



Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting

**"Trade Facilitation in North Africa for Enhanced Regional Economic  
Integration: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward"**

25-26 November 2019, Aswan (Egypt)

**Meeting Report**



## **ATTENDANCE**

1. Delegates from seven member States (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Libya, Mauritania, the Sudan and Tunisia) attended the Expert Group Meeting (EGM).
2. Were also present at the meeting, the Diplomatic Corps, Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), international and regional organizations, Universities, cooperation agencies, financial institutions and the United Nations System.
3. The detailed list of participants is annexed to the report.

## **OPENING SESSION**

4. In her opening statement, Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director of the ECA Office in North Africa, stated that the meeting was timely as it focused on the AfCFTA and the challenges that hinder the booming of Intra trade in North Africa as it is the least integrated sub region on the African continent. The proximity, culture, linguistic commonalities, low labour cost as an advantage among the countries in the sub region is expected to help integration in the Global Value chains (GVCs). Mrs. Naas spoke of the fragile nature of integration, low domestic linkages, social unrest as challenges to the integration.
5. Ms. Naas pointed out that the theme of this EGM is “Trade Facilitation in North Africa for Enhanced Regional Economic Integration: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward”, but more focus on opportunities and tackling of the challenges. Mrs. Naas put forward some ideas to contribute to the reflection and discussions to be carried out at this EGM. She stressed the need for the creation of national linkages to be established as high transaction cost plagues the implementation of the agreement. Critical sub regional coordination in information technology, customs, procedures and exports needs to be reviewed. This is necessarily achieved by strengthening dialogue and cooperation between countries.
6. Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi presented the objectives of the meeting and the programme of work, she noted that the outputs expected from the meeting would form part of a comprehensive report on “Trade Facilitation in North Africa for Enhanced Regional Economic Integration: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward”; including good practices, lessons learnt and proposed way forward.
7. The proceedings of the meeting were held in plenary around four sessions: (i) policies, procedures and mechanisms for trade facilitation in North Africa, (ii) Presentation and discussion of national case studies in two sessions, (iii) group work and open discussions on possible cooperation areas and opportunities in developing sub, regional trade facilitation and single window applications: challenges, opportunities and the way forward. (iv) evaluations of policies and programs for trade facilitation in North Africa: good practices, challenges, opportunities and proposed recommendations.
8. In his introductory remarks, H.E. Ambassador Yasser Hashem, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Egypt), highlighted the expected promising future as GDP increases for Africa and FDI raising as compared with Asia, India, and France. He expressed the need to collaborate to increase trade and growth, the need to open the door for more investment chances for production and improve the value chains. H.E. Ambassador Yasser Hashem expressed that a framework is needed and linkages need to be established between North African countries and institutions who have similar culture, language and advantages in technology and financial services in the sub region.

9. H.E. Ambassador Yasser Hashem pointed out that the issue of linkages in the electricity, maritime and canals from the Mediterranean and the Atlantic will help in the implementation of the agreement not only at the national level, but also at regional and international levels. He added that the challenges faced by young people and women in economic and social integration are affecting African countries and the world, which could be addressed through the opportunities available through trade facilitation.

10. H.E. Ambassador Yasser Hashem recommended the need to establish one stop window shop for investment, a collaborative measure among customs from the various countries, monitoring of activities, improve transportation and involve the business community in negotiations. He further expressed the commitment of Egyptian Embassies to assist North African countries in intra trade activities. He wished all well throughout the stay in Aswan and called for a leap with the UN to achieve all the goals.

### **Session 1: Policies, procedures and mechanisms for trade facilitation in North Africa**

11. The moderator for session 1 was H.E. Ambassador Omar Abou Eich (Egypt) with panelists, Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi (UNECA), Mr. Souleymane Abdallah (UNECA) Mr. Aminur Rahman (World Bank) and Dr. Ahmend Ghoniem, Professor of Economics, Cairo University (Egypt). H.E. Ambassador Omar Abou Eich, stated that the main objective is trade which is the basic need for growth in countries. He asked if this was sufficient for development and stated that it was not enough but should be linked with policies on infrastructure from transport to services in the banking sector, transparency in trade facilitation to reduce the cost and mobilize funds for Africa through its resources.

12. Mr. Aminur Rahman (World Bank) spoke on the Global Value Chains (GVCs), development and employment in North Africa. He expressed the conclusions of the world bank report on GVCs which was based on World Development Indicators (WDI). He expressed that the changes in trade over the past 30 years has been from import and export with at least half (1/2) of global trade coming from GVCs. Mr. Aminur stressed the need for facilitations from cross boarder operations and customs to remove the problems which cumulate and affects the number of days needed to clear goods at the various points of ports. Mr. Aminur stated that customs processes and procedures affected trade in the long run as the traditional factors affecting trade were still the same as before and as such there should be critical look at the benefit of the GVCs.

13. Mr. Aminur pointed out that the net effect was expected to be positive based on technological skill level of labour in areas of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics. He advocated for countries in the sub region to take advantage in the downstream labour learning from countries such as India who have taken advantage in the software industry with more applied learning, technical and vocational learning. Mr. Aminur stressed the need to endow and improve the skills of labour and increase market size by taking advantage of the geographical advantages available to the region. The need for institutions to be more transparent in policies, increase predictability in the trade environment to increase trust in the facilitation of the GVCs in the long term on trade.

14. Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi gave a brief presentation on the objectives of the meeting and its expected outcomes, presented the draft agenda on the theme for the EGM which was on Trade facilitation in North Africa for Enhanced Regional Economic Integration. In her presentation on “Trade facilitation in North Africa for Enhanced Regional Economic Integration: Challenges, Opportunities and the Way Forward”, Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi pointed out that the reduction of trade cost across borders and avoidance of unnecessary trade restrictions will help to achieve

trade facilitation. She recommended that countries in the sub region learn from the flying geese concept which was used in Asia. She further expressed that diversification and the expansion of markets such as that of Egypt through the removal of impediments could lead to further gains in trade facilitation. The involvement of the private sector in trade facilitation she said would be of great benefit to the implementation of the agreement and fostering more integration in North Africa since the level of current integration in trade in North Africa was low as compared to trade with the outside world.

15. Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi mentioned the example of Morocco that started incorporating the agreement in their National policies at the ministry level and the provision of technical assistance from banks in the set up and facilitation of trade. She further spoke of the need for regional value chains to be introduced in the North African region in the facilitation of trade. Ms. Elbeshbishi explained that it is that further assistance will be given to countries in the form of technical assistance through the sharing of revised reports with member States.

16. Mr. Souleymane Abdallah from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa referred to the timely nature of the meeting as he stated that about 18 countries have started adopting the agreement in their national policies after the signatories were collected in July 2019. He indicated the need to know that in the short run the gain for all countries will not be the same but with collaboration and facilitation in the long term some level of similar gains was possible. He advocated for activating the mechanism to stimulate growth in the African continent.

17. Dr. Ahmed Ghoniem, Professor of Economics, Cairo University- Egypt, expressed the insufficiency in the level of port services, poor liberalization in the services sector, low competition but could be improved with facilitation if issues such as tariffs reduction is considered to boost intra-regional trade. He noted that although challenges existed with regards to the uneven distribution and quality, the impact of the agreement will be felt if infrastructure is strengthened especially in the transportation sector. The indicators of countries will improve when number of days for trade facilitation is reduced at the port of customs.

18. Participants expressed the need for collaborations with the UN organizations in helping improve status of the countries in these indicators. Elements that affect GVCs was noted to still affect trade in North Africa and as such a call for the matrix which was general in nature to be reduced to the country level. North African countries were found to have weak productivity levels and there was an advocate to start and improve productivity while factoring and integrating it into national level policies after improvements.

19. Quality control is needed from governments to look at international standards, competition in high capacity building should be supported by banks with grants from international agencies. Private sector should coordinate with ministries of trade on policies through studies by analyzing the policies of government when negotiating the usefulness and implementation process of agreements. The issue of implementation of agreements having been signed but not implemented should be considered as logistics, export, finance for private sector were not considered before such agreements were agreed to.

20. The private sector could take advantage of the agreements to iron out advantages if studies were done with their involvement. The issue of customs and privileges at the individual level should not be over run. The role of finance institutions in their financial and commercial role at the global and African level with regards to international risk of financing should be dealt with in the expansion of transport and distribution of plants.

21. Trade facilitation in North Africa was expected to move ahead although some countries still were not part of the WTO agreements on trade. The need for experience sharing and the collaboration and the use of benchmarking indicators from doing business index, logistic performance index, which gives information on international good practices was advocated for countries.

## **Session 2: Presentation and discussion of national case studies**

22. The moderator for session 2 was Mr. Guisset of Mauritania with consultants Dr. Mohamed Boumghar from Algeria, Prof. Fathy Al Tony from Egypt and Mr. Abdoul Kane from Mauritania. Mr. Guisset stated the challenge for countries and the UNECA to make this issue a focal point for discussion to help improve economies in the North African region.

23. Dr. Mohamed Boumghar on the case of Algeria stated that the delays in trade facilitation were as a result of no engagement with the private sector as they were inherently involved in cross border trade. The issue of corruption he noted if reduced will bring about effective trade in exports and imports saving about 80 percent or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of time in trade issues. The need for firms to provide full disclosure on information to facilitate clearance at port authorities and for the measurement of the activities of customs and clearance authority activity. The impact of the maritime fleet on trade and the participation of foreign companies in this area was a cause for concern as the cost involved in transport empty freight was high and served as a deterrent to trade.

24. The impact on trade from air freight in Algeria was low and attitude of local entities necessitates the need for a platform to collect data for federation of exporter to get information on all actors and their activities. Public and Private sector participation and international agencies need to be involved in the implementation process. The central bank needs to be involved with the rules and regulations governing the agreement.

25. Dr. Mohamed Boumghar pointed out the cross-boundary trade through unified initiative from trade and transport through the advertisement and modelling after the south Korea port system would help fill the gap. The one window shop would help give information and be linked to the ministries involved. The Adaptation of exportation best practices from South Korea through the ministry of trade in October 2018 for maritime trade for customs was good for trade. In relation to performance index he stated that Algeria needs to do more as they have the weakest procedures and practices. In the area of time spent at port was as high as 140 days with low electronic participation in administration with heavy manpower involvement. He expressed that on importation an average of 100 hours was needed in dealing with imports. The cost he stressed in the transaction increased overtime.

