

CAREC DIGITAL TRADE FORUM 2022

Advancing Digital Solutions and Deepening Regional Cooperation for Trade

Jointly organized by the ADB, PRC Ministry of Commerce, ADB-PRC Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative

8 November 2022

14:00 – 17:00 Manila/Beijing time (UTC+8), via Zoom

Register here: https://adb-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_b1e5aes8TpmPhtNm6cFFDA



DRAFT AGENDA

Recent global and regional events add urgency to developing digital trade in Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) countries. Digitalization has helped products and services penetrate markets with remarkable speed in the last two years of the pandemic, but the emergence of new technologies and business models have brought new challenges as well. *What must CAREC do to achieve its digital trade potential? How can vulnerable groups such as smallholders and informal sectors benefit? What can governments do to help businesses operate globally in the digital world? What are the consequences for existing trade issues and what new issues are emerging? How do countries and regions with similar challenges address these issues individually and collectively? How can innovation be extensively promoted to restore competitiveness and achieve sustainable economic growth?* Regional cooperation enables countries to reap the most out of digital transformation.

The CAREC Digital Trade Forum

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the ADB-PRC Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative (RKSI) will launch the CAREC Digital Trade Forum virtually on 8 November 2022. The Forum is a knowledge platform which aims to promote the use of emerging digital solutions and strengthen regional cooperation to promote supply chain connectivity and trade expansion, as part of the broader *CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda 2030*.

The Forum is envisioned to be a cross-learning network of policy makers, regulators, trade promotion agencies, private sector representatives, development partners, think tanks and other key stakeholders to share effective policies, good practices and innovative ideas to achieve CAREC countries' digital trade potential. The information, knowledge, and technology that will be pooled by this platform will be disseminated via the *CAREC Trade Information Portal* as well as the Regional Knowledge Sharing Initiative (RKSI) and CAREC Program websites, to generate more opportunities for collaboration with other regional institutions, international organizations and related initiatives within the CAREC region and beyond.

The inaugural *CAREC Digital Trade Forum* to be held on 8 November 2022 with the theme of “*Advancing Digital Solutions and Deepening Regional Cooperation for Trade*” will focus on: (i) enabling legislation and policies; (ii) digital technologies for trade; and (iii) cooperation arrangements—to demonstrate how this platform can be instrumental in reviving supply

chains and cross-border trade, accelerating post-pandemic recovery and rebuilding momentum for sustainable economic growth.

Draft Program

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| <p>14:00 – 14:17 (17 mins)</p> <p>(Manila/Beijing time)</p> | <p>Welcome Remarks</p> <p>Director General, Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the People’s Republic of China (PRC) (4 minutes)</p> <p>M. Teresa Kho, Director General, East Asia Department (EARD), Asian Development Bank (ADB) (4 minutes)</p> <p>Yevgeniy Zhukov, Director General, Central and West Asia Department (CWRD), ADB (4 minutes)</p> |
| <p>14:17 – 15:00 (43 mins)</p> | <p>Session 1: Key Rules, Standards and Principles for Developing Digital Trade</p> <p>The session will introduce key rules, standards and principles that underpin the existing digital trade environment and reflect the issues under discussion among 86 WTO members that form the Joint Statement Initiative. Discussions will include WTO-ESCAP-UNCITRAL Cross-Border Paperless Trade Toolkit, the OECD Digital Trade Inventory, the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records, and UN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-Border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Javier Lopez Gonzalez, OECD [<i>on OECD Digital Trade Inventory</i>]; • Luca Castellani, Legal Officer, UNCITRAL Secretariat [<i>on UNCITRAL model laws</i>] • Yann Duval, Chief, Trade Policy and Facilitation Section, UNESCAP [<i>on WTO-ESCAP-UNCITRAL Cross-Border Paperless Trade T</i>] <p>Country Discussant: Samson Uridia, Head, Department of International Relations, Georgia Revenue Service</p> <p>Moderator: Emma Fan, Director, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division, EARD, ADB</p> |
| <p>15:00 – 15:40 (40 mins)</p> | <p>Session 2: New Trends and Technologies Transforming Trade</p> <p>Digital technologies empower businesses to participate in global trade with much lower barriers to entry. The continuous improvement of digital infrastructure and technologies will help further remove the major constraints in logistics and payments that affect cross-border trade. Government policies could do more to facilitate this digital transformation and provide a more enabling environment for digital trade. Topics of discussion are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Application of Blockchain in Cross-border Trade</i> • <i>Digital Technology Facilitates Cross-border Logistics</i> • <i>Cross-Border E-Commerce Comprehensive Service Platform as Institutional Support for Innovation</i> <p>Panelists: (3 from Chinese public and private sector to be invited by PRC)</p> |

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| | Moderator: Yuping Zhu , First Secretary, MOFCOM, PRC |
| 15:40 – 16:50 (70 mins) (35 mins) | <p>Session 3: Digital Cooperation and Innovative Arrangements in Digital Trade</p> <p>Part I: Among governments</p> <p>Regional trade agreements have played an important role in developing rules for digital trade. Innovative governments are modernizing rules and tackling digital policy fragmentation through digital economy agreements, which are comprehensive digital-only agreements that establish trade rules and facilitate interoperability between economies. These encourage domestic regulatory reforms and soft cross-border collaboration on wide-ranging issues and are particularly beneficial to small and medium-sized enterprises. The Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) between Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore, is the first digital-only trade agreement open to all WTO members. DEPA has gained the attention of some large economies with Canada, the PRC, and the Republic of Korea applying to join.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ziyang Fan, Head of Digital Trade, World Economic Forum (tbc) • Deborah Elms, Founder and Executive Director, Asian Trade Centre (tbc) • New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Topic: DEPA or RCEP) (tbc) • UNCTAD eTrade for all Initiative (tbc) <p>Country Discussant: Kazakhstan Ministry of National Economy (Topic: Silkroad E-commerce and other alliance)</p> <p>Moderator: ADB</p> |
| (35 mins) | <p>Part II: Between public-private entities and research institutions</p> <p>Digital partnerships bring public and private sector and think tanks together to advance digital solutions and accelerate safe and inclusive digital transformation in developing countries.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francis Lopez, InterCommerce Network Services, Inc. [<i>on Pan-Asian E-Commerce Alliance</i>] (tbc) • CAREC Institute • Other existing networks (Digital Trade Network) (tbc) <p>Country Discussant: Aisha Humera Moriani, Senior Joint Secretary (e-commerce), Ministry of Commerce, Pakistan (tbc)</p> <p>Moderator: ADB</p> |
| 16:50 – 17:00 | <p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>Emma Fan, Director, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division, EARD, ADB</p> <p>DDG, MOFCOM, PRC</p> |