SASEC ASYCUDA Subregional Network Meeting
8 - 9 June 2016
Kathmandu, Nepal

Summary of Proceedings

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1.   A meeting of the SASEC ASYCUDA Subregional Network (SASUN) was held in Kathmandu on 8-9 June 2016 jointly organized by the Department of Customs (DOC) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Nominated focal and alternate persons from Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka as well as officials from DOC participated in the workshop. The initiative is funded by ADB's Technical Assistance Special Fund. The list of the participants is in **Annex 1.**

2.   The Deputy Director General of Customs, Mr. ShreeKrishna Nepal as the chair of the meeting, welcomed all participants. During his opening remarks, he highlighted the benefits that SASEC ASYCUDA user countries can harness from the proposed SASUN. He emphasized that Customs administrations in the four countries will be more equipped to resolve the challenges in sustainability of ASYCUDA World as well as overall Customs automation and e-customs as the outcome of this meeting.

3.   Mr. Gareth Lewis, International Customs Expert, on behalf of ADB, reiterated that this SASUN of the four countries is of great potential significance for the sustainability of ASYCUDA and also mentioned the importance of UNCTAD as a significant stakeholder of the SASUN.

4.   Head of delegations from Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka and Mr. Renaud Massenet, Asia Pacific Coordinator for UNCTAD also provided their opening remarks reiterating their views upon the importance and benefit of setting up the SASUN in the region.

5.   **Session 1: AW Implementation status and expectation from the SASEC ASYCUDA Subregional Network.** Heads of delegation from the four countries gave country presentations where they primarily focused on the status of ASYCUDA implementation, challenges faced, sustainability plans and expectations from the SASUN.

6.   On sustainability, Bangladesh mentioned that it is carrying out Service Level Agreements with UNCTAD as well as other providers of data center, connectivity and database and plans to establish ICT/MIS wing, build capacity of ICT staff and plan to transfer technology from UNCTAD. Maldives mentioned that it seeks to sustain AW in the long run and in addition, to train at least four developers for ASYCUDA World. Maldives also seeks UNCTAD support to integrate new features for better functionality and performance of the system. Nepal focuses on institutionalization, internalization, Documentation and knowledge transfer as the key factors for sustainability. Similarly, Sri Lanka has focused its sustainability on other systems, Network, ASYCUDA application, ASYCUDA database and ICT staff.

7.   On expectations from the SASUN, Bangladesh expects to establish a common forum to share functional and technical issues, platform to share documentation on resolved issues, meeting workshop periodically to share experience, prepare action plan for AW upgradation, establish support mechanism and technology transfer with development training and technical missions for the national experts. Maldives expects to develop technical experts after implementation of ASYCUDA World and expects to provide assistance in developing web services. Also, gain knowledge on troubleshooting and further enhance the AW modules for better performance and efficiency. Nepal expects information sharing, harmonization, UNCTAD assistance, common platform to share issues and solutions and a common technical support center. Similarly, Sri Lanka expects a better maintaining arrangement for ASYCUDA system, proper troubleshooting arrangements, support for developments, sharing of locally developed ASYCUDA modules, trainings for ICT staff and standard guidelines and best practices from the SASUN.

8.   Addressing the meeting, Mr. Renaud Massenet, shared the experience of the ASYCUDA Support Mechanism for the Pacific (ASMP) already in implementation and provided information on its functions and modality of operation.

9.   **Session 2: Discussion on Draft TOR of the SASUN.** Two groups were formed out of the eight delegates from the four countries. The groups were provided with a draft skeleton TOR and guide questions to assist the discussion. One group was designated to discuss on the TOR of the SASUN and the other was designated to discuss on the composition and modality of the SASUN. After the discussions, each group leader presented the outcome of their discussions.

10.   **Session 3: Adoption and endorsement of TOR.** Mr. Gareth Lewis, based on the outcome of discussion presented by the two groups on the first day, presented the final draft of the TOR. All the delegations as well as UNCTAD actively participated in the session and finalized the TOR.

11.   The meeting unanimously adopted the summary of proceedings with the TOR, composition and modality of the SASUN. The adopted TOR, composition and modality are in **Annex 2**. Country delegates agreed to take this proceeding with the annexes to the appropriate level for comments and validation from their respective administration.

Closing of the Meeting

12.   Mr. ShreeKrishna Nepal, the chair concluding the meeting, highlighted the importance of ASYCUDA for countries and thanked all the delegates, UNCTAD and ADB for support and active participation.