26. Dr. Mohamed Boumghar recommended that in the short-term the one window shop for transport, maritime and trade be set up and expanding dialogue. Land transport set up he said took a lot of time for ownership set by the private sector and as such should be amended for high participation. Administrative measures should be reduced regarding documentation and move more towards electronic documentation through the one window shop.

27. Prof. Fathy Al Tony from Egypt talked about the practical analysis and the 45 bottleneck issues and 55 policy recommendations in trade facilitation for Egypt. He stated that benefits in trade facilitation were varied and cuts across all sectors. The need for competition domestically and globally as Egypt had a low trade turnout of 2 to 3 percent with other North African countries. Agreements he said need to go with infrastructure and tools to help in the implementation and

application to avoid different interpretation of the issues. He expressed the need to make agreements clear and concise for the implementers to be able to interpret and facilitate with ease and remove obstacles. He further pointed out that trade cannot be done without transportation, maritime activities at cross borders which required more to be done to bring ease to trade. The enhancement of logistics and transport he stated will give the country a better performance on the Performance Index.

28. Prof. Fathy Al Tony pointed out the challenges regarding the time to get acquainted to the terms of the agreement to be extended. The electronic processes involved to be improved while customs received efficient and effective training to reduce delays and avoid double effects. The working hours of customs officials at the ports to improve. He asked for improved customer satisfaction measures for clients thus importers and exporters and improve communication among departments.

29. Mr. Abdoul Kane from Mauritania stated that there was an increase in trade from 15 to 25 percent and the removal of barriers to trade was helpful to the country. He pointed out the low level of diversification in Mauritania as it mostly trades in fish and agricultural products especially with the West African sub region specifically with Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria. He pointed to the reduction in the number of times spent at the port from 9 days to 2 days for imports and exports and the improvement of the indicators from 176 to 148 in the Doing Business Index.

30. Mr. Abdoul Kane spoke of the reduction in documentation from 8 to 3 and the joining of programs such as the SYDONIA world and electronic models introduced have helped in the facilitation of trade. He talked about the simplification of rules since 2017 and their review since 2019 to measure their impact. The low level of transport logistics, training and cost of use for equipment such as scanners were high for the country. He asked for more coordination among customs in the various countries to join conventions and implement the best practices. He called for the establishment of electronic platforms and to coordinate agreements across board for various agencies and the use of reports in the creation of one field office establishment to handle the work on all agreements and involve stakeholders' participation to have a positive impact.

31. Participants asked for electronic facilitation and lease contracts to be enhanced to assist with payments. Collaboration and cooperation among all customs officials. The unification of point of views from countries on procedures in the sub region in relation to customs. The call for tariff barriers to be removed and a call on ECA to help countries facilitate trade.

32. Ms. Zhara Maafiri of Morocco moderated the second session on the national case studies with panelists, Professor Chokri Thabet, Tunisia, Professor Mutasim Abdelmawla, Sudan, and Dr. Nabil Boubrahimi, Morocco. Professor Chokri Thabet presented the case of Tunisia and identified the issues of protectionism and spoke on the issue of about 75 percent of all goods being imported. He advocated for more diversification to be done for Tunisia to benefit more from trade facilitation to help improve employment. The intervention and provision of incentives for the private sector to improve social and economic aspects and bring revolution of social change. He spoke of the weak performance in intra trade in Africa with the issues of complicated documentation and limit the time spent in customs clearance. He asked Tunisia to take advantage of their geographic location to reduce cost. He expressed that 88 percent of delays is caused by administrative processes for exports, weak infrastructure, long administrative hours, lack of competition as issues faced by Tunisia. He recommended the improvement of logistics and infrastructure at ports and training for authorities in the public and private sector to provide effective and efficient services to attract trade.

33. Professor Mutasim Abdelmawla from Sudan spoke on the low levels of trade and logistics for the case of Sudan as it faces infrastructure deficit from roads to finance and the high cost of doing business. He stated that most of Sudan's trade was with the COMESA region at about 5 percent of total global trade. The unemployment rate in Sudan he said was at a high of 15 percent. He expressed that through trade facilitation more job opportunities will be created. The provision of incentives and support could improve infrastructure, increase value addition and remove barriers to trade. The lifting of sanctions and the removal of Sudan from the terrorism watch list could help trade in the country.

34. Dr. Nabil Boubrahimi of Morocco in his presentation spoke of the collaborative measure established by the country to integrate rules and regulations with simplification and a look at the agreements and ensure implementation to facilitate the agreement and give time to help train for implementation of the agreement to be of benefit to the countries. He advocated for the setting up of database to know the needs of the signatory countries. He iterated that Morocco had implemented 39 out of the 44 procedures of the WTO and submitted them to the WTO. He mentioned the harmonization of agreements on trade and a single electronic window for trade facilitation. He recommended that the customs website be fixed and one passage for all information for all commodities be updated and uploaded. The risk management protocol in the country's ports be reviewed and updated to bring focus on trade facilitation.

35. Participants during the discussions asked for knowledge and experience sharing to help facilitate trade. The introduction of smart systems and management of containers and the involvement of the private sector at ports with digitization. The renewal of data systems at ports to meet best international practices and establish the terms of operationalization of the agreement.

