Trade Facilitation UK Statement: Dedicated Session on Capacity Building

* Aid for Trade (AfT) is a central pillar of the UK’s approach to economic development.
* Our objective is to support developing countries to play an active role in the global trading system and to use trade as an instrument for growth, job creation and poverty alleviation.
* A key part of our aid for trade support is dedicated to trade facilitation projects which help developing countries implement reforms relevant to the implementation of the TFA (Trade Facilitation Agreement).
* A key part of our aid for trade support is spent on trade facilitation projects which help developing countries implement reforms relevant to the implementation of the TFA.
* As well as bilateral and regional programmes such as TMEA – which began its life as a DFID project – the UK funds a Capacity Building Programme to support implementation of the TFA through the WCO Mercator Programme and the UNCTAD Empowerment Programme for National Trade Facilitation Committees.
* A recent positive example from the programme is in Namibia, where capacity building on National Trade Facilitation Committees has resulted in a Trade Facilitation Roadmap for implementing TFA measures. During the workshop, the NTFC of Namibia was formally launched with a mandate to lead the country’s trade facilitation efforts and the implementation process of the country’s trade facilitation obligations under the TFA.
* The UK also provides funding for the ‘Support for the Implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement’ or SITFA programme. The aim of the programme is to help reduce trade costs and waiting times at the border, and in the long-term to contribute to inclusive growth.
* The programme has been working with four main implementing partners, the World Bank Trade Facilitation Support Programme, the Global Alliance on Trade Facilitation, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility and the Standards and Trade Development Facility.
* A good example of where we are seeing positive impact on the ground through this programme is in Vietnam, where the Trade Facilitation Support Programme has helped launch the Vietnam Trade Information Portal. This portal enables access to all cross-border trade regulation information in one place.
* Making all of Vietnam’s regulatory requirements for import and export available to the private sector in an easily accessible, transparent, and searchable format, is a key step toward a simpler, faster, and lower-cost business environment.
* The UK is committed to working with partners around the world to build on the good progress that has been made and target the specific needs of developing countries for trade facilitation.
* Thank you.