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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

On behalf of the Government of Mexico, it is my privilege and pleasure to welcome all of you to Mexico, City for the 12th UN/CEFACT Forum. Mexico is deeply honored to host this important international event, and I would like to specially welcome delegates and participants from all over the world that will share with us their experience and knowledge on the issues that will be bring up during this forum. I also would like to express my deep appreciation for the UN/CEFACT's efforts in arranging this forum in our country, with special thanks to our organizers in Mexico for their hard work to prepare for this event. I am confident that we will have some very interesting discussions in these days of activities, as our organizers have made a superb effort to put together a number of internationally renowned experts from government, private sector, and academia in the field of electronic business, trade facilitation, e-government, information and communication technologies, among other topics.

We have always recognized the valuable contributions and recommendations that the United Nations Organization has made, through the Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, in order to foster the enhancement of e-business standards that will contribute to the growth of global commerce. To that end, the main purpose of this forum is to keep on working in the development of such standards that will cross all international boundaries and help lower transaction costs, increase competitiveness, simplify data flow and reduce bureaucracy.

Mexico is aware that nowadays the electronic commerce plays an important role in the economic and social development of our countries, and for that reason our government has been focused in its national and international promotion avoiding the creation of unnecessary barriers that hinder its progress. Likewise, we acknowledge that the information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become an engine of growth in the economies of some countries, and they also are seen as one of the most efficient tools for trade facilitation.



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The use and adoption of ICT's can provide outstanding solutions for the accomplishment of trade facilitation's goals, such as the reduction of costs and delays by simplifying trade procedures, customs requirements and document flows, modernizing customs and port systems, promoting quality and safety standards, and improving trade logistics and information exchange associated with cargo handling and clearance. Thereby, it is necessary that we work together in order that our countries have an unlimited access to information technologies with the purpose of getting more benefits from its usage within the trade process.

Without a doubt, the UN/CEFACT provides us a window of opportunity to get worldwide agreements concerning trade facilitation issues within an international cooperation framework, and we are willing to renew our commitment to carry out the recommendations arisen from this organism. Thus, I invite you to actively participate in this forum and get the most of this unique opportunity to learn and share.

I hope that your visit to Mexico, City will meet your highest expectations, and I wish you all productive and intellectually stimulating discussions over this week.

Yours faithfully,
The Undersecretary

MARÍA DEL ROCÍO RUIZ CHÁVEZ