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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

## **Report**

**Second session of the Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members  
of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia  
Online, 15-16 September 2021**

### **Summary**

The Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia held its second session virtually on 15-16 September 2021. Participants discussed various issues related to the implementation of trade policies and technical cooperation activities, trade analysis tools for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the global survey on trade facilitation measures, and other key topics related to trade measures and the obstacles they face, in addition to economic integration in the Arab region.

The Committee adopted a set of recommendation at the close of its second session addressed to member States and to the ESCWA secretariat. The present report sets out those recommendations, summarizes the discussions, and provides information on participants and session documents.

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## **Introduction**

1. The Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was established pursuant to ESCWA resolution 332 (XXX) on developing the work of the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development, which divided the Technical Committee into two committees so as to ensure increased focus on each component, namely trade policies and financing for development. The United Nations Economic and Social Council endorsed the separation in resolution 2019/30. The Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia held its first session in Amman on 8 and 9 December 2019. Its second sessions was held virtually on 15 and 16 September 2021.

2. Participants discussed various issues related to the implementation of trade policies and technical cooperation activities, trade tools and analysis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the global survey on trade facilitation measures, and other key topics related to trade measures and the obstacles they face, in addition to economic integration in the Arab region. The Committee also adopted a set of recommendation at the close of its second session addressed to member States and to the ESCWA secretariat. The present report sets out those recommendations, summarizes the discussions, and provides information on participants and session documents.

### **I. Recommendations made by the Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia at its second session**

3. At the close of its second session, the Committee adopted a set of recommendation addressed to member States and to the ESCWA secretariat.

#### **A. Recommendations to ESCWA member States**

4. The Committee made the following recommendations to ESCWA member States:

(a) Welcome the activities carried out pursuant to the recommendations issued by the Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia at its first session and under the ESCWA programme plan in the field of trade, and benefit from ESCWA services within the framework of technical cooperation activities;

(b) Welcome the vision presented by the ESCWA secretariat on transforming the knowledge it produces in the field of trade into interactive tools through online portals, so that decision makers can benefit from their various applications in a timely manner and according to their needs;

(c) Welcome the Arab Trade Gateway and its various components, including the External Trade Data Platform for the Arab Region, the Arab Economy-wide Trade Simulator Interface, and the Index Simulator for Policymakers; and benefit from the data and information it provides;

(d) Support the ESCWA secretariat with data, particularly those related to trade in services, for the development of the trade flows database;

(e) Provide the ESCWA secretariat with comments on the Arab Trade Gateway and the interactive tools available therein after testing them, by 16 November 2021, with a view to developing them;

(f) Take note of the results of the global survey on trade facilitation measures for the Arab region; and urge member States to respond to the questionnaire for the upcoming survey;

(g) Strengthen trade facilitation measures, including by implementing paperless trade, to respond to sudden shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and reduce their impact on trade and regional integration;

(h) Continue collaboration to reach an agreement on the operational plan of the Arab customs union to enhance trade and investment among Arab countries, taking into consideration the studies prepared by the ESCWA economic integration team on the scenarios for establishing the Arab customs union;

(i) Emphasize the importance of strengthening partnerships in the field of trade policies between United Nations specialized bodies and agencies, other international organizations and regional organizations, especially with the secretariat of the League of Arab States with regard to regional integration.

## **B. Recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat**

5. The Committee made the following recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat:

(a) Promote widely the Arab Trade Gateway to publicize its importance and ways to benefit from it;

(b) Expand the trade flows database to cover trade in services;

(c) Continue developing tools to assess the economic impact of international, regional and bilateral trade negotiation scenarios, and make them available to member States, especially within the framework of the Arab customs union and the accumulation of rules of origin;

(d) Continue building the capacity of the ESCWA secretariat in the field of data science and artificial intelligence to benefit from them in applications that support decision makers in the field of trade policies;

(e) Offer training workshops on interactive tools developed by the ESCWA secretariat at the regional and national levels to maximize their use; and prepare distance learning programmes in the areas of trade and regional integration;

(f) Provide technical support to Arab countries in implementing the annexes on developing the legislative framework for the Greater Arab Free Trade Area;

(g) Expand communication with actors involved in trade policy, such as the private sector and academia, to share knowledge and experiences, and to maximize the use of tools developed by the ESCWA secretariat;

(h) Continue providing technical support in the field of trade policies at the request of member States, and coordinate with them to complete the implementation of technical cooperation activities agreed upon at the bilateral level.

