



Session 5: Panel Discussion

TITLE: Building the Foundations of Digital Trade for CAREC Customs Modernization

Presentation A: Foundations for Digital Trade: Regional Mapping, Interoperable System Design, and Customs Modernization
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Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC)
Customs Cooperation Committee**

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Integrated Analytical Framework for Digital Trade

Key Themes	Description
Theme 1: Integrated Governance and Legal Foundations for Digital Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishes coordinated legal frameworks, identifies regulatory gaps, and promotes harmonized standards through institutional collaboration.
Theme 2: Interoperable Systems and Data-Driven Trade Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides benchmarking of trade systems while assessing cross-border interoperability, data exchange readiness, and regional infrastructure barriers.
Theme 3: Evidence-Based Regional Readiness and Future-Ready Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Synthesizes assessments into Regional Readiness Scorecards guiding policy priorities while integrating AI, blockchain, digital identity, and cloud modernization strategies.

Digital Trade Governance and Coordination

CAREC Country	Insights and Key Highlights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens regional integration via interoperability pilots and capacity building
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances governance through Single Window systems and regional coordination
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads digital trade innovation via blockchain and automated customs systems
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens transit leadership through China cooperation and cargo facilitation
Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances corridor integration via reforms and connectivity cooperation frameworks
Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverages mineral exports and geography for logistics interoperability systems
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands trade connectivity via Pakistan Single Window and partnerships
People's Republic of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drives global leadership through integrated customs systems and interoperability initiatives
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens corridor integration through e-TIR deployment and customs coordination.
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances transit modernization through e-TIR implementation and reforms
Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances digital trade integration through reforms and coordination mechanisms

Legal Mapping Matrix

CAREC Country	Insights and Key Highlights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances digital trade laws supporting interoperability and electronic documentation
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens interoperability through electronic transaction laws and governance frameworks
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads paperless trade laws enabling blockchain and digital documentation
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances seamless trade through interoperable customs and legal frameworks
Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens readiness through electronic transaction laws and reforms
Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances modernization through evolving legal interoperability governance frameworks
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances regional trade through Pakistan Single Window legal integration
People's Republic of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drives leadership through comprehensive interoperable digital trade legal frameworks
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens readiness through legal harmonization and transaction reform measures
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops opportunities through legal reforms and governance modernization initiatives
Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerates integration through laws enabling paperless interoperable trade systems

ICT System Mapping and Readiness Assessment

CAREC Country	Insights and Key Highlights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASYCUDA enables interoperability efficiency gains and regional integration opportunities
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW maturity enables seamless trade efficiency and regional interoperability benefits
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced customs systems enable blockchain and regional leadership benefits
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated ASTANA-1 drives efficiency interoperability and trade benefits growth
Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW and ASYCUDA enable efficiency gains and interoperability strengthening
Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASYCUDA and NSW support modernization interoperability and mineral trade benefits
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WeBOC and PSW enable efficiency integration and export growth benefits
People's Republic of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced systems enable global leadership interoperability and digital trade benefits
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASYCUDA and NSW provide efficiency interoperability and modernization opportunities
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging systems enable modernization interoperability efficiency gains and opportunities
Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW modernization drives efficiency interoperability and trade facilitation benefits

Cross-border Data Exchange Readiness Review

CAREC Country	Insights and Key Highlights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paper-based CO, SPS, invoicing systems constrain digital trade readiness progress
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phased e-CO SPS digitization and invoicing enhance modernization potential
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced e-CO SPS alignment and e-invoicing support efficiency
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> highly advanced e-CO, SPS systems, and e-invoicing enable seamless trade integration
Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transitional e-CO, partial SPS digitization, and emerging invoicing support modernization
Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> growing e-CO systems, SPS digitization, and pilot logistics improve trade readiness
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expanding e-CO pilots, SPS e-Phyto adoption, and growing e-invoicing enable reform
People's Republic of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fully integrated CO, SPS, invoicing, and eBL systems enable leadership
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper-based CO SPS invoicing constrain trade modernization readiness
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimal CO, SPS, invoicing, and eBL systems limit digital trade capacity
Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advancing e-CO SPS e-Phyto e-invoicing strengthen trade integration

Innovative, Digital, and Emerging Technologies Landscape

CAREC Country	Insights and Key Highlights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverages mobile services and cooperation to build digital infrastructure progress
Azerbaijan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands e-government systems and interoperability to strengthen trade efficiency
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepens digital trade leadership through customs innovation and interoperability
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances trade hub role through blockchain logistics and harmonization
Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves digital capacity through infrastructure upgrades and interoperability
Mongolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances e-government and customs systems improving efficiency and integration
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expands Single Window systems and trade platforms boosting integration
People's Republic of China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads innovation through AI blockchain and logistics integration systems
Tajikistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops digital infrastructure enabling gradual regional trade integration
Turkmenistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens infrastructure and transparency enabling regional trade participation
Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advances digital transformation supporting efficient trade and integration

Regional Readiness Scorecard

Key Themes	Description
Institutional Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establishes coordinated institutional and legal architecture through mapping agencies, mandates, and regulations for coherence.
Legal Maturity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provides comprehensive inventory and benchmarking of customs, NSW, and trade systems.
Systems Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Synthesizes institutional, legal, and technological assessments into a scorecard for benchmarking and guiding policy prioritization.
Data Exchange Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthens secure standardized sharing, improving interoperability, transparency, cybersecurity, trade flows.
Emerging Technology Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advances adoption of AI, blockchain, and digital innovation.

Regional Readiness Scorecard

Dimension	KPI Category	Scoring Scale (1–5)*	Suggested Weight (%)
Institutional Readiness	Institutional Clarity	1 = unclear / overlapping; 5 = fully defined	5%
	Coordination Mechanisms	1 = none; 5 = fully institutionalized	5%
	Governance Effectiveness	1 = ad hoc; 5 = highly effective	5%
	Implementation Capacity	1 = very limited; 5 = strong	5%
	Private Sector Engagement	1 = none; 5 = fully integrated	5%
Subtotal			25%

Dimension	KPI Category	Scoring Scale (1–5)	Suggested Weight (%)
Legal Maturity	Legal Coverage	1 = absent; 5 = comprehensive	5%
	Alignment with International Standards	1 = none; 5 = fully aligned	5%
	Legal Recognition	1 = not recognized; 5 = fully recognized	5%
	Cross-border Legal Readiness	1 = none; 5 = fully operational	5%
	Subtotal		

Dimension	KPI Category	Scoring Scale (1–5)	Suggested Weight (%)
Technological Capability	System Functionality	1 = manual; 5 = fully automated	5%
	System Integration	1 = none; 5 = fully integrated	5%
	Platform Coverage	1 = minimal; 5 = comprehensive	5%
	Data Exchange Capability	1 = manual; 5 = real-time exchange	5%
	System Reliability	1 = weak; 5 = robust	5%
Subtotal			25%

Dimension	KPI Category	Scoring Scale (1–5)	Suggested Weight (%)
Interoperability Readiness	Data Standards Alignment	1 = none; 5 = fully aligned	4%
	Cross-border Exchange Capability	1 = none; 5 = fully operational	4%
	Priority Use Cases	1 = none; 5 = multiple operational	4%
	Security & Trust Frameworks	1 = weak; 5 = robust	4%
	Participation in Pilots	1 = none; 5 = active leader	4%
Subtotal			20%

Dimension	KPI Category	Scoring Scale (1–5)	Suggested Weight (%)
Innovation & Emerging Tech Readiness	Adoption of Emerging Tech	1 = none; 5 = advanced deployment	2%
	Scalability Potential	1 = low; 5 = high	2%
	Innovation Ecosystem	1 = none; 5 = strong ecosystem	2%
	Integration Readiness	1 = low; 5 = fully integrated	2%
Subtotal			10%

Readiness ranges from nascent to advanced, indicating progressive maturity of systems from minimal capability to full interoperability supporting regional integration and alignment across economies region.

CAREC Digital Trade Integration

Key Themes	Description
Hub-and-Spoke Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible hub-and-spoke model enables phased, inclusive regional digital integration progress
Living Laboratories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living laboratories enable real-world testing, innovation, and scalable learning platforms
Interoperability Sandboxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interoperability sandboxes provide controlled environments for safe cross-border digital testing
Build–Measure–Learn Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build-measure-learn cycle ensures iterative, evidence-based, adaptive digital trade reforms
Regional Trust Anchors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional trust anchors enable secure verification of cross-border digital documents

Recommendations

Key Themes	Description
Interagency Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen coordination among customs, ICT, and trade agencies through focal points enabling faster decisions and improved accountability mechanisms.
Digital Systems Upgrading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upgrade and connect existing trade systems such as permits and declarations enabling incremental improvements without costly platform redevelopment.
Hub-and-Spoke Technical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage advanced countries as regional hubs providing tools, templates, and peer learning support accelerating scalable knowledge diffusion.
Quick-Win Implementation Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize electronic certificates, paperless corridors, and simplified workflows delivering visible early results and sustaining regional reform momentum effectively.