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**Conclusions and recommendations of the joint workshop on**

**Stakeholder Platforms for Collaboration in Cross Border Trade:**

**Trends in building the Single Window Environment**

**Shanghai 23 October 2015**

On 23 October the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) together with the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) organised a joint workshop on *Stakeholder Platforms for Collaboration in Cross Border Trade: Trends in building the Single Window Environment* in Shanghai. The workshop was attended by many experts from Chinese administrations, responsible for the further development of China Single Window. The program of the workshop including presentations and conclusions has been made available on the Internet at http://tinyurl.com/SingleWindowWS

At the outset, Ms. Dang, on behalf of the GACC, provided current status and overall progress in implementing a national Single Window in China, including its deployment at different local areas such as Tianjin, Fujian, Guangdong, Zhejiang and Shandong as well as tangible benefits gained. The workshop noted good progress in China’s implementation of a Single Window and highlighted importance of China’s further cooperation with other countries and international organizations in paperless trade Single Window for promoting regional and global connectivity through paperless trade facilitation.

International experts from around the world presented latest trends and experiences in developing Single Window and collaborative systems to improve competitiveness of cross border trade and increase regulatory compliance through better management of information. The Chinese experts analyzed of the standards, tools and approaches used on the international level for application to the specific requirements of China international trade and developed a set of recommendations for the further development of the China Single Window.

On the workshop Chinese experts took note of these international standards, trends and best practice and discussed their relevance for development of the Environment for China Single Window, in particular:

* Recommendations to Governments on implementation of Single Window developed by the UN/CEFACT;
* The success of Single Window projects around the world, in particular in developing countries;
* The emergence of automated systems for stakeholder collaboration, or example Port Community Systems, in more advanced economies. These systems are becoming crucial for regulatory compliance and competitiveness, in particular in the European Union;
* This has led to the development of the concept of a Single Window Environment with the objective to provide a framework for collaboration and information exchange between Single Windows and Stakeholder platforms within a country and across borders;
* Collaboration between Government agencies requires analysis and simplification of Business Processes. UNECE and ESCAP support Governments in applying latest concepts for Business Process Analysis;
* Important open international standards such as UN/CEFACT ebXML and WCO DM are now available for information exchange and management in the Single Window Environment. There is broad international consensus to base cross border information exchange on these standards;
* The development of a national Single Window environment requires leadership and engagement by the Government agencies. They need to develop a high level master plan to guide the development of a favorable environment for the Single Window and stakeholder platforms including policies, legislation, standards, change management and connectivity to platforms used in importing and exporting countries.

In the conclusion of the workshop the experts resolved to the following recommendations to foster the development of Single Window Environment (SWE) in China:

1. The development of a **high level master plan** for the China Single Window Environment is of high importance. This master plan should include an outline of the vision of the China SWE, its high level objectives, actions and key performance indicators. The plan should also consider the future role of stakeholder platforms such as Port Community Systems. This Master plan should be discussed by all relevant stakeholders and **approved by the highest level of the Government**. UNECE and ESCAP can provide methodologies for the drafting of this Master Plan.
2. The use of open, international standards for message exchange is of highest importance of the development of the future China Single Window Environment. This requires standardized messages and the analysis and simplification of business processes. The experts recommend setting up a **national data harmonization task force** in China with participation of the relevant Government agencies and supported by private sector entities. This body should be mandated **to develop business process analysis, a data model and message specifications** for information exchange of China cross border trade on the basis of UNECE and WCO standards. This task force could work closely with UNECE and ESCAP for capacity building and advisory services, preferably through the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade and Transport in Asia and the Pacific (UNNExT) platform.[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. Modern trade using Single Window and cross border electronic information exchange happens in a national regional and global context. To further develop its Single Window, China should **engage in the development of open and global standards developed in the United Nations.** The experts recommend that China experts participate on **an ongoing basis in the work of UN/CEFACT** for development of Single Window and eBusiness standards, as well as in the intergovernmental work being done as part of the development of a regional agreement on the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade at ESCAP.[[2]](#footnote-2)

1. The Secretariat of this knowledge and capacity building community is provided jointly by ESCAP and UNECE. See <http://unnext.unescap.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://communities.unescap.org/cross-border-paperless-trade-facilitation> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)