## **II. Topics for discussion**

### **A. Follow-up issues**

#### *1. Implementation of trade policy activities under the ESCWA programme plan for 2020-2021* (Agenda item 4)

6. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/3](#), the representative of the secretariat made a presentation on trade policy activities under the ESCWA programme plan for 2020-2021. He said that those activities included drafting reports and technical papers, organizing meetings and workshops for expert teams, preparing recurrent and non-recurring publications, building databases, and developing a brief overview of the Arab Trade Gateway and its role as a key tool that contributed to reviving the economic cycle, especially in view of the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He added that ESCWA carried out those activities under the framework of technical cooperation with member States in accordance with their priorities and with regional and international partners, so as to follow up on issues related to global trade, face the challenges that

it could pose to the economies of some Arab countries, and maximize the profits that other countries might achieve.

7. State representatives welcomed the progress made in the implementation of activities since the last session of the Committee.

*2. Technical cooperation activities*  
(Agenda item 5)

8. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/4](#), the representative of the secretariat made a presentation on the technical cooperation activities carried out by the ESCWA secretariat in the field of trade, explaining that technical cooperation activities translated ESCWA work into direct support to member States. They included conducting technical studies, organizing meetings and workshops for expert groups, building the capacity of member States to negotiate bilateral, subregional and multilateral trade agreements to encourage trade flows and build partnerships, and providing advisory services to member States upon their request.

9. He reviewed the technical cooperation activities implemented in support of a project to facilitate the establishment of the Arab customs union. The project included conducting regional dialogues to negotiate various topics related to the Arab customs union, in addition to building national capacity to operationalize the union. He noted the development of a trade simulation tool covering the Arab economies, based on economic modelling, which would be easy to use in conducting trade simulations. He also mentioned the development of a project to measure, monitor and improve performance in regional integration, and another project on transport and trade in the era of epidemics, which provided seamless and collaborative solutions to deal with transport and logistics challenges, and to enhance countries' ability to maintain communication with each other during pandemics, such as the one the COVID-19 crisis. He concluded by reviewing the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation and the activities and technical papers it included.

10. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the United Arab Emirates praised the work of the Committee and the reports that provided Arab countries with technical advice. The representative of Tunisia noted the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic for the implementation of some activities with member States, and hoped that things would be easier in the future, stressing the importance of the reports issued by ESCWA and its role in assisting member States in trade-related areas. The representative of the secretariat of the League of Arab States expressed the League's hope to increase communication with ESCWA.

11. In response, the representative of the secretariat said that ESCWA had always welcomed collaboration with the League of Arab States and would coordinate relevant activities with it.

*3. Implementation of the recommendations made by the Technical Committee on  
Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing  
for Development at its eleventh session (focus on trade)*  
(Agenda item 6)

12. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/5](#), the representative of the secretariat made a presentation on ESCWA efforts to implement the recommendations made to it by the Committee at its first session. He listed the recommendations and reviewed the activities implemented under each, noting their contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

13. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Egypt commented on the implementation of some recommendations, such as the study of free zones, expressing her hope that the study would be generalized to all Arab countries, given its importance to Egypt and other countries in the region. She requested that the results of the various workshops held by ESCWA be disseminated on a regular basis so that countries could forward them to those concerned. Commenting on the ongoing work with the League of Arab States regarding the Arab customs union, she requested a study dealing with tariff negotiations, in accordance with the latest

study of the League of Arab States on the Arab customs union. ESCWA was also requested to provide member States with access keys to the available tools, so that they could benefit from them.

## **B. Trade tools and analyses for 2030 Agenda implementation**

### *1. Arab Economy-wide Trade Simulator Interface* (Agenda item 7)

14. Before presenting agenda item 7, the ESCWA secretariat showed a video on the Arab Trade Gateway under development, which provided information, data and smart applications for those concerned with trade issues, and constituted a unified reference for Arab trade issues. The Gateway also provided data and information on market access and business environment frameworks in Arab countries. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on the database of Arab trade flows contained in the Gateway, noting that it provided information on regional integration and trade flows, a tool for simulating Arab trade, and a wide range of international indicators related to trade and other issues. The Gateway would later provide opportunities for remote learning, and offer prominent publications on trade in Arab countries.

15. He said that the first part of the Gateway was related to trade flows in the Arab region, which was a new knowledge offered by ESCWA to member States to provide data in one place, instead of searching for it in various places and portals. He indicated a new feature related to the trade flow values of each partner group, showing the share of different partners in the total trade with the region. He noted that a set of illustrations had been added to better highlight the region's total imports and exports, while identifying the top 10 intratrade partners. The Gateway was not only for displaying information; other functions had been added that were not available in similar portals, within a bilingual system available in Arabic and English. The link to the Gateway would be sent to member States to try it out before its launch.

16. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the League of Arab States stressed the importance of Arab trade data, and enquired whether it was possible to add data on inter-Arab trade in services in addition to data on goods. The representative of Tunisia suggested using that data to reflect new non-traditional sectors and their relationship to traditional ones. The representative of Bahrain thanked ESCWA for its effort that benefited followers of regional integration issues.

17. In response, the representative of the secretariat clarified that the Gateway was built on intra-Arab trade data, and that a specialized database was not available for it.

18. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/6](#), the representative of the secretariat made a presentation on the Arab Economy-wide Trade Simulator Interface (ATSI), which was also part of the Arab Trade Gateway. He said that ATSI was an easy-to-use analytical tool that allowed users who were not modelling experts to simulate the impact of trade policies. He demonstrated how to use the simulation interface, emphasizing that users would be able to conduct a large number of simulations that showed national reform priorities, bilateral trade agreements and the impact of global shocks, taking into account external variables, trade policy tools and any amendments thereto. He added that the link to ATSI would be sent to member States with the password to test the simulator and send queries or comments thereon. He said that training workshops could be offered to member States on ATSI and other platforms. He then showed the results of a particular simulation, including the impact on many indicators, such as growth and unemployment, and on many sectors.

19. The representative of Yemen stressed the importance of ESCWA efforts; of organizing a training course to benefit from the tool, including its features; and of providing a trial period to evaluate it and make comments. The representative of the Arab Monetary Fund said that the lack of data was a fundamental problem in the Arab region, and that ATSI was a first step towards solving that problem. He also enquired about the possibility of the Fund benefiting from it.

20. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic enquired whether the simulation results were available for download, requesting clarification on the importance of the tool in assisting Arab policy makers in making decisions, and stressing the importance of organizing a training workshop on the tool. The representative of the State of Palestine asked whether conditions in her country could be taken into account when building its model, and whether the training would include the creation of the social accounting matrix.

21. In response, the representative of the secretariat emphasized the need for countries to comment on the tool, stressing that the models were subject to continuous development. He underscored the importance of having a closed system to allow Arab negotiators to obtain a trade simulator interface that would enable them to identify the effects of their negotiations in real time, giving them a comparative advantage over partners they were negotiating with. He added that ESCWA had contacted the Palestinian authorities to provide support on how to build the social accounting matrix.

*2. Arab customs union negotiations helpdesk: a demo version*  
(Agenda item 8)

22. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/7](#), the representative of the secretariat made a presentation of the demo version of the Arab customs union negotiations helpdesk, explaining that the helpdesk was a specialized electronic platform that ESCWA was working on, aimed at facilitating the negotiation process for Arab negotiators and the League of Arab States. The new tool enabled negotiators to discuss outstanding issues, either bilaterally or in groups, before meeting formally, thus reducing pressure on them and the League of Arab States. The tool also enabled the League to track discussions and monitor progress, making it easier to follow up on specific outstanding issues.

23. The representative of the secretariat of the League of Arab States, which sponsors the negotiations on the Arab customs union, thanked the ESCWA secretariat for its support to Arab countries in engaging in the negotiations through the helpdesk. He suggested that the helpdesk be transformed into a platform for Arab economic integration, and that an independent platform be established for bilateral negotiations.

*3. Global survey on trade facilitation measures*  
(Agenda item 9)

24. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/8](#), the representative of the secretariat presented the results of the global survey on trade facilitation measures conducted by ESCWA and the other four United Nations regional commissions. She said that ESCWA had sent the questionnaire to more than 50 experts in government agencies, the private sector and academia from 22 Arab countries, and that the overall implementation rate for the Arab region reached 54 per cent in 2021 for the 34 core measures related to general and digital trade facilitation. Saudi Arabia was the highest performer with an implementation rate of 85 per cent, followed by Morocco at 83 per cent, Bahrain at 80 per cent, and Tunisia at 72 per cent. She added that central trading countries and least developed countries were lagging behind in terms of implementing trade facilitation measures, owing to significant administrative shortcomings that made cross-border trade difficult, with the exception of the Sudan that had an implementation rate of around 67 per cent and Mauritania at 55 per cent.

25. She noted that the Arab region was still lagging behind in terms of cross-border paperless trade and trade facilitation in times of crisis and pandemics. With regard to trade facilitation in such times, many countries had formed a committee or appointed an agency to administer trade facilitation measures. For example, the State of Palestine had assigned the task to the Ministry of National Economy, and Lebanon had formed a ministerial committee to combat COVID-19. She added that measures related to transparency, formalities, and institutional arrangement and cooperation were the most implemented in the Arab region, while there was a need to direct more efforts towards implementing measures related to cross-border paperless trade and trade facilitation in times of crises and pandemics. She stressed that ESCWA was committed to supporting member States in adopting and implementing policies and measures to facilitate regional and international trade.

26. In the ensuing discussion, participants enquired about the difference between the results of the global survey and the index published by the World Trade Organization on trade facilitation in member States.

27. In response, the representative of the secretariat explained that the difference between the results was due to the addition of a number of measures by countries, and some of them receiving technical assistance from bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on facilitating trade, which in some cases had led to a change in the order of countries.

#### *4. Index Simulator for Policymakers in the Arab Region* (Agenda item 10)

28. With reference to document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/9](#), the representative of the secretariat presented the Index Simulator for Policymakers in the Arab Region as an integral part of the Arab Trade Gateway, to track improvements made by Governments at various levels. She said that since this standard had many international indicators, Governments could track changes in their policies in non-trade areas (finance, education, gender equality), and answer the following questions: How will this reform affect the country's ranking in specific indicators? What are the obstacles that go beyond trade facilities and tariffs? What is the nature of those obstacles, and what are the other costs that prevent more comprehensive integration between Arab countries and the world, and what can be done? The Index Simulator allows the development of short, medium and long term strategies to address the issue of economic integration in the Arab region.

29. The representative of the secretariat presented examples of simulations using the platform. He explained how to access it, reviewed its components including the board containing general information on the Simulator and its importance, and the indicators page covering 11 international indicators including technological and economic indicators and gender equality indicators. He added that in the country section, users could review the international indicator rankings for a country, make comparisons with other countries, and simulate indicators.

30. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Tunisia asked whether the platform was currently available without a password and username. The representative of the Arab Monetary Fund asked about the data available on the platform, and whether it would be linked to the ministries of trade in member States so that responsible authorities in the ministry could feed the platform, or would ESCWA be solely responsible for the data.

31. The representative of Mauritania asked about the possibility of obtaining those indicators through other websites, and about the added value of the platform. The representative of the United Arab Emirates suggested holding a workshop to explain the platform's functions in detail to benefit from its services.

32. In response, the representative of the secretariat explained that the tool was flexible, and ministries interested in using it could feed it with whatever inputs they wanted. ESCWA was responsible for updating data for all Arab countries. She added that after trying the tool, the data could be discussed and the methodology modified if the results were not convincing. The added value of the platform was the simulation. The data could be found online, but the platform itself allowed users to change the indicator values to see how they affected countries' scores and rankings. She welcomed the idea of a workshop, noting that ESCWA was currently organizing several workshops for ministries to explain how to use the platform.

### **C. Programmatic issues**

#### *1. Round-table discussion: regional priorities for the coming years in the field of trade* (Agenda item 11)

33. At its second session, the Committee held a round-table discussion on the Arab region's priorities for the coming years in the field of trade, based on document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/CRP.1](#).



34. The representative of the United Arab Emirates said that the document dealt with challenges in Arab countries and discussed the policies and measures needed to overcome them, in particular the responses required of ESCWA. The representative of Tunisia noted that it was important to highlight how trade and regional integration could be employed in achieving economic, social and development goals and ensuring prosperity for the peoples of the region. He added that it was vital to find new ways to enhance trade, investment and integration to reduce unemployment and increase per capita shares.

35. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic requested that ESCWA provide integration and trade planning initiatives in the area of intra-regional trade and global trade for the Syrian Arab Republic. Her colleague stressed the importance of focusing on trade in intermediate products, and their gradual increase year after year, and suggested conducting studies on products that Arab countries could supply.

36. The representative of Saudi Arabia thanked ESCWA for its efforts in developing electronic platforms that provided access to information and supported decision makers, stressing the need to organize training courses.

37. The UNDP representative noted that establishing the origin and issuing electronic certificates remained a challenge. He said that the integration of origin had come from the private sector, and that UNDP was working on developing several projects in that field, in which ESCWA would be a major partner.

38. The representative of Tunisia stressed the need to focus on areas related to technological progress, in addition to transport that had witnessed increased costs owing to the pandemic, which had hampered transport in some regions. The representative of Egypt noted the importance of ESCWA studies for the Arab region.

#### **D. Date and venue of the third session of the Committee**

(Agenda item 12)

39. Representatives of member States agreed to hold the third session of the Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia at the United Nations House in Beirut, unless a member State officially offered to host it, in accordance with the established procedures and regulations in force at the United Nations.

#### **E. Other matters**

(Agenda item 13)

40. No issues were discussed under this item.

#### **F. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee at its second session**

(Agenda item 14)

41. The recommendations emanating from the discussions were presented to representatives of member States for discussion and adoption. The present report sets out the recommendations as adopted.

### **III. Organization of work**

#### **A. Date and venue**

42. The Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia held its second session in virtually on 15 and 16 September 2021.

#### **B. Opening**

43. The Committee on Trade Policies in the States Members of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia opened at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 15 September 2021. The representative of Jordan, the country

that chaired the first session of the Committee, Mr. Zaher Al-Qatarneh, made a statement in which he thanked ESCWA for its efforts towards member states, and for organizing its second session at a time when countries needed assistance. He said that the events of 2020 had affected the entire world, which led to the decline in commercial performance globally, especially in the Arab region. Arab exporters had found themselves unable to perform normal daily trading activities, and the region had faced additional cumulative economic challenges. He noted that the region offered many opportunities that must be benefited from, and that the formation of the current Committee was evidence of the importance of national trade to the economic cycle, stressing that Arab countries needed to work together at the regional level to overcome obstacles. He added that the current meeting was an opportunity to explore opportunities and tools that would enable member States to advance in trade. He stressed the importance of increasing the efficiency and skills of workers in the field of trade, and concluded by thanking ESCWA for the efforts made in implementing the recommendations of the first meeting and developing more tools and preparing reports to be presented at the current meeting.

44. Mr. Mohamed El Moctar Mohamed El Hacene, Leader of the ESCWA Shared Economic Prosperity Cluster, made a statement on behalf of the ESCWA secretariat in which he welcomed the representatives of member States. He said that the current meeting provided a valuable opportunity and platform to learn about the latest developments in economic integration among member States, in particular the performance of Arab trade in contributing to achieving the SDGs in the region. The meeting also provided an opportunity for ESCWA to consult with member States on the effectiveness of its activities in facilitating Arab trade to support Arab countries in keeping pace with international and regional trade developments, and to face current challenges such as economic recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. He affirmed that he and fellow organizers of the current session would make every effort during the meeting to ensure a participatory and interactive environment that allowed participants to put forward recommendations to strengthen the contribution of trade to growth and economic development in the region. He noted that the meeting would review the many tools included in the Arab Trade Gateway, which was being developed by a specialized team with diverse economic and technological skills at ESCWA. He concluded by stressing that the region was making tangible steps in several trade fields, including the ongoing negotiations between Arab countries to liberalize trade, which would undoubtedly contribute to advancing human development at the regional level.

### **C. Participants**

45. The second session of the Committee was attended by representatives of ESCWA member States, the League of Arab States, regional bodies working in the field of trade policies, and Arab funds. The list of participants is set out in annex I to the present report.

### **D. Election of officers**

46. Pursuant to rule 18 of the rules of procedure of ESCWA, “member countries shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations”. The representative of the United Arab Emirates was appointed Chair of the second session of the Committee. The Committee elected the representative of Jordan as First Vice-Chair and the representative of Bahrain as Second Vice-Chair. The representative of Tunisia was elected Rapporteur.

### **E. Agenda and organization of work**

47. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the agenda as set out in document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/L.1](#), and the organization of work set out in document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/L.2](#).

### **F. Documents**

48. The documents considered by the Committee at its second session are listed in annex II to the present report and set out in document [E/ESCWA/C.6/2021/INF.2](#).

**Annex I**  
**List of participants**

**A. ESCWA member States**

Bahrain

Sheikh Hamad Bin Salman Al Khalifa  
Assistant Undersecretary for Domestic  
and Foreign Trade  
Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism

Egypt

Ms. Dina Mahmoud  
Head of the Central Department for Trade  
Agreements  
Ministry of Trade and Industry - Agreements  
and Foreign Trade Sector

Ms. Noha Nofal  
General Manager of Regional Agreements  
Ministry of Trade and Industry

Mr. Mohamed Sulaiman  
Ministry of Trade and Industry - Agreements and  
Foreign Trade Sector

Iraq

Mr. Riyadh Al-Hashimi  
Director-General of the Supplies and  
Planning Department

Jordan

Mr. Zaher Al-Qatarnah  
Assistant Secretary-General for Technical Affairs  
Director of the Foreign Trade Policies and  
Relations Department  
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

Ms. Nour Salah El-Din Shqair  
Assistant Director of Foreign Trade Policy  
for Foreign Affairs  
Head of the Trade Policy Department  
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

Mr. Suhaib Al-Raoud  
Economic Researcher  
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

Mr. Amjad Mohamed Mhanna  
Economic Researcher  
Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply

Lebanon

Ms. Leila Dagher  
Economic Adviser to the Prime Minister  
and the Minister of Economy  
Ministry of Economy and Trade  
Mr. Razi El Hage

Mauritania

Mr. Mohamed Lemine Vayda  
Deputy Director of the Foreign Trade Department  
Ministry of Trade, Industry, Handicraft  
and Tourism

Mr. Sheikh Ahmed Sidati  
Head of the Department of Multilateral Trade  
Cooperation  
Ministry of Trade, Industry, Handicraft  
and Tourism

Mr. Mohamed Mokhtar Ould Obeid  
Customs Inspector  
Head of the Control Department  
General Administration of Customs  
Ministry of Finance

