation committee?
- What can donors and international agencies do to support the sustainability of trade facilitation bodies?
- Are there any specific techniques to encourage the involvement of the private sector?

¹ The research is based on UNCTAD’s on-line repository on trade facilitation committees, available under www.unctad.org/TFCcommittees.

Logistics

Upon arrival, participants are requested, before entering the Palais des Nations, to collect their badges at the United Nations Security Service, Pregny Gate entrance, 14 avenue de la Paix. The Security Service is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Because of the security measures in force, participants are strongly advised to arrive before 9 a.m. in order to complete entry procedures in good time and proceed to the meeting in the E Building (Batiment E) of the Palais. Participants are requested to carry a passport or similar national identity card with them. Taxis are not allowed to enter the grounds of the Palais des Nations and visitors will therefore be dropped off at the requested entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service grants special clearance.

Participation

The meeting is open to all member States of UNCTAD and may be of particular interest to government officials, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, and representatives of the private sector involved with issues related to National Trade Facilitation Committees. Member States, specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies wishing to participate in the meeting, as well as non-governmental organizations in the general category and those in the special category wishing to participate as observers, are requested to inform the UNCTAD secretariat of the names of their representatives by **27 June 2014**.

Further information and contact details

Nominations and related communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH-1211. Registration should be completed online under [Ad Hoc Expert Meeting: National Trade Facilitation Committees](#).

All other enquiries concerning substantive issues should be addressed to the coordinators in the substantive division. Please contact Mr. Jan Hoffmann or Mr. Julian Fraga-Campos, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland, fax +41 22 917 00 50; e-mail: julian.fraga-campos@unctad.org.

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

16 June 2014