Economic and Social Council

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
3rd meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group
  on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation

Bangkok, 23-24 March 2017
Item 3 of the provisional agenda[*]
Report on progress made by the Legal and Technical
Working Groups on the preparation of a draft road map
for the implementation of the substantive provisions in the
Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border
Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific

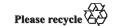## Report on progress made by the Legal and Technical Working Groups in their mandated tasks

Note by the secretariat

Summary

> The present report has been prepared by the secretariat to update the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation on progress made by the Legal and Technical Working Groups on the preparation of a draft road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions in the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.

I. Progress made

1. Since the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation finalized the draft text of the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific at its 2nd meeting, held in March 2016, the Legal and Technical Working Groups have focused on preparing a draft road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions in the Framework Agreement.

2. Given that the Legal Working Group, as mandated in its terms of reference, has completed its leading role in revising and finalizing the draft text of the Framework Agreement, it did not hold any further physical or virtual meetings.

3. The Technical Working Group, as mandated in its terms of reference, has continued its leading role in preparing a draft road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions in the Framework Agreement and has held eight virtual meetings since the 2nd meeting of the Steering Group, in March 2016, using the online conference facility supported by the secretariat, as shown in table 1.

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[*] E/ESCAP/PTA/IISG(3)/L.1.

Table 1
Virtual meetings of the Technical Working Group

Virtual meetings	Dates
9th meeting	27 April 2016
10th meeting	25 May 2016
11th meeting	27 July 2016
12th meeting	31 August 2016
13th meeting	5 October 2016
14th meeting	23 November 2016
15th meeting	25 January 2017
16th meeting	22 February 2017

4.   In accordance with the background document on the preparation of a draft road map prepared by the secretariat,[1] the Technical Working Group has continued to prepare documents in support of tasks identified in the draft road map. The supporting documents that the Technical Working Group has continued to develop are listed in table 2.

Table 2
List of supporting documents further developed by the Technical Working Group

Supporting documents	Relevant articles of the Framework Agreement
Guide on how to develop or upgrade paperless trade systems consistently with the general principles	Article 5: General principles
Template for designing a good national policy framework	Article 6: National policy framework, enabling domestic legal environment and paperless trade committee
Mutual recognition mechanism	Article 8: Cross-border mutual recognition of trade-related data and documents in electronic form
International standards implementation strategy	Article 9: International standards for exchange of trade-related data and documents in electronic form
Draft terms of reference for the Paperless Trade Council and Standing Committee	Article 11: Institutional arrangements
Technical gap checklist	Article 12: Action plan
Template for action plan	Article 12: Action plan
Cross-border paperless trade reference map	Article 13: Pilot projects and sharing of lessons learned
Capacity-building strategy	Article 14: Capacity-building

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[1]   E/ESCAP/PTA/IISG(2)/3.

5.   The secretariat organized an extended United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT) Advisory Group meeting in Bangkok from 22 to 24 November 2016, bringing together selected members of relevant UNNExT Advisory Groups and regional experts to work on selected legal and technical work items such as a legal gap analysis checklist, technical gap checklist, action plan template, draft terms of reference for the Paperless Trade Council and Standing Committee, draft rules of procedure, mutual recognition mechanism and cross-border paperless trade reference map, and provide its outcome as input to the work of the Legal and Technical Working Groups in further advancing delivery of the draft road map.

6.   The Legal and Technical Working Groups will hold their 4th combined meeting in Bangkok on 21 and 22 March 2017, with a view to further progressing the preparation of the draft road map and related supporting documents. The meeting will start with a joint session of the two Working Groups, followed by breakout sessions, and end with another joint session to coordinate work effectively.

7.   Progress made by the Working Groups during their 4th meeting will be reported to the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation at its 3rd meeting.

II.   Consideration by the Steering Group

8.   The Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation may consider taking the following actions:

(a)   Note the progress made by the Legal and Technical Working Groups in preparing a draft road map for the implementation of the substantive provisions in the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific;

(b)   Further guide the Legal and Technical Working Groups on their mandated tasks.

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