State of Palestine

Ms. Soha Abdul Rahman Awad Allah  
Chief of Cabinet of the Minister of National  
Economy  
Director-General of the International Relations  
and Economic Policy Department  
Ministry of National Economy

Ms. Manal Desouki  
Assistant Undersecretary for Industry, Commerce  
and Consumer Protection  
Ministry of National Economy

## Qatar

Ms. Salma Abdullah Al-Dossary  
International Cooperation Researcher  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Mr. Abdullah Abdulrahman Al-Durham  
Third International Cooperation Researcher  
Ministry of Commerce and Industry

## Saudi Arabia

Ms. Shahd Salah Al-Dahan  
Director of the Foreign Policy Unit

Ms. Najla Ali Al-Sabhan  
Trade Policy Specialist

Ms. Alhanouf Ali Alarjani  
International Organizations Specialist

## Sudan

Mr. Mutasim Mahmoud Makawi Ali  
Director-General of the International  
Relations Department  
Ministry of Trade and Supply

Mr. Issam Saad Allah Mirsal Hassan  
Director of the International Organizations  
Department  
Ministry of Trade and Supply

Ms. Omaima Syed Muhammad Al-Saeed  
Commercial Inspector  
General Department of Planning, Policies  
and Monitoring  
Ministry of Trade and Supply

## Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. Louay Irfan Soukar  
Office of the Assistant Minister of Economy  
for Economic Development and International  
Relations  
Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade

Mr. Yasser Jamil Rabouh  
Director of International Economic Relations  
Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade

Ms. Manal Abu Raqti  
Director of the Foreign Trade Directorate

Ms. Ghalia Mohammed Tawfiq Obeid  
Director of the Policies Directorate  
Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade

Ms. Nabila Aref Nabaa  
Director of the Planning and Statistics Department  
Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade

## Tunisia

Mr. Mohamed Jamel Elifa  
Public Interests Advisor  
Director Exceptional Grade  
Department of Cooperation with Regional  
and International Organizations  
Ministry of Trade and Exports Development

Mr. Mohamed Deldoul  
Business Leader  
Department of Cooperation with Regional  
and International Organizations  
Ministry of Trade and Exports Development

## United Arab Emirates

Shaima Al Aydarous  
Director of the Trade Negotiations Department  
Ministry of Economy

Mr. Ahmed Bin Sulaiman Al Malik  
Head of the International Organizations Division  
Trade Negotiations Department  
Ministry of Economy

## Yemen

Mr. Salem Salman Al-Wali  
Deputy Minister of Oil and Minerals  
Ministry of Industry and Trade

Mr. Ali Saleh Atef  
Undersecretary of the Ministry of Industry  
and Trade  
Ministry of Industry and Trade

Mr. Rashed Qasem Mohammed Hazeb  
Director-General of the Office of the Deputy  
Minister of Industry and Trade  
Ministry of Industry and Trade

Yemen (continued)

Mr. Nabil Mansour Al-Abbasi  
Director-General of the Office of the Minister  
of Industry and Trade  
Ministry of Industry and Trade

**B. Regional and international organizations**

League of Arab States

Dr. Bahgat Abu El Nasr  
Director General of the Arab Economic Integration  
Department

Ms. Jawaher Badr Sultan  
Second Secretary

Ms. Noura Salem Al-Nabawi

Mr. Sameh Abdel Karim  
Technical Assistant  
Department of Arab Economic Integration

Gulf Cooperation Council

Mr. Ali Abdulrahman Bin Ghadir  
Director of the Trade and Knowledge Economy  
Department

Arab Monetary Fund

Mr. Anwar Othman

Mr. Abdelkrim Ahmed Guendouz

UNDP in Arab States

Mr. Walid El-Nazhi  
Consultant for the Development of Institutional  
Trade

Arab Administrative Development Organization

Ms. Laila El Sheikh  
Acting Head of International Relations

Union of Arab Banks

Mr. Ali Awdeh  
Director of the Research Department

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