36. Road transport between countries could increase trade especially the new road network from Algeria to Niamey could be to reduce time spent in transporting on the road networks. The issues regarding entry visa should be considered for free movement. The impact of the agreement on the border officials should be taken into focus. The need to develop a system of information exchange through national investigation of companies to show the weakness in the exporting companies and provide support to activate those that can take advantage of the trade facilitation.

37. To activate the agreement there is the need to look at the bank being set up by Morocco to help in the financial aspect of the agreement. There is the need to coordinate with national policies to bridge the gap and apply the results from studies. Build multilateral media cooperation, develop infrastructure trade facility and mobility and take advantage of competitive advantage available to countries.

38. The participants proposed that ECA and experts need to develop a matrix of reforms for the countries from logistical reforms in a month or two to help decision makers to improve the situation. Help countries in the digitalization of electronic trade systems to help countries improve.



**Session 4: Group work and open discussions on the possible cooperation areas and opportunities in developing sub regional trade facilitation and single window applications: challenges, opportunities and the way forward.**

39. During this session policy recommendations were laid out for participants to discuss and make amendments.

40. Some of the recommendations made were:

- For the adaptation of best practices by member States.
- To take advantage of roads and open pathways in member States to facilitate trade.
- To reduce the waiting time along the trade routes to facilitate trade.
- To conduct a detailed study on GVCs in the north African sub region to know the gaps.
- To deal with local value chains through the harmonization of procedures and communications.
- To establish a national level committee on trade to avoid multiplicities to be done by the ECA.

Detailed recommendations are listed in annex II.

**Session 5: Evaluation of policies and programs for trade facilitation in North Africa: good practices, challenges, opportunities and proposed recommendations.**

41. Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbisi, UNECA presented the recommendations before the committee for discussion and after which comments and feedback were received from participants. At the end of the discussions, the Committee endorsed the recommendations proposed by the Secretariat. Detailed recommendations are listed in annex II.

43. In her closing statement, the Director of ECA/NA Sub- regional Office, Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas, thanked all participants for their excellent contributions and rich insights and deliberations which enhanced the debate and helped lay emphasis on many aspects related to the main topical theme. She reiterated the Office's will to strengthen its contacts with/ and activities in the member countries to provide them with guidance and support for the optimal implementation of their trade policies as one of the crucial priorities of their national development agenda. With her remarks, the meeting was ended.

## ANNEX I: PROGRAMME OF WORK

### Monday, 25 November

14:30 – 15:00 p.m.     **Opening Session**

Statements:

- **Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas**, Director, ECA Sub-regional Office for North Africa (ECA-NA)
- **H.E. Ambassador Yasser Hashem**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Egypt)  
-Presentation of the objectives of the meeting and of the program of work: **Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi**, (UNECA)

15:00 – 16:30 p.m.     **Session 1: Policies, procedures and Mechanisms for trade facilitation in North Africa.**

An introductory Session to set the stage and update on where we stand in regarding the policies, procedures and mechanisms for trade facilitation in North Africa, including strengths and weakness, followed by brief Q&A.

- *Moderator: H.E. Ambassador Omar Abou Eich (Egypt)*
- Presentor
- **Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi**, (UNECA)
- **Mr. Souleymane Abdallah** (UNECA)
- **Mr. Aminur Rahman** (World Bank)
- **Dr. Ahmed Ghoniem**, Professor of Economics (Egypt)
- General discussion

### Tuesday, 26 November

09:00 – 11:00 a.m.     **Session 2: National case studies**

This session will present some national case studies and will discuss many issues such as the economic benefits of trade facilitation; bilateral and regional trade agreements; trade facilitation policy, practice and opportunities; and major challenge for intra- North African trade.

- *Moderator: Dr. Dialel Guisset (Mauritania)*
- National consultants
- **Dr. Mohamed Boumghar**, Algeria case study

- **Prof. Fathy Al Tony**, Egypt case Study
- **Mr. Abdoul Kane**, Mauritania study
- General discussion

11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Coffee Break

### 11.30-13.00 **Session 3: National case studies**

This session will present the rest of the national case studies and will discuss many issues such as the economic benefits of trade facilitation; bilateral and regional trade agreements; trade facilitation policy, practice and opportunities; and major challenge for intra- North African trade.

- *Moderator: Ms. Zahra Maafigri* (Morocco)
- **National consultants**
- **Dr. Nabil Boubrahimi**, Morocco case study
- **Prof. Mutasim Abdelmawla**, Sudan case study
- **Prof. Chokri Thabet**, Tunisia case study
- General discussion

11:30 – 1:00 p.m. **Session 4: Group work and open discussions on the possible cooperation areas and opportunities in developing sub regional trade facilitation and single window applications: challenges, opportunities and the way forward.**

This will be a working break, breaking up the participants into two groups.

14.30-16.00 The interactive working groups will identify challenges, opportunities and the way forward related to trade facilitation.

**Moderators (2 groups; challenges, opportunities and the way forward- Host country)**

**Dr. Ashraf Mokhtar**

**Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi and Mr. Aziz Jaid, (UNECA)**

16:00 – 16:30 p.m. Coffee Break

16:30 – 17:30 p.m.      **Session 5: Evaluation of policies and programs for trade facilitation in North Africa: good practices, challenges, opportunities and proposed recommendation.**

This session will discuss policies, programs and initiatives needed to encourage and promote trade in North Africa. The session will focus on how to ensure effective cooperation between customs and other relevant authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues and what are the needs for technical assistance and capacity building in this area, finally policy recommendations will be presented.

