

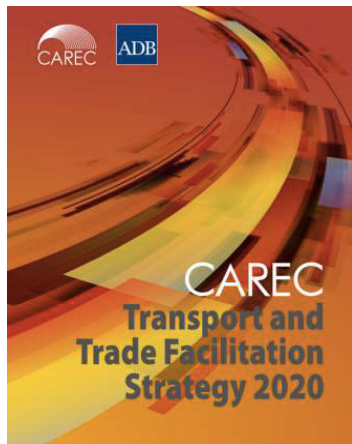
# Regional Trade Group (RTG)

## *Draft Terms of Reference*

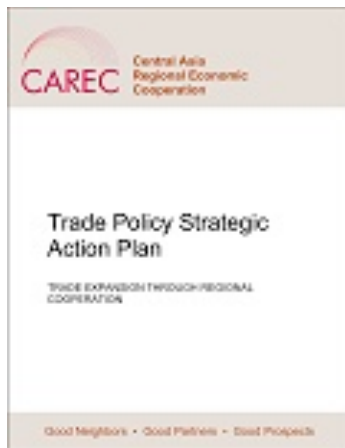
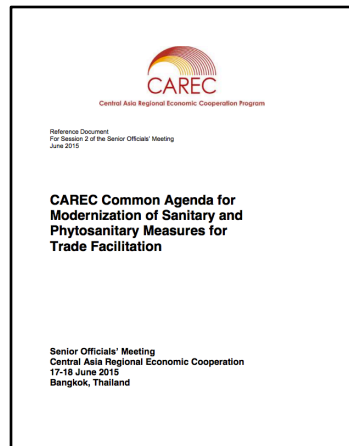
**Inaugural Regional Trade Group Meeting  
Bangkok, Thailand  
25-26 June 2018**



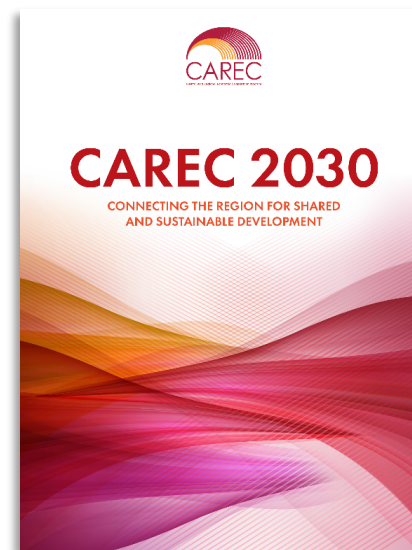
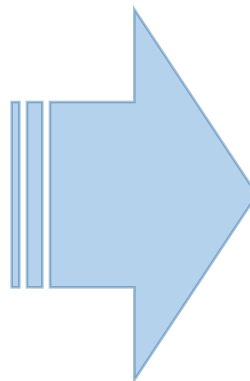
# BACKGROUND



Customs Cooperation Committee



Trade Policy Coordinating Committee



***“A Regional Trade Group (RTG) will be established to discuss and deliberate on the increasingly intertwined issues of trade policy and trade facilitation in a synergistic manner”***



# **RTG's GENERAL PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE**

- **Lead, with full operational authority as the coordinative and consultative body for trade sector**
- **Champion CAREC trade sector priorities and make recommendations to the CAREC Ministerial Conference (MC) through the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and National Focal Points (NFP) Meeting**
- **Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) to continue on customs cooperation functions related to trade facilitation**
- **Ad-hoc working groups and expert groups may be organized in new technical areas such as in SPS measures and technical barriers to trade (TBT), and other areas (e.g., services and investment)**



# SCOPE OF WORK

- **Oversight Function**

- **Plan, discuss, deliberate, coordinate and monitor implementation of the trade work under the CAREC program, specifically, the CITA 2030 and three-year RSAP.**

