



Panel Summary: The role of the private sector in National Trade Facilitation Committees (2/2/2022)

Suggested headline: NTFC Panel: Private Sector Participation Crucial for Successful Trade Reform

Key stakeholders from throughout the international trade space came together Wednesday to share best practices and lessons learned for ensuring that the private sector plays an active part in shaping trade facilitation reform.

The 90-minute discussion, held Wednesday during UNCTAD's National Trade Facilitation Committees Global Forum 2022, featured NTFC representatives from both the public and private sectors.

During the session, panellists reflected on the vital role of public-private partnerships in trade facilitation reform and how National Trade Facilitation Committees serve as a bridge to maintain and deepen trust and collaboration between both sectors. Participants acknowledged that while NTFCs receive their mandate from the government, the private sector is crucial in identifying and driving trade reform priorities.

Establishing and maintaining active and ongoing participation by a diverse range of businesses and associations in NTFC working groups was touted as a key to achieving more effective and innovative trade facilitation outcomes.

Among the other recommendations discussed by the group: the need for clear commitments from the government, having the willingness to delegate responsibility to practitioners and empower them to make decisions, and being flexible and remembering that no one size fits all. Different countries and cultures require different approaches to public-private partnerships.

It was also noted that in addition to the time and cost savings businesses enjoy, trade facilitation provides a clear incentive for governments in the form of enhanced revenue collection and improved compliance with customs regulations.

Participants included Robin Reese, Advisor to Norwegian Customs, which is Norway's NTFC Secretariat; Zafivanona Ernest Lainkana, Director General of Madagascar Customs; Davilyne Busuru, Policy and Regulatory Compliance Analyst for the Kenya Private Sector Alliance; Chea Samnang, Deputy Director of Cambodia's Department of International Customs Cooperation and Chairman of the National Committee on Trade Facilitation; Andrew Hudson, partner at Rigby Cooke Lawyers in Australia and Chair of the NCTF Private Sector Group; and Bharat Joshi, CEO of J-Curve Ventures in India and Co-Chairman, CII National Committee on Shipping and Logistics.

The panel session was co-organised by the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation and moderated by Valerie Picard, Deputy Director of the Alliance.