



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Trade and Investment

### Fourth session

Bangkok, 4-6 November 2015

Item 7 of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of Commission resolutions 68/3, 70/1, 70/4  
and 70/6 and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions  
for submission to the Commission at its seventy-second session**

## Implementation of resolutions 68/3 and 70/6

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The present document reports progress made in the implementation of Commission resolutions 68/3 on enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation and 70/6 on implementation of the decision of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade.

## I. Progress made

1. In accordance with the decision of the Committee on Trade and Investment at its third session, held in Bangkok from 20 to 22 November 2013, the secretariat organized the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Bangkok from 22 to 24 April 2014. The meeting was attended by representatives of 30 member States, as well as representatives from the Office of Legal Affairs, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), and the World Customs Organization. After discussing and further revising the regional arrangement on facilitation of cross-border paperless trade in Asia and the Pacific, the meeting decided to establish an interim intergovernmental steering group on cross-border paperless trade facilitation under the auspices of the ESCAP secretariat to: (a) further improve the draft text of the regional arrangement as a potential intergovernmental agreement; (b) prepare a draft road map for the implementation of substantive provisions in the draft text; and (c) carry out other functions as agreed by the steering group.<sup>1</sup> The decision of the meeting was subsequently endorsed by the Commission at its seventieth session through adoption of Commission resolution 70/6 on 8 August 2014.

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\* E/ESCAP/CTI(4)/L.1.

<sup>1</sup> See E/ESCAP/70/31.

2. In response to paragraph 2 of Commission resolution 70/6, the secretariat organized the first meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation in Bangkok from 1 to 3 April 2015. The meeting, which was attended by representatives of 27 member States, revised the draft regional arrangement for the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade, and discussed the preparation of a road map for the implementation of its substantive provisions. The meeting also established legal and technical working groups under it to expedite the revision of the draft regional arrangement and to work on the draft road map for its implementation.<sup>2</sup>

3. In response to an invitation for nomination of participants to the newly created legal and technical working groups issued by the secretariat, 50 officials/experts were officially nominated by 23 ESCAP members. The first and second physical meetings of the working groups are organized in Bangkok in 2015, from 9 to 11 September and on 5 and 6 November, respectively.

4. Regarding paragraph 3(c) of Commission resolution 68/3 on capacity-building support, the secretariat has continued to support capacity-building activities related to trade facilitation and paperless trade. Since the third session of the Committee on Trade and Investment, more than 20 capacity-building activities were organized with the support of the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT)<sup>3</sup>, benefitting more than 1,100 officials and other stakeholders from developing countries of the region. Capacity-building workshops were also organized back-to-back with the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on a Regional Arrangement for the Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade and the first meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation to maximize benefits for participating government officials. Most of the capacity-building activities were implemented in close partnership with relevant regional and global organizations, which enhanced their impact, in particular in least developed and landlocked developing countries. Some of the activities have also been supported by a trust fund established by the Republic of Korea in May 2013.

## **II. Issues for consideration by the Committee**

5. The Committee may take note of the progress made and provide the secretariat with comments and further guidance.

6. Noting with appreciation the trust fund established by the Republic of Korea in 2013 to support trade facilitation, including implementation of resolution 68/3 and the work of the Steering Group on Cross-Border Paperless Trade under resolution 70/6, and aware that additional resources would be useful for the efficient and timely implementation of the two resolutions, the Committee may invite other members to consider contributing funds and other resources.

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<sup>2</sup> See E/ESCAP/71/41.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://unnex.t.unescap.org/>.