- *Moderator: Mr. Chafik Chiti* (Algeria)
- Recommendations: **Ms. Amal Nagah Elbeshbishi**, (UNECA)
- General discussion
- Comments and feedback from participants
- Adoption of the recommendations
- General discussion

17:30 – 18:00      **Closure of the ad-hoc expert group meeting**

- **Dr. Ahmed Kamaly**, deputy minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform
- **Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas**, Director, ECA Sub-regional Office for North Africa (ECA-NA)
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## **ANNEX II: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING:**

### **Policy recommendations for North Africa**

Tackling the challenges of trade facilitation in North Africa is critical and requires *sub- regional, comprehensive* and *coordinated* approach that entails improvements in infrastructure and provision of efficient and competitive services in the areas of roads, railways, ports, ICT; the removal of illegal roadblocks; and the simplification and harmonization of customs and border procedures as the gains of trade facilitation are related to the whole chain of processes.

This *sub- regional approach* can be an efficient means of *coordinating actions, setting priorities, reviewing progress, mobilizing resources, allocating funds, and monitoring contribution levels.*

#### **1. Integrate trade facilitation strategies in broader economic strategies**

While attention to trade facilitation is growing in North Africa region, there is a degree of risk in treating the issue as a stand-alone economic policy. Trade facilitation is unlikely to lead to positive impacts without being linked to broader economic policies that target capabilities of firms to trade and to increase the ability to upgrade in the global market. Issues such as access to finance and technological capabilities are common factors in the region hindering the ability of firms to upgrade their position in Regional Value Chains (RVCs). As a stand-alone strategy, trade facilitation is unlikely to address such constraints.

#### **2. Develop a regional strategic roadmap for trade facilitation in North Africa**

A regional strategic roadmap for trade facilitation in North Africa should be developed with inputs from different countries and stakeholders. Lessons from other regional blocs should feed into this roadmap and could help specify the key policies that proved to be effective. Developing specific objectives related to the reductions in trade costs and the promotion of regional trade can be useful to monitor the implementation of this roadmap. An institutional framework to develop and implement this roadmap should be established. Such framework should allow frequent meetings for trade facilitation policy makers from different countries and a regional unit to analyze and learn from best practices in the region and also in other parts of the world.

#### **3. Adopt a targeted approach to trade facilitation**

Trade facilitation covers a range of policies from infrastructure investments to customs procedures to other administrative rules. As such and considering the limited resources available to countries in North Africa region, there is a need to develop a targeted approach to trade facilitation. Such an approach will prioritize measures that are more effective in boosting imports and exports and in facilitating imports of parts and components that are important for such exports. Focus should be given to trade facilitation measures that could promote activities with higher potential for export diversification, jobs, and technological upgrading. This focus could be linked to the national economic strategies of each country.

**4. Widen the adoption of digitization in regional and national trade facilitation policies**

Digitization offers an important opportunity to improve trade facilitation and limits its costs. North African countries must promote the access of new information technology in digitalization to increase effectiveness and efficiency of trade facilitation measures. Most countries in North Africa region are adopting programs to digitize trade procedures and share information online. Boosting these programs and focusing it toward the needs of firms could be highly useful to lower the costs of trade. The Euromed Trade and Investment Facilitation Mechanism (TIFM) offers a useful platform but not all countries in North Africa are part of this mechanism.

**5. Focus on the regional road infrastructure and rail networks**

Reflecting the dependency of most countries in the region on trade with the EU, the maritime shipping and transport links of those economies tend to be far more developed than land shipping networks. This includes the ports infrastructure, the location of industrial zones in coastal areas, and the road networks. Policies in this area should focus on providing higher degree of harmonization and simplification across the region and better shared use of port capabilities including through road infrastructure linking ports to other countries in the region.

### **ANNEX III : LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### **ALGERIE/ALGERIA**

**1. M. Kamal Meraghni**

Directeur auprès de la Direction générale de la Prévision et des Politiques  
Ministère des Finances  
Alger  
Tel. : +213553939493  
Email: kamel.meraghni@mf.gov.dz

**2. Mme Nawal Lammari**

Sous Directrice des financements des institutions internationales  
Direction Générale des relations économiques et financières extérieures  
Ministère des Finances  
Alger  
Tél : + 213 21 59 56 46 - Gsm : + 213 552 16 48 28 - Fax : + 213 21 59 51 25  
Email : Nawel.Lammari@mf.gov.dz

**3. Mme Bey Sabrina**

Chef Département des Affaires Commerciales  
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères Algérie  
Alger  
Mob.: +213 5 42 64 30 94  
Email : s.kaci@mae.dz

**4. M. Abdel Ali Droua**

Directeur Central  
Ministère du Travail, de l'emploi et de la sécurité sociale  
Alger  
Tél : +21321663985 - Mob.: +213551159066  
Email : drouaabdelali@gmail.com

**5. M. Hichem Boughdiri**

Attaché des Affaires étrangères  
Ambassade d'Algérie  
Cairo, Egypte

**6. M. Zineddine Boussoussa**

Directeur  
Ministère de l'Industrie et des Mines  
Alger  
TL.: +213553483503  
Email: z.boussoussa@industire.gov.dz

7. M. Ahmed Badani

Directeur des statistiques agricoles et des systèmes d'information  
Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Développement Rural et de la Pêche (MADRP)

Alger

Tel.: +213 23 503180 / Mob.: +213 5 40328351 - +213 7 76049353

Email: dsasi@madrp.gov.dz/ ahmed.badani.dz@gmail.com

8. M. Khaled Bouchelaghem

Négociateur en Chef

Directeur Général du Commerce Extérieur

Ministère du Commerce

Alger

Tél : + 213 21 890 555

Fax : + 213 21 897 523

Email: bouchelaghem@commerce.gov.dz

9. M. Sahi Youcef

Contrôleur général des douanes

Direction générale des douanes

Alger

Tel. : +213 23 50 11 60 / Mob.: +213 661 59 02 07

Email: sahyoucef@gmail.com

**EGYPTE/EGYPT**

10. Dr. Ahmad Kamali

Deputy Minister for Planning, Monitoring and Administrative  
reform for Planning Affairs

Ministry of Planning and Administrative Reform

Cairo

Email : a.kamali@mop.gov.eg

11. Dr. Omar Aboueich

Assistant Minister for Regional and International

Multilateral Economic Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Cairo

Tel. : +20 2 25747826 / Mob.: +20 122 1021644

Email : oeich@hotmail.com / o.aboueich@mfa.gov.eg

12. Mr. Mohamed ElHamzawi

Deputy Assistant Minister, Regional Economic Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Cairo

Tel.: +2012222958555

Email: elhamzawi@yahoo.com



13. Ambassador Yasser Hashem  
Deputy Assistant Minister  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs for African communities and organizations  
Cairo

14. Mr. Emad Hamdy ali Hamdan  
President of the Chemical Syndicate  
Cairo  
Tel.: 01224797111 – 0225753021/3014  
Email: emadtranco@yahoo.com

15. M. Mohamed Abd Elaziz Gobran  
President of the Petroleum Syndicate  
Cairo

16. Mr. Ali Ibrahim Abd Elmaguied  
President of the Syndicate of Prosecution and Courts  
Cairo

17. Ms. Noha Nofal  
Director - department of regional agreements  
Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Cairo  
Tel.: 01006408508  
Email: n.mahfouz@tas.gov.eg / noha78@gmail.com

18. Ms. Asmaa Adel Labib  
Director  
Trade Agreements Sector  
Trade Policies Researcher, Africa Dept  
Cairo  
Tel.: +201141818178  
Email: a.labib@tas.gov.eg

19. Mr. Mohamed Adway  
Director of events - PR department  
Cairo

20. Mr. Mohamed Samir  
Director of Governance and Management  
Cairo

21. Mr. Mohamed Abd Elwahab  
Director of Labore Force Office - Aswan Governorate  
Aswan

22. Mr. Ashraf Abou Alam  
General Manager - Banque du Caire  
Cairo

23. Mr. Mohamed Nabil Elshimi  
General Manager  
Leather Industry Chambers, Tel.: 01003414535  
Cairo

24. Mr. Tarek Matar  
Head of the bilateral and Regional agreements, Rules of Origin  
and Customs transactions Department- Policies Support Unit  
Federation of Egyptian Industries  
Cairo  
Tel.: 01001042771  
Email: tmatar@fei.org.eg

25. Mr. Walid Gamal  
Head of the Central Administration  
Export Development Authority  
Cairo  
Tel.: 01144438807  
Email: w.mahmoud@eda.gov.eg

26. Dr. Gehane Saleh  
Economic Advisor for the Egyptian Prime Minister  
Cairo

27. Dr. Rania Abd Elnaiim  
Senior Researcher - Deputy minister office

28. Dr. Ahmed Farouk Ghoneim  
Economic professor  
Cairo University

29. Mr. Ahmed Nabil  
Economic researcher - Minister technical office  
Cairo

30. Ms. Zeinab Mahmoud Abd El Fattah  
Head of the African Economic Trade Agreements  
Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Cairo  
Tel.: 01069452950  
Email: z.mamdouh@tas.gov.eg

31. Mr. Mohamed Hassan Rabie  
Email: rabie.news@gmail.com

32. Mr. Ahmed Amer Ghannam  
Youth Secretary  
Federation of Egypt workers  
Cairo  
Tel.:01000348739  
Email : aaamer10200@gmail.com

**MAURTIANIE/MAURITANIA**

33. M. Dialel Guisset  
Directeur des Etudes, de la Programmation et de la Coopération  
Ministère du Commerce et du Tourisme  
Nouakchott  
Tel. : + 222 42 43 42 87 - Mob.: + 222 46 02 66 66  
Email : daguisset@gmail.com

**MAROC/MOROCCO**

34. M. Zakaria El Harmiri  
Chef du Service des Affaires africaines multilatérales à la Direction du Trésor et des  
Finances Extérieures, Ministère de l'Economie, des Finances et de la Réforme de  
l'Administration  
Rabat  
Tel.: +212 5 37 67 73 75 - Mob.: +212 6 73 99 22 35  
Email: z.elharmiri@tresor.finances.gov.ma

35. Mme Meriem Eddaou  
Conseiller des Affaires Etrangères près de la Direction de la Coopération Multilatérale et des  
Affaires Economiques Internationales  
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, de la Coopération Africaine et des Marocains Résidant à  
l'Etranger  
Rabat  
Tel.. : +212537676118 / Mob.: +212616180017  
Email : m.eddaou@maec.gov.ma/ meriemeddaou@yahoo.fr

36. Mme Hasna Al Echeikh El Alaoui  
Chef de division des Secteurs Productifs et de la Compétitivité -DP  
Haut-Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat  
Tél. : +2120660102155  
Email: h.elalaoui@hcp.ma

37. M. Mohammed Maktit  
Directeur adjoint et Chef de la Division des Etudes et de la Planification  
Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines et de l'Environnement  
Département de l'Environnement

Rabat

GSM : +212 6 73 08 30 39 - Tél : +212 5 37 57 06 38

Email : m.maktit@gmail.com

### **SOUDAN / SUDAN**

38. Ms. Khalda Mohamed El Hassan Badawi Ali

Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Khartoum

Mob. : +249 91 05 63 137

Email : khaldahory@gmail.com

### **TUNISIE / TUNISIA**

39. Mme Kalthoum Hamzaoui

Directrice Générale de la Coopération Multilatérale

Ministère du Développement, de l'investissement et de la Coopération Internationale

Tunis

Tel. : (+216) 70556600 / 70556638 - Fax : (+216) 71.799.069

E-mail : k.hamzaoui@mdci.gov.tn

40. M. Tarek Bouhlel

Conseiller des Services Publics -Directeur chargé de la Coopération avec la BAD et les Organisations Régionales

Ministère du Développement, de l'Investissement et de la Coopération Internationale

Tunis

Tel.: (+216) 70556600 / 70556638 – Mob. :216 97468071/25468071

Fax: +216 71 799 069

Email: tarek.bouhlel@mdci.gov.tn

### **EXPERTS/CONSULTANTS – Expert Group Meeting**

41. M. Mohamed Yazid Boumghar

Chargé de recherche (CREAD)

Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement

Alger

Tel. : +213662735248

Email : myboumghar@gmail.com

42. M. Aouidette Djeloul

Président de l'Union Nationale des Transitaires

et Commissionnaires en Douane Algériens - UNTCA

Alger

Téléphone : +213 21 72 32 38

Email : untca@mail.com

43. M Ali Bey Nasri

Président

Association Nationale des Exportateurs Algériens "ANEXAL"

Alger

Tél : +213 21 82 42 28 – Mob.: +213 560 423 092/ +213 555 298 627

Fax : +213 21 82 42 27

Email : anexal\_export@yahoo.fr

44. Mr. Ashraf Mokhtar

Under Secretary Head of central Dpt of WTO

Ministry of Trade and Industry

Cairo

Mob.: +01006595584 – Tel.: +20223422331

Fax +20223422441

E-mail: ash.mokhtar@tas.gov.eg / ashrafelbayyoudi@hotmail.com

45. Mr. Kamel Salem

Export Development advisor

Egyptian Exporters Association

Cairo

Tel.: +202 2527 1010 Ext. 479

Mob.: +2 0122 357 8221

Fax : +202 2527 1015

Email : ksalem@expolink.org

46. Prof. Fathy AL-Tony

Professor of Transport Economics and Logistics

Senior Transport Economist and Logistics Expert

Cairo

Tél : +2 01003816677

Email : fathyaltony@yahoo.com

47. Dr. Boubrahimi Nabil

Professor

Université Mohammed V -Agdal- Rabat

Tél: +212 661470040

Email: nboubrahimi@gmail.com

48. Mme Zahra Maafiri

Directeur, Maroc Export/Centre Marocain de Promotion des Exportations

CMPE Maroc Export/Centre Marocain de Promotion des Exportations

Casablanca

Tél: + 212 522 302 210 - 0522 307 543/

Fax: + 212 522 301 793 - 0522 450 557

Email: zahra.maafiri@gmail.com

49. M. Abdoul Kane  
Expert Consultant  
Nouakchott, Mauritanie  
Email : abdoul\_dado@yahoo.fr

50. Ms. Ragaa Mustafa Ossman Abbas  
Central Bank of Sudan  
Khartoum  
Tel.: +24987056691 Mob.: 090933604  
Email: raga-osman@cboe.gov.eg

51. Prof. Dr. Mutasim Ahmed Abdelmawla  
Professor of Economics-University of Gezira  
Faculty of Economics and Rural Development  
Department of Economics  
Medani, Sudan  
Mob.: +249124335537  
E-mail: abdelmawla2004@hotmail.com / abdelmawla2004@uofg.edu.sd

52. Mme Saida Hachicha  
Directrice Générale de la Coopération Economique et Commerciale  
Ministère du Commerce de la République Tunisienne  
Tunis  
Tel.: +21671354434 : 52169136  
Email : saida.hachicha@ati.tn

53. Prof. Chokri Thabet  
Professor of Agricultural Economics  
Institut Supérieur Agronomique de Chott Meriem- Tunisia  
Sousse, Tunisia  
Tel.: +21695711218, +21673231321, +21673327592  
Email: cthabet@gmail.com

54. M. El-Mokhtar Cheikh Ould Sghair  
Consultant  
Tanger, Maroc  
Email: cheikhcmos@gmail.com  
Mob. : 212641109241

### **Institutions financières/ Financial institutions**

#### **BADEA**

55. M. Mohammed Ismail Elzain  
Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa - BADEA  
Expert, Private Sector & Foreign Trade Division  
Tel.: +249 183 773646 Ext 362 - Fax: +249 183 770600  
Email: mohammed.ismail@badea.org

**World Bank**

56. M. Aminur Rahman  
Lead Economist  
World Bank  
Email : arahman@worldbank.org

**Communauté économique régionale/ Regional economic community**

**Union du Magreb Arabe (UMA)**

57. M. Belbachir Zahr Eddine  
Expert des Affaires économiques  
Rabat  
Tél : + 212 667678395- Fax : + 212 537 68 13 77  
Email : belbachir.zahr@gmail.com

**Organisation patronale/ Employers' organization**

**Union Nationale du Patronat Mauritanien (UNPM)**

58. M. Hamza Babetta  
Secrétaire Général Adjoint  
hbabetta@gmail.com, sga@unpm.mr  
Mauritanie Nouakchott  
Tel. ; +222 45 24 00 26 +222 20 87 97 85  
Email : hbabetta@gmail.com

**Agence Nationale/ National Agency**

**Agence Nationale de Promotion du Commerce Extérieur**

59. M. Walid Belabidi  
Tél. : +213 (0) 21 52 12 10  
Fax : +213 (0) 21 52 11 26  
Email : w.labidi6@gmail.com

**Centre de Recherche/ Research Centre**

**Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Sociales (CRES)**

60. M. Hedi Bouker  
Directeur Général  
Tunis, Tunisie  
Tél. : (+216) 71 844 098 / Fax : (+216) 71 842 322 – Mob.: 21698269095  
Email : hedi.bouker@cres.rn

**Organisme intergouvernemental / intergouvernemental**

**Organisation Mondiale des Douanes (OMD)**

61. M. Samson BILANGNA

Administrateur technique principal/Senior Technical Officer

Belgique - Belgium

Tel.: +32 2 209 9332 - Fax: +32 2 209 9493

Email bilangna@hotmail.com

**Système des Nations Unies/ United Nations System**

**ESCWA**

62. Mr. Mohamed Chemingui

Chief of Regional Integration Section

Economic Development and Globalization Division

Beirut, Lebanon

Email: Cheminguim@un.org

**World Food Programme**

63. Mr. Haile Menghestab

Representative & Country Director

Cairo, Egypt

Tel. +202 25261993 - Mob.: +201062437187

Email: Menghestab.haile@wfp.org

64. M. Zohery Alaa

Government Relations Officer

Cairo, Egypt

Tel. : +202 25261993 / Mob.: +201032041266

Email : Alaa.zohery@wfp.org

65. Ms. Nirvana Farrag

Director, Africa Knowledge platform and South-South Cooperation

Strategic Partnership Division (STR)

Rome, Italy

Tel.: +201022229359 - Mob.: +201001709779

Email: nirvana.farrag@wfp.org

66. M. Mustakim Waid

Strategic Partnerships Advisor

World Food Programme, Rome – Italy

Tel.: +39 345 599 7048 / Mob.: +39 345 599 7048

Mustakim.waid@wfp.org



**UNECA SECRETARIAT / Addis Ababa**

67. Mr. Souleymane Abdallah  
Economic Affairs Officer  
Regional Integration and Trade Division  
Tel.: +251 11 5443784, Fax: +251 11 5514416  
E-mail: abdallahs@un.org

68. Mr. Ben McCarthy  
Associate Economic Affairs Officer  
Development Planning Section |  
Macroeconomics and Governance Division  
Tel.: +251-11-5443979  
Email: benjamin.mccarthy@un.org

69. Mr. Ahmed Al-Awah  
Chief, IT Strategic Advisory Unit  
Information and Communication Technology Services Section (ICTSS)  
Public Information and Knowledge Management Division (PIKMD)  
Office : +251 (11) 544-3775 (x33775)  
Email : al-awah@un.org

70. Mr. Demba Diarra  
SPORD  
Email: diarrad@un.org

**UNECA SECRETARIAT / RABAT**

Subregional Office for North Africa  
Tel.: +212 537 71 78 29 - +212 537 71 56 13  
Fax : +212 537 71 27

website: [www.uneca.org/sro-na](http://www.uneca.org/sro-na)

71. Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director  
72. Mr. Khaled Hussein, Senior Economist  
73. Mr. Omar Ismael Abdourahman, Economist  
74. Ms. Amal Najah El Beshbishi, Economist  
75. Mr. Aziz Jaid, Economist  
76. Mr. Salem Sebbar, Knowledge Management Officer  
77. Ms. Houda Filali-Ansary, Communication Officer  
78. Mr. Ibrahim Ayoub, Administration and finance Officer  
79. Mr. Mohammed Mosseddek, Senior Research Assistant  
80. Ms. Aouatif El Arroud, Finance Assistant  
81. Mr. Lahcen Hmade, Administrative Assistant  
82. Ms. Naima Sahraoui, Director Assistant  
83. Ms. Amal El Korchi, Procurement Assistant  
84. Mr. Rachid Ramdane, Transport Assistant  
85. Mr. Driss Cherrabi, Team Assistant  
86. Ms. Genevieve Gyasi, Fellow