



Launch of the Iraq eTrade Readiness Assessment (eT Ready)

Date: Thursday, 3 December 2020, from 10:00 to 12:00, Iraq time

Platform: Cisco WebEx

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CONTEXT

In cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Trade, UNCTAD is organizing the virtual launch of the eTrade Readiness Assessment of Iraq. This is the first of a series of assessments for developing countries that follows an enhanced methodology, including contributions by eTrade for all partners. The Assessment of Iraq was prepared in close collaboration with the Universal Postal Union (UPU), with the support of the Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States (AfTIAS) programme managed by the International Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), member of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group.

This Assessment shows that the emergence of e-commerce in Iraq is promising and has the potential to create jobs, diversify the economy, increase exports and stimulate domestic demand. As the country continues to rebuild after years of conflict, e-commerce can provide a significant boost to many existing industries and generate new opportunities for young people, women and aspiring entrepreneurs. However, the country faces complex and interconnected policy barriers to advance the digital economy agenda. These include slow and costly Internet connectivity, poor transport and logistics infrastructure, the lack of legislation governing e-commerce and related services, restrictions on money and profits transfer and limited digital skills, among others.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this event will be to:

- Present the main findings of the Assessment
- Discuss the priorities of the Government of Iraq regarding the implementation of the recommendations included in the Assessment
- Reflect on the role of development partners in the digital transformation of Iraq.

The Assessment can be found on the following link:

<https://unctad.org/webflyer/iraq-etradereadinessassessment>



AGENDA

10:00 – 10:15: Introductory remarks

- Ms. Shamika N. Sirimanne, Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD
- Mr. Siva Somasundram, Director, Directorate of Policy, Regulations and Markets, International Bureau, Universal Postal Union (UPU)

10:15 – 11:00: High-level dialogue on the implementation of the eT Ready recommendations

- Mr. Bassam Salim Hussein, Head of Board of Commissionaire, Iraq Communications and Media Commission (CMC)
- Mr. Adel Khudeir Abbas, Director General of Foreign Economic Relations Dept, Ministry of Trade, Iraq
- Ms. Dhuha Abdulkareem Mohammed, Director-General of the Payments Directorate, Central Bank of Iraq
- Dr. Abbas Alfatlawi, Chargé d'Affaires, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Iraq to the United Nations Office in Geneva
- Eng. Hani Salem Sonbol, CEO of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)

11:00 – 11:20: Presentation of the eT Ready key findings

- Mr. Shawqi Makhtoob, UNCTAD consultant

11:20 – 12:00: Policy discussion

Key representatives from the public and private sectors as well as development partners are invited to share their views on the main barriers and opportunities for e-commerce development in Iraq.

Proposed speakers:

1. Mr. Ja'afar Qumar Khwair, Director of Valuation, Customs' Authority
2. Mr. Ibrahim Mansour Sa'eed and Mr. Mohammed Sayed Samee', Universal Communication for Information Technology and Postal Services LTD
3. Dr. Ali Tarish, University of Information Technology and Communications (UOITC)

Moderator: Ms. Iris Macculi, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD