



Regional Workshop on CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership

28-29 August 2025, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic



Regional Workshop on CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership (CARTIF)

In 2024, CAREC member countries conveyed their support for the **CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation (CARTIF) Partnership** initiative and expressed keen interest in engaging in detailed deliberations concerning the agreement's structure, priority chapters, and institutional arrangements.

The establishment of the CARTIF Partnership requires a comprehensive approach to establish a robust trade and investment partnership framework within the CAREC region. In consultation with the interested CAREC countries' and working closely with thematic international experts, ADB is preparing documents as basis of dialogue.

In Istanbul in June 2024, a two-day regional workshop discussed the overall concept, workplan and methodology of the CARTIF. Representatives from the CAREC countries agreed to examine the feasibility of the CARTIF in detail. They also endorsed, in principle, the initial concept and methodology for developing CARTIF.

Since then, a comprehensive CARTIF Concept Note with priority chapters was prepared and circulated among CAREC member countries in February 2025 and discussed with CAREC Trade focals at the virtual consultation meeting on 14 March 2025.

On 12-13 June 2025 in Bishkek, CAREC member countries attended the regional workshop on CARTIF and the Regional Trade Group (RTG) meeting. The CARTIF draft text was prepared by the team of the international experts and circulated to members of the RTG and CAREC trade focals prior to the workshop. Workshop participants deliberated on the draft text of CARTIF and reviewed procedures for potential participation in the important CAREC-wide regional initiative. Members of the RTG and CAREC trade focals expressed their overall support for the draft CARTIF text and readiness to complete domestic processes to facilitate CAREC members' participation in CARTIF.

The draft CARTIF text was updated after the CARTIF workshop and officially sent to governments of the CAREC members on 1 July 2025 requesting to (i) review the attached draft CARTIF text for finalization, and (ii) express the country's interest in joining the CARTIF priority protocols.

In this regard, this workshop aims to:

- (i) Review and discuss the comments received regarding the CARTIF text from the CAREC members;
- (ii) Discuss the institutional arrangements and further procedures for CARTIF;
- (iii) Present and review a draft Ministerial Statement on CARTIF for the CAREC Ministerial Conference (MC).
- (iv) Express countries' interest in joining the CARTIF priority protocols.

Participants: Trade Focals from CAREC countries, development partners, international experts, ADB staff and consultants.

Venue: Sheraton Bishkek Hotel, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

Date: 28-29 August 2025

Agenda

Bishkek time	DAY 1 - 28 August 2025, Thursday
09:00-09:30 (30 mins)	Registration of Participants, General Announcements
09:30-09:45 (15 mins)	Welcome and Opening Remarks Mederbek Tumanov , Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyz Republic Lyaziza Sabyrova , Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, Central and West Asia Department, ADB
09:45-10:15 (30 mins)	Session 1: Review of the comments to the CARTIF text from the CAREC members (Comments Matrix) Speaker: Mikheil Janelidze , Team Leader, Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG) (10 mins) Moderator: Zulfia Karimova , Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB Q&A (20 mins)
10:15-10:35 (20 mins)	Group photo and coffee break
10:35-11:15 (40 mins)	Session 2: Protocol I on Trade Facilitation - Expert responses to comments and discussion Speaker: Yann Duval/Alexey Kravchenko , UNESCAP (10 mins) (<i>virtual</i>) Moderator: Mikheil Janelidze , Team Leader, PMCG Q&A (30 mins)
11:15-12:00 (45 mins)	Session 3: Protocols II and III on Non-tariff Measures (SPS and TBT) - Expert responses to comments and discussion Speaker: Gloria Pasadilla , International Expert (15 mins) (<i>virtual</i>) Moderator: Mariam Gabunia , Head, Foreign Trade Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, CAREC sector focal - trade policy, Georgia Q&A (30 mins)
12:00-12:45 (45 mins)	Session 4: Trade in Services Facilitation Related Protocols IV and V - Expert responses to comments and discussion Speaker: Jane Drake-Brockman , International Expert (15 mins) (<i>virtual</i>) Moderator: Mikheil Janelidze , Team Leader, PMCG Q&A (30 mins)
12:45-14:00 (75 mins)	Lunch (restaurant “Legend”)
14:00-14:45 (45 mins)	Session 5: Review and discuss a draft Joint [Bishkek] Ministerial Declaration on CARTIF for CAREC Ministerial Conference



	<p>Speaker: Zulfia Karimova, Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB (10 mins)</p> <p>Moderator: Pramila Crivelli, Economist, ADB</p> <p>Discussion (35 mins)</p>
14:45-15:15 (30 mins)	<p>Session 6: Protocol VII on Investment Facilitation - Expert responses to comments and discussion</p> <p>Speaker: Julien Chaisse, International Expert (10 mins) (<i>virtual</i>)</p> <p>Moderator: Pramila Crivelli, Economist, ADB</p> <p>Q&A (20 mins)</p>
15:15-15:45 (30 mins)	<p>Session 7: Protocol VIII on Dispute Settlement - Expert responses to comments and discussion</p> <p>Speaker: Jan Bohanes, International Expert (10 mins) (<i>virtual</i>)</p> <p>Moderator: Mikheil Janelidze, Team Leader, PMCG</p> <p>Q&A (20 mins)</p>
15:45-16:00 (15 mins)	Coffee Break
16:00-16:30 (30 mins)	<p>Session 8: Protocol VI on Digital Trade - Expert responses to comments and discussion</p> <p>Speaker: Henry Gao, International Expert (10 mins) (<i>virtual</i>)</p> <p>Moderator: Jin Jiankai, Director, Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, PRC</p> <p>Q&A (20 mins)</p>
16:30-16:45 (15 mins)	Concluding of DAY 1

Bishkek time	DAY 2 - 29 August 2025, Friday
09:15-09:30 (15 mins)	Registration of Participants, General Announcements for DAY 2
09:30-10:00 (30 mins)	<p>Session 9: Protocol IX on Supply Chain Connectivity – Review and discussion</p> <p>Speaker: Jin Jiankai, Director, Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, PRC (10 mins)</p> <p>Moderator: Mikheil Janelidze, Team Leader, PMCG</p> <p>Q&A (20 mins)</p>
10:00-10:30 (30 mins)	<p>Session 10: Protocol X on Green Economy - Review and discussion</p> <p>Speaker: Jin Jiankai, Director, Department of International Trade and Economic Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, PRC (10 mins)</p> <p>Moderator: Mikheil Janelidze, Team Leader, PMCG</p> <p>Q&A (20 mins)</p>



10:30-11:00 (30 mins)	Session 11: Institutional arrangements and further procedures for CARTIF Speaker: Mikheil Janelidze , Team Leader, PMCG (10 mins) Moderator: Pramila Crivelli , Economist, ADB Q&A (20 mins)
11:00-11:15 (15 mins)	Coffee break
11:15-12:15 (60 mins)	Session 12: Final CAREC Countries' Statements on CARTIF Speakers: Trade focals from CAREC member countries (60 mins) Moderator: Zulfia Karimova , Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB
12:15-12:30 (15 mins)	Concluding Remarks Zulfia Karimova , Principal Regional Cooperation Specialist, ADB ... Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyz Republic (<i>tbc</i>)