- **Key Functions and Tasks**

- (a) Policy Dialogue and Strategy Formulation**

- (b) Project Pipeline Development, Implementation and Monitoring**

- (c) Institutional Strengthening and Stakeholders Coordination**

## **(a) Policy Dialogue and Strategy Formulation**

- i. To be an inclusive and constructive forum for policy discussions, consensus-building, cross-learning and cooperation in the trade sector with the objective of supporting CAREC countries' trade-related development strategies and furthering their integration into the global economy,**
- ii. Develop, refine and update a region-wide trade strategy – the CITA 2030 and its accompanying three-year RSAP 2018-2020, to maintain its relevance and responsiveness to the changing global and regional landscape, emerging challenges and priorities,**
- iii. Develop a results framework that will measure and assess progress in achieving the CITA, making use of selected broad or strategic indicators and following the whole-of-supply chain approach to assist in formulating, updating, and prioritizing recommendations. The tool will also build national capacities in statistical recordkeeping for management purposes,**
- iv. Provide updates and make recommendations to the MC through the SOM and NFP, as may be required, on policy issues and priorities for the CAREC region.**

## **(b) Project Pipeline Development, Implementation and Monitoring**

- i. Oversee the overall implementation, information dissemination and monitoring of CITA, specifically, to discuss and review on annual basis the three-year RSAP, and endeavor to prioritize investment projects, policy dialogue and coordination, knowledge products and services that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely;**
- ii. Identify mutually agreeable solutions and flexible operational arrangements (such as allowing two or more CAREC countries to initiate and implement regional projects and initiatives agreed on by all members) guided by international best practices and demonstrated results to implement and promote CAREC trade work,**
- iii. Provide advise and support as required, on the formulation and implementation of national plans with respect to CITA and RSAP implementation including to work with the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) or similar inter-agency mechanisms in CAREC countries, to ensure country-level buy-in and proper implementation,**
- iv. Working closely with the CAREC Secretariat, develop sector-specific monitoring framework that may include a policy matrix to measure the progress in reforms; results-oriented framework with numerical targets and baselines used selectively in investment projects; and periodic reporting mechanism to MC through SOM and NFPs.**

## **(c) Institutional Strengthening and Stakeholders Coordination**

- i. Support the establishment and/or strengthening of intergovernmental and cross-sectoral mechanisms (e.g., NCTFs) with the objective of better coordination of sectoral policies and priorities in the region,**
- ii. Promote evidence-based policy-making and negotiations including through improved data collection and cross-country analytical work and capacity-building for government officials in emerging trade issues and negotiations,**
- iii. Enhance linkages and strengthen synergy with initiatives from the real sectors that have trade implications, through coordination with other sectoral bodies including CCC, Transport Sector Coordinating Committee, Energy Sector Coordinating Committee, or sub-sectoral groups as may be established,**
- iv. Engage and strengthen dialogue mechanisms with the private sector (including through the CAREC Federation of Carrier and Freight Forwarder Associations (CFCFA)), to identify and address issues and challenges faced by the private sector in expanding trade,**
- v. To the extent possible, cooperate and coordinate with think-tanks and research institutions (e.g. CAREC Institute), international organizations (e.g., World Trade Organization and World Customs Organization), development partners engaged in trade sector activities in CAREC countries, and regional cooperation mechanisms (e.g., Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization, Eurasian Economic Union, among others) to share knowledge, create synergy and optimize the use of resources.**



# MEMBERSHIP

- **Membership will be per country, represented by Appointed Representative of the Country (ARC)**
- **Each CAREC country may determine the size and composition of the country's delegation to the RTG meetings.**
- **The delegates to the RTG meetings shall comprise senior-level representatives from trade-related agencies of CAREC countries and experts from development partners.**
- **The RTG may also invite international experts, resource persons and observers to the RTG meetings as may be required.**





# **CHAIRING, SECRETARIAT AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

- **RTG meetings will be agenda-driven and issues-based**
- **RTG shall meet at regular intervals, including an Annual Meeting prior to SOM, attended by ARC from each country and other delegates as may be nominated.**
- **A Chairperson shall be appointed by the host-country (rotation). To strengthen ownership and promote cross-learning, Country co-chair may be appointed during the RTG meetings based on the agenda and specific country expertise.**
- **The secretariat for the RTG will be established at ADB to provide technical support in close coordination with the CAREC Secretariat.**



# FOR ENDORSEMENT OR DISCUSSION

- **Appointed Representative of Country (ARC)**
  - **Designation of lead agency**
  - **Contact points and agency lists for topical issues**
- **RTG's key functions and tasks**
- **CCC reporting structure/mechanism with RTG**
- **Results-framework and communications strategy**
- **Frequency and timing of RTG meetings**

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# Thank you!