



**UNCTAD First International Forum For National Trade
Facilitation Committees**

**Establishing NTFC by Sudan
Presentation**

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INTRODUCTION:-

- Trade facilitation(TF) measures seek to establish a transparent, consistent and predictable environment for border transactions based on simple and standardized customs procedures and practices, documentation requirements, cargo and transit operations, and trade and transport conventions and arrangements.
- The cross-sectoral nature of trade facilitation calls for close cooperation and coordination between trade operators and service providers and Customs and various ministries and regulatory agencies.

- That means there should be strong effective inter-agency cooperation as indicated in Article (8.1) of TFA (Border Agency Cooperation) and a sound and fully effective coordination and governance mechanism as shown in Article (23.2) of TFA (National Committee on Trade Facilitation) (NCTF).
- According to the World Bank, establishing the National Committee on Trade Facilitation would be a sensible first step of implementation of TF measures.

Membership Of The NCTF :-

According to UNCTAD and UNECE NCTF includes:

- Implementing agencies: (Customs, Quarantine, Standards Board, Port and Airport Authority, etc.);
- Attorney General or Legal Department of Cabinet (legal matters, e.g., appeals).

- Line Ministries for Transport, Commerce, Foreign Affairs, Economy and Finance, Agriculture and Animals, Food and Drugs, and Environment;
- Private sector: a cross-section to reflect wide interests, including large and small, importers and exporters, carriers, freight forwarders and associations, cargo owners chambers of commerce and shippers associations.

National Trade Facilitation Committee in Sudan:-

- Sudan had embarked on the way of trade facilitation since 2007 when Sea Ports witnessed a tremendous congestion of imported goods. As a result the government established a high level ad hoc committee to solve this problem and put an action plan for the implementation of TF measures.

- Motivated by WTO Programme of Needs Assessment 2007-2010 the Ministry of Trade established an ad hoc committee to conduct the first Self Needs Assessment funded by WTO(Sudan is acceding country to WTO).
- Again in 2010 Sudan Government established permanent ministerial committee on trade facilitation under the auspices of Council of Ministers. The permanent secretariat of the committee was housed in the Council of Ministers. Small budget was allocated to the committee from the Ministry of Finance.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee:-

- Re-engineering of imports and exports processing using IT.
- Identification of electronic trade documents.
- Providing trade data base.

- Coordination of government agencies related to foreign trade and the private sector.
- Enhancing the role of private sector in international trade and electronic business.
- Preparation of a guide on procedures of all related border agencies.

Composition of The Committee:

- Minister of State For Trade (Chair).
- Deputy governor of Central Bank (Vice Chair).
- Undersecretary of Ministry of Trade.
- Undersecretary of Ministry of Finance and National Economy.
- Undersecretary of Ministry Agriculture and Irrigation.
- Undersecretary of Ministry of Transport.

- Undersecretary of Ministry of Health.
- Undersecretary of Ministry of Sciences and Communication.
- Under Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Under Secretary of Ministry of Justice.
- Director General of Customs.
- Director of Economic Development Sector In Council of Ministers.
- Director General of Seaports Authority.
- Director General of Sudanese Standards and Metrological Organization.
- Director General of National Information Center.
- President of Business Associations.
- Chair of National Working Group on Trade Facilitation (Reporter).

The National Working Group on TF:

The Chair of the Committee established a National Working Group on Trade Facilitation (**NWGTF**) by ministerial decree in 2011 chaired by Customs and comprised representatives from different government agencies and private sector representatives.

The Terms of Reference of NWGTF :-

- Implementation of policies and decisions of the Committee.
- Conduct self- needs assessment workshops.
- Study and follow up the progress in TFA negotiations in WTO and report to the Committee .
- Implementation of a matrix of trade facilitation measures.

Composition of The NWGTF:

- Brig/Ali Giddo Adam (Customs) Chair.
- Three Representatives of Ministry of Trade (one reporter).
- Two Representatives of Customs.
- Representatives of Ministry of Finance and National Economy.
- Representative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Representative of Ministry of Justice .
- Representative of Ministry of Agriculture .
- Representative of Ministry of Animal Resources .
- Representative of Ministry of Transport.
- Representative of Ministry of Cabinet .
- Representative of Bank of Sudan .

- Representative of Seaports Authority .
- Representative of Civil Aviation Authority .
- Representative of Sudanese Standards Authority.
- Representative of Sudan Trade point .
- Representative of Ministry of Health .
- Representative of National Agency for Insurance and Financing Exports .
- Representative of National Center For Information.
- Representative of National telecommunication.
- Representative of Associations of Business .
- Representative of Chamber of Commerce.
- Representative of Chamber of Industry.
- Representative of Shipping Agents and.
- Representative of Clearing Agents.

Achievements of the Committee and the NWGTF:

- Many separate and joint meetings were held periodically. The NWGTF used to convene two meetings per month.
- Mission and vision statements with strategic objectives were put within the frame-work of 5 year strategic plan (2012-2016) with annual action plan.
- Many Workshops and seminars were held like two workshops on single window funded by ESCWA and a work-shop on validation of National Plan for the Implementation of the Future WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement funded by UNCTAD.

- Representatives from the WG participated in many regional and international workshops and meetings for example: UNECE workshop on TF in Kigali and Agaba/ Jordan (April 2013 and May 2013), IGAD workshop on OSBP in Kambala/ Uganda/ Rwanda (2013), UNCTAD Multi-year Expert Meetings in Geneva (2014), Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation meetings in Geneva and the like.
- Field visits to some Customs Border Posts to be introduced to goods clearance processes.
- Follow up of UNCTAD document on National Plan For the Implementation of the Future WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement till it was finally approved by Council of Ministers on early February 2015.
- The WG and UNCTAD prepared two projects on single window and risk management to be funded by donors.

- Sudan Customs with other agencies are currently conducting a fourth Time Release Study (TRS) with technical assistance from ADB and COMESA.
- Completing UNCTAD Empowerment Programme with assistance from HM Revenue and Customs- 4 Modules Dec. 2015- Dec. 2016.
- Drafting TF Road Map in December 2016, the first country in the World to do that.



The lessons learned by Sudan:

- 1-** Financial resources represent a major problem faced by the Committee and the WG.
- 2-** Having a permanent Secretariat and enough human resources is critical for the function of NCTF.
- 3-** Customs plays a pivotal role in the success of the NCTF.
- 4-** Having a defined work plan plays an important role in the success of the WG.
- 5-** Making sub-groups on specific topics is essential.
- 6-** Regular meetings are of fundamental importance to keep the NCTF and WG active.
- 7-** Meetings with high officials is a useful tool to obtain their commitment to support the work of the group implying the necessity of political will

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8- Communication between the committee and the WG and the Permanent Mission in Geneva is a crucial factor for implementation of the TF.

9- Team and trust building and ownership are essential factor for the well functioning of the WG.

10- The WG can be of great help for the implementation of TF projects.

11- Two tiered structure committee is a good model: A committee chaired by Ministry of Trade for trade facilitation policy purposes and a national working group chaired by customs for technical issues.

The Way Forward:

- Customs in Sudan in coordination with Ministry of Trade and other agencies, is leading processes towards full implementation of TF measures on the basis of needs assessment conducted earlier and TF Roadmap.
- UNCTAD and other International Organizations and Donors are highly requested to provide technical and financial assistance to Sudan for the implementation of TF measures.



**Thank you For Your
Attention**