Summary of Study Report: REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FACILITATION OF CROSS-BORDER PAPERLESS TRADE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Regional Meeting on Development of Regional Arrangements for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade

12 September 2013
Beijing, China

Study Background

- ☐ ESCAP Resolution 68/3 of May 2012 mandates to conduct studies to facilitate regional arrangements for cross-border paperless trade
- ☐ Study covered:
- ▪ Status and gaps in trade and transit facilitation in Asia-Pacific region
- ▪ Review of existing approaches on arrangements of cross-border paperless trade in the Region
- ▪ Proposed contents and features of a possible regional arrangement
- ▪ Proposal on draft text of regional arrangement

Study Methodology

- ☐ Review of documents of UN Bodies and other organizations, including WCO and WTO

- ☐ Desktop Research: information from the Web

- ☐ Information obtained through consultation and interaction with officials from private sector and governments

- ☐ Inputs from ESCAP Secretariat

Study Outline

- Chapter 1 – Discusses need for regional arrangement on paperless trade in the Asia-Pacific

- Chapter 2 – Reviews existing arrangements for facilitation for paperless trade

- Chapter 3 - Proposes contents and features of a regional arrangement for the Asia-Pacific

- Chapter 4 – Presents conclusion and Way Forward

- Annex presents a draft text of regional arrangement on facilitation of cross-border paperless trade for the Asia-Pacific region

Chapter 1

- Paperless Trade: "trade taking place on the basis of dematerialized commercial and regulatory documents instead of paper documents"
- Term 'Paperless Trade' distinct from 'e-trade'
- Paperless Trade has several advantages:
- ✓ Cost reduction
- ✓ Increased revenue
- ✓ Supply chain security
- ✓ Information more reliable
- ✓ Faster clearance at border
- ✓ Simplification and modernization of procedures through re-engineering

Advantages cont'd…

- ➢ Beneficial for SMEs
- ➢ Helpful in risk assessment
- ➢ Avoiding rekeying of same data
- ➢ Special benefits for landlocked countries
- ➢ Reliable data to take trade defense measures

Challenges in moving towards paperless trading:

- ❖ Inadequate national effort to apply ICT
- ❖ Uncoordinated computerization
- ❖ Lack of application of global standards
- ❖ Lack of financial resources and qualified personnel (human capacity gap)
- ❖ Lack of political will
- ❖ Lack of public-private partnership
- ❖ Vested interests

Regional arrangements for cross-border paperless trade need the following:

- o Ideally have a single window

- o Re-engineer complex trade procedures

- o Take into account specific national/regional requirements

- o Should factor considerations like compliance