

## **UN Development Account 6<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project**

**Opening Remarks by  
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**At the National Workshop on Establishing a Single Window in Mongolia**

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Distinguished participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning,

On behalf of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), I would like to welcome all of you to the “National Workshop on Establishing a Single Window in Mongolia”. At the outset, let me take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry for its support for organizing this meeting.

This workshop is one of the major activities under the UN Development Account 6<sup>th</sup> Tranche Project, jointly implemented by ESCAP and UNECE. The overarching objective of the project is to enhance institutional and human capacities of landlocked and transit developing countries, as well as countries in transition in the ESCAP region, to develop and implement a Single Window

facility for electronic trade data exchange. The project is expected to assist the participating countries to increase their export competitiveness by reducing the time and the costs of conducting international trade.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Increased trade flows, the complexity of international transactions, as well as rapid changes in information technologies have changed the environment in which businesses operate in the 21st Century. Inefficiencies in complying with regulatory requirements for internationally traded goods have tremendous negative impact on businesses. The hidden costs associated with the procedures are high, in some cases more than 10% of the value of goods traded. The high transaction costs combined with delays substantially undermine a country's competitiveness. Eliminating these costs has become, if not the first priority, at least as important as the elimination of tariff barriers in promoting trade.

Trade facilitation provides an effective solution to the elimination of hidden costs through simplification and harmonization of trade procedures and documents, improvement of coordination and cooperation among regulatory agencies, as well as use of information technology. However, in terms of trade facilitation, the landlocked countries face special challenges as a result of being far away from the seaports. As you know, the cost to export is extremely high in landlocked developing countries.

In recent years, the implementation of modern trade facilitation measures such as Single Window has received increasing attention from governments and business community. The benefits of Single Window are significant. Traders can benefit from fast clearance, less paperwork, shorter time for document processing, less room for errors. The government benefits from improved

coordination of border controls, higher compliance, better risk management and accurate trade statistics. In the ESCAP region, many countries have established or are in the process of establishing a Single Window system.

Establishing a Single Window system would help the landlocked developing countries like Mongolia to boost their economic and trade development. But Single Window is not a “silver-bullet”. The successful implementation of the Single Window depends on many factors, ranging from political will at the highest level, effective inter-agency co-ordination, to streamlined trade procedures and enabling legal and regulatory systems.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ESCAP and UNECE organized this workshop exactly to address these issues, so that Mongolia's efforts in building a Single Window would be successful. We have brought together a team of highly-respected regional experts and policy makers who have been deeply involved in trade facilitation initiatives in their countries. Some of them have been driving forces in national Single Window Initiatives.

The meeting will also give you a chance to identify specific constraints and develop follow-up actions to establish a Single Window environment in Mongolia. I believe, through your active participation, that this workshop would be a successful and productive event.

I would like to thank all speakers and participants, and wish you fruitful deliberations.

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