

## CAREC Regional Trade Group (RTG) – Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) Joint Meeting

12 June 2023, Tbilisi, Georgia



**Objectives:** The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Regional Trade Group (RTG) – Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) Joint Meeting will (i) discuss the implementation progress of customs modernization, trade facilitation, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, digitalization of trade and other cross-cutting initiatives under the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda (CITA) 2030; (ii) discuss the midterm review of CITA 2030; and (iii) endorse the Trade Sector Report 2023 and Rolling Strategic Action Plan (RSAP) 2023-2025, which will be reported to CAREC Ministers through the Senior Officials' Meeting on 13-14 June 2023.

**Reference documents:** Trade Sector Report 2022-2023 and Rolling Strategic Action Plan 2023-2025; Draft Terms of Reference for the CITA 2030 Midterm Review; and ADB 2023. Evaluation of ADB Support for the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program, 2011–2022.

**Participants:** Trade sector delegates to the Senior Officials' Meeting, CCC focals, development partners

**Chairs:** **Mariam Gabunia**, Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia (CAREC RTG Co-chair)

**Samson Uridia**, Head, International Relations Department, Georgia Revenue Service, Ministry of Finance, Georgia (CAREC CCC Chair)

**Mikheil Peikrishvili**, Main Specialist, International Relations Department, Georgia Revenue Service, Ministry of Finance, Georgia (CAREC RTG Co-chair)

**Co-chair: Emma Fan**, Director, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division (EAPF), East Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB)

### WORKING AGENDA (as of 9 June 2023)

10:00 – 10:30 (Tbilisi time)	<b>Registration and coffee</b>  <b>Emcee: Dorothea Lazaro</b> , Regional Cooperation Specialist, East Asia Department, Asian Development Bank
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Opening Session</b>  <b>Vladimer Khundadze</b> , Deputy Director General, Georgia Revenue Service, Ministry of Finance  <b>Mariam Gabunia</b> , Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia  <b>Xiaohong Yang</b> , Deputy Director General, Central and West Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB)

	<p><b>Joint Meeting Agenda and Objectives</b></p> <p><b>Emma Fan</b>, Director, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division (EAPF), East Asia Department, ADB</p> <p><i>Group Photo</i></p>
11:00 – 11:40	<p><b>Session 1: Progress of Modernization under the Customs and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures Initiatives</b></p> <p>The session will discuss the (i) key outcomes of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) held in June 2023 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the SPS Regional Working Group (RWG) held in January 2023; and (ii) proposed actions to sustain the momentum and strategic steps moving forward.</p> <p>Presenter: <b>Samson Uridia</b>, Head, International Relations Department, Georgia Revenue Service (GRS), Ministry of Finance (CAREC CCC Chair and CAREC SPS Co-Chair) (<b>20 minutes</b>)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Emma Fan</b>, Director, EAPF, East Asia Department, ADB</p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p>
11:40 – 12:15	<p><b>Session 2: CITA 2030's Rolling Strategic Action Plan (RSAP)</b></p> <p>The session will present the CAREC Trade Sector Report 2023 and RSAP 2022-2025 for RTG and CCC endorsement, to be reported to the CAREC Ministerial Conference through the Senior Officials' Meeting.</p> <p>Presenter: <b>Dorothea Lazaro</b>, Regional Cooperation Specialist, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division, East Asia Department, ADB (<b>15 minutes</b>)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Mariam Gabunia</b>, Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, MOESD, Georgia (CAREC RTG Co-chair)</p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p>
12:15 – 14:00	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>
14:00 – 14:20	<p><b>Session 3: Proposed Initiatives in Developing Capacity for a Potential CAREC-wide Free Trade Agreement (FTA)</b></p> <p>The session will present and discuss proposed initiatives in developing capacity including institutional aspects for a potential CAREC-wide FTA under the TA 6558: <i>Strengthening Knowledge and Capacities for the Design and Implementation of Free Trade Agreements Involving CAREC Countries</i>.</p>

	<p>Presenter: <b>Zulfia Karimova</b>, Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, Public Management, Financial Sector, and Regional Cooperation Division, East Asia Department, ADB (<b>10 minutes</b>)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Mariam Gabunia</b>, Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, MOESD, Georgia (CAREC RTG Co-chair)</p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p>
14:20 – 14:50	<p><b>Session 4: Midterm Review of the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda (CITA) 2030</b></p> <p>The session will deliberate on the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) of the mandated midterm review of CITA 2030 and consider the recommendations of ADB's independent evaluation of the CAREC Program completed in May 2023. The midterm review will commence in July 2023 to feed into stakeholders consultations from 2023 to 2024.</p> <p>Co-presenters:</p> <p><b>Saad Abdullah Paracha</b>, Senior Regional Cooperation Specialist, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Central and West Asia Department, ADB (CAREC Unit Head) (<b>10 minutes</b>)</p> <p><b>Dorothea Lazaro</b>, Regional Cooperation Specialist, EAPF, East Asia Department, ADB (<b>10 minutes</b>)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Mikheil Peikrishvili</b>, Main Specialist, International Relations Department, GRS, Ministry of Finance, Georgia (CAREC RTG Co-chair)</p> <p><b>Discussion</b></p>
14:50 – 15:10	<b>Coffee break</b>
15:10 – 16:50	<p><b>Session 5: Around the Table</b></p> <p>Each country will be requested to delegate a speaker to make a five-minute intervention on proposals and comments to RSAP 2023-2025.</p> <p>Chair <b>Mariam Gabunia</b>, Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, MOESD, Georgia</p>
16:50 – 17:00	<p><b>Wrap-up and Closing Session</b></p> <p><b>Samson Uridia</b>, Revenue Service, Ministry of Finance, Georgia</p> <p><b>Mariam Gabunia</b>, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia</p> <p><b>Lyaziza Sabyrova</b>, Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Central and West Asia Department, ADB</p>