

**A Summary Note
on
Inputs Received during the APTA Business Forum
13-14 November 2014, Delhi**

A. APTA: Conclusion of the Fourth Round:

1. Bangladesh: Using trade coverage would be more useful to explain the benefit of APTA than using MoPs and product coverage.
2. India: It is necessary to see MFN percentage change for the benefit of APTA tariff concessions.
3. Sri Lanka: Examine the impact of the Fourth Round negotiations of APTA comparing to the benefit of adopting FTAs [as a new modality of tariff concession negotiations (e.g., negative list approach)] with other countries such as China, possibly under the Fifth Round negotiations.

Future action points:

- Incorporate the above comments into the draft APTA staff paper presented at the SC meeting at its 45th session.
- Provide technical assistance to LDC PSs for capturing preferential trade data through capacity building activities.

B. ESCAP Resolution 70/6 on Cross Border Paperless Trade:

1. Bangladesh: Inquired whether the framework arrangement on cross border paperless trade only covers RoO or includes the data exchange.
2. India: Establishing clear RoO is a precondition of facilitating the cross-border paperless trade.
3. Mongolia: Technical assistance from the APTA Secretariat and other PSs would be most helpful.
4. Sri Lanka: It is essential to have capacity building activities to promote paperless trade.

Future action points:

- Continue to raise the awareness of Resolution 70/6 and the related framework arrangement through the UNNExT website and capacity building workshops.

C. NTM and RoO Database developed by ESCAP under APTA 4th Round Concession Lists and APTA Electronic Certificate of Origin in APTA:

1. India: Among the three data sources presented by the APTA Secretariat, it is desirable to refer to WTO's related NTM database.
2. Several PSs of APTA (Bangladesh, Mongolia, Sri Lanka) requested for building capacity on RoO and CoO under the APTA.
3. All the PSs appreciated the RoO and NTM database being constructed by the APTA Secretariat.

Future action points:

- Provide technical assistance to LDC and LLDC PSs of APTA for electronic CoO through capacity building activities under the APTA business sector forum.

D. Research on a Future Road Map of APTA and the private sector's perspectives:

1. Senior research fellow (Dr. Ram Upendra Das of RIS, India): APTA should be evolved toward a comprehensive, Pan Asia-Pacific trade agreement now following the negative list approach, proactive membership expansion, and exploring new areas of regional cooperation.
2. APTA Participating States: expressed strong preference that the Secretariat continues operating at ESCAP as it has done good work and accomplished a lot.
3. India: Complicated RoOs in regional/bilateral trade agreements have been limiting factors despite its potential of forming an Asia-Pacific wide bloc trade agreement.
4. ROK: It is time to transform the APTA to an APFTA.
5. Sri Lanka: suggested that APTA Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) be established and volunteered to prepare a concept paper in consultation with the APTA Secretariat in time for the 4th session of the APTA Ministerial Council scheduled for mid-January 2015.

Future action points:

- There is a consensus in the APTA business forum that there is a strong need to further develop a future road map of the APTA by building consensus among APTA PSs at the Ministerial Council and the SC meetings with inputs from the APTA PSs' business sector (e.g., national CCI).

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

APTA Business Forum

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