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Cross-Border Paperless Trade Facilitation: ESCAP's Approach

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ESCAP Resolution on enabling paperless trade and the the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents (adopted in May 2012)

Legal and technical barriers in information exchange (across borders)

Supply Chain Integration

Increased implementation of (national) single window and paperless trade systems, but

Need for cross-border paperless trade

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ESCAP Resolution 68/3 in Brief

❖ **Request the Executive Secretary to:**

1) support and facilitate the process for the development of regional arrangements on the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade, including by conducting studies, developing potential options, and and in this regard to present its results to the Committee on Trade and Investment at its third session

2) ensure that the regional arrangements take into account and are consistent with the existing international and regional agreements, mechanisms, and undertakings…

3) continue and further strengthen the secretariat's support for capacity-building activities

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Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Regional study of options

❖ **Done by two regional experts with extensive work experience in customs and trade negotiations**

❖ **Extensive review of relevant literature and projects**

❖ **Contributions from regional experts and nominated national focal points through peer review**

❖ **The regional study recommends <u>a regional agreement that each ESCAP member may voluntarily decide to join, while providing for a flexible trade data exchange mechanism</u> <u>to be developed jointly by the parties</u> to the agreement as the best option for the Asia-Pacific region.**

Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Expert Reviews

❖ *Expert Group Meeting on Enhancing Regional Connectivity through Trade and Investment: Towards Regional Arrangements for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade* (Bangkok, 13 and 14 March 2013)

✓ **Reviewed the findings of the study**

✓ **Revised proposed draft text of the regional arrangement**

✓ **Developed an explanatory note**

❖ *A follow-up expert group meeting* (Bangkok, 2 and 3 May 2013)

Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Member Consultations

Meeting	Date	Venue
Subregional meeting for South-East Asia	9 July 2013	Bangkok
Subregional meeting for South and South-West Asia	12 July 2013	Bangkok
Subregional meeting for East and North-East Asia	24 July 2013	Incheon, Republic of Korea
Regional meeting	12 September 2013	Beijing

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Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Capacity Building Support

No.	Capacity-building activities	Date and venue
1	ESCAP-ECO Joint Trade Facilitation Forum on Paperless Trade and Single Window	24-25 May 2012, Kish Island, Islamic Republic of Iran
2	ESCAP-ADB Capacity-building Workshop on Subregional Trade and Transit Cooperation for SASEC Countries	21-26 June 2012, Kathmandu
3	UNNExT Training Workshop on Business Process Analysis for Paperless Trade	10-11 September 2012, Bangkok
4	UNNExT High-level Business Process Analysis Workshop for South Asian Logistics and Connectivity	
5	SASEC Stakeholders Workshop on Subregional and Transit Collaboration	
6	Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012	
7	Global Facilitation Partnership for Transportation Trade (GPF) Meeting	
8	UNNExT Capacity-building Workshop for Tajikistan Single Window Implementation	18-19 November 2012, Bangkok
9	UNNExT Capacity-building Workshop for Cambodia Single Window Implementation	28-29 March 2013, Bangkok
10	ESCAP Workshop on Business Process Analysis Introduction and National Trade Facilitation Strategy of Kyrgyzstan	14 June 2013, Bishkek

No.	Capacity-building activities	Date and venue
11	Capacity-building Workshop on Facilitating Cross-border Paperless Supply Chain	10-11 July 2013, Bangkok
12	Subregional Capacity-building Workshop on Facilitating Cross-border Paperless Supply Chain	22-23 July 2013, Incheon, Republic of Korea
13	Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2013	10-11 September 2013, Beijing
14	Workshop on Designing and ... n in Asia and the Pacific	12 September 2013, Beijing
15	... n Electronic Traceability ... ural Trade Facilitation	24-26 September 2013, New Delhi
16	... Facilitation and	2-3 October 2013, Tabriz, Islamic Republic of Iran
17	... plementing Single	7-18 October 2013, Cheon-an, Republic of Korea
18	Workshop on Business Process Analysis for Trade Facilitation in Central Asia	12-14 November 2013, Almaty, Kazakhstan
19	Global Trade Facilitation Conference 2013	18-19 November 2013, Bangkok
20	Regional Training Workshop on Global Supply Chain and Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide	19-22 November 2013, Bangkok

UNNExT
United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific

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Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting

- ❖ **Organized in April 2014 at the request of ESCAP Committee on Trade on Investment**

- ❖ **30 ESCAP member states participated**

- ❖ **Collectively reviewed and improved the draft text of a regional arrangement for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade, but needed more time to finalize it.**

- ❖ **Decided to establish an interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation to 1) further improve the draft text and 2) prepare a draft roadmap for the implementation of substantive provisions in the draft text**

  - ❖ **Decision endorsed by the 70th session of the Commission in August 2014**

Progress in Implementing ESCAP Resolution 68/3: Next Steps

❖ **Operationalize Steering Group & Prepare initial draft of a roadmap for cross-border paperless trade**

❖ **First meeting of the Steering Group planned for the last week of February 2014, back-to-back with the 4ᵗʰ session of the Committee on Trade and Investment.**

❖ **Subsequently, the Steering Group would convene every six months or as agreed in its first meeting, either physically or virtually.**

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Important Considerations for Achieving Cross-border Paperless Trade

❖ **An effective arrangement likely to require a broad (lengthy) consensus building process**

❖ **Continuous capacity building support of stakeholders (member states) needed to reduce capacity gaps among them**

❖ **Identifying and narrowing both legal and technical gaps needed.**

❖ **Interoperability a key principle, not only among the members, but also at global/regional levels.**

   1) **Use of international standards**
   2) **Use of/alignment with regional legal instruments, such as the ESCAP regional arrangement**

Thank you

More Information on:

ESCAP Res. 68/3:
http://unnext.unescap.org/reso683.asp

United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT):
http://unnext.unescap.org/

ESCAP Trade Facilitation programme
http://www.unescap.org/our-work/trade-investment/trade-facilitation

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