



# **UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL FOR E-COMMERCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:**

## **Towards an Action Plan for an Aid for eTrade Initiative**

**Château de Bossey, 16 – 17 February 2016**

### Abstract Program

While e-commerce is increasingly affecting the way enterprises interact among themselves, their consumers and government, research indicates that e-commerce can be a great driver of economic growth, inclusive trade, and job-creation, including at the bottom of the pyramid. Improved ICT connectivity, better legal and regulatory frameworks and the rise of new e-commerce and payment solutions are enabling more developing countries to seize opportunities from online commerce. But significant divides remain: most people and small and medium-size companies especially in the developing world have yet to use the Internet, let alone fully leverage e-commerce for economic opportunity. In light of the opportunities that e-commerce opens for growth and development, it is critical to explore ways to ensure that shift from offline to online transactions does not leave people, enterprises and countries behind.

Against this background, the workshop will bring together a small group of government representatives, international organizations, private companies and other experts to formulate concrete proposals on how to facilitate e-commerce in developing countries. The event will draw on previous experience with the Aid for Trade initiative and build on existing activities and work by relevant public and private bodies.

An important premise of this meeting is that creating an enabling environment for e-commerce requires holistic, cross-sectoral development strategies and solutions. High-quality logistics, world-class payment solutions, high Internet usage rates, legal frameworks and other factors are necessary but not sufficient for e-commerce to thrive. In many developing countries, several components need to be improved and brought together for e-commerce to blossom.

Another premise of the workshop is that the public sector will critically benefit from learning about the obstacles and opportunities faced by private sector actors engaged in e-commerce, as well as from working together with the private sector in developing solutions. As such, the meeting aims to maximize private sector input for the donor community.

**Tuesday, 16 February 2016**

Topic of the day: Opportunities and Challenges of E-commerce in Developing Countries

Château de Bossey, Conference Hall Geneva

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| 09:00-09:30 | <p><b>Welcoming Remarks</b></p> <p>Hubert René SCHILLINGER, Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva Office<br/>Joakim REITER, Deputy Secretary General, UNCTAD</p>  |
| 09:30-10:00 | <p><b>An update on e-commerce in the WTO context</b></p> <p>H.E. Alfredo SUESCUM, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Panama</p>   |
| 10:00-10:30 | <p><b>Operationalizing the “Aid for eTrade” concept</b></p> <p>Kati SUOMINEN, CEO, TradeUp Capital Fund and Nextrade Group</p>  |
| 10:30-10:50 | Coffee Break  |
| 10:50-11:50 | <p><b>Private sector views on priority areas requiring action</b></p> <p>Moderator: Nick ASHTON-HART, Independent Expert, Switzerland<br/>Roundtable with speakers from e-commerce and payment companies</p>  |
| 11:50-12:50 | <p><b>Developing country public sector views on priority areas requiring action</b></p> <p>Moderator: Sven CALLEBAUT, Advisor, Aid-for-Trade, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia and Myanmar<br/>Roundtable with government representatives from Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean</p>   |
| 12:50-14:20 | Lunch Break   |
| 14:20-14:40 | <p><b>Introduction to breakout sessions</b></p> <p>Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON, , Chief, ICT Analysis Section, UNCTAD</p>  |
| 14:40-16:00 | <p><b>Sectoral breakout sessions Part I</b> (discussion leaders in brackets)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- E-commerce readiness and strategy assessments (Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON)</li> <li>- ICT infrastructure and services (Philippa BIGGS)</li> <li>- Trade logistics and trade facilitation (Paul DONOHOE)</li> <li>- Payment solutions (Usman AHMED)</li> <li>- Legal and regulatory frameworks (Cécile BARAYRE)</li> <li>- E-commerce skills development (James HOWE)</li> </ul> |

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| 16:00-16:15 | Coffee/Tea Break   |
| 16:15-17:30 | <b>Sectoral breakout sessions Part II</b>                              |
| 17:30-18:00 | <b>Conclusions from Day 1</b><br>Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON<br>Kati SUOMINEN |
| From 18:00  | Reception/Dinner   |

## Wednesday, 17 February 2016

Topic of the day: Towards an Action Plan

Château de Bossey, Conference Hall Geneva

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| 09:00-10:30 | <b>Bringing it all together: Reports from the breakout sessions followed by discussion</b><br>Discussion leaders of the breakout session<br>Moderator: Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON  |
| 10:30-10:45 | Coffee Break   |
| 10:45-12:15 | <b>Unlocking the Potential of E-commerce - The role of development partners</b><br><b>What can each do internally? Why and how should donors work together to catalyze e-commerce? How can public-private partnerships be leveraged? What is the best common vehicle to accomplish joint objectives?</b><br>Roundtable discussion with donors and international organizations.<br>Moderator: Christiane KRAUS, Chief Coordinator, Enhanced Integrated Framework, Switzerland |
| 12:15-13:45 | Lunch Break  |
| 13:45-15:30 | <b>Towards an Action Plan for an Aid for eTrade Initiative:</b><br>General discussion on the first draft text<br>Moderator: Taffere TESFACHEW, Acting Director, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD   |

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| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee/Tea Break  |
| 16:00-17:00 | <b>Towards an Action Plan for an Aid for eTrade Initiative, <i>continued</i></b>            |
| 17:00-18:00 | <b>Wrap-up and next steps</b><br>Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON                                       |
| 18:00       | <b>Closing remarks by the organizers</b><br>Hubert René SCHILLINGER<br>Torbjörn FREDRIKSSON |