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# **WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION: TRADE FACILITATION ASSESSMENT PROJECT**

**Report on Nigeria Trade Facilitation Self Assessment**

**April 7-11, 2008  
Abuja, Nigeria**

**Paul Fekete  
Chief of Party  
USAID Trade Facilitation and Capacity Building Project "FASTrade"**

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**Submitted by:  
Booz Allen Hamilton**

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## **DISCLAIMER**

**The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.**

The WTO Trade Facilitation National Self Assessment of Nigeria's Needs and Priorities was held in Abuja, Nigeria April 7-11 at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel.



## Background

The WTO's Trade Facilitation Negotiating Group, operating under the auspices of the WTO Doha Round negotiations in Geneva, is implementing a *Trade Facilitation National Needs Assessment Project* under the auspices of the Trade Facilitation Trust Fund. These self assessments are intended to provide support to WTO members, particularly developing and least-developed countries, with respect to their trade facilitation needs and priorities, and to the cost implications of proposed measures being considered in the Trade Facilitation negotiations. The importance of carrying out a national self assessment of needs and priorities has been identified in several written proposals and by many Members as a crucial step with respect to the negotiations and the implementation of any final result.

There are already a large number of requests from WTO members for technical assistance under this proposed self assessment program, with the demand already exceeding the capacity of the WTO Secretariat. As a result, the WTO has been seeking support from WTO developed country members to support this initiative. The US Government (USTR/USAID) has offered in-kind support to this needs assessment project. USAID's Trade Facilitation and Capacity Building Project "FASTrade" has been identified as the vehicle through which this assistance will be offered as FASTrade's mandate, from its inception, has been to improve trade facilitation efforts around the world.

## The Self Assessment in Nigeria

The USAID team supporting the WTO's effort in Nigeria was led by FASTrade's Chief of Party Paul Fekete, who served as lead facilitator. He was assisted by Mr. Roy Skårsllette (Senior Customs Representative to the WCO from the Directorate of Customs and Excises, Norway), Robert Ireland from the World Customs Organization, and Claire Avett (Trade Specialist III), also from the FASTrade project.

### Advance Meetings with Nigerian Officials

Although the assessment itself was scheduled to take place during the week of April 9 – 11, the team arrived in Abuja on April 3, 2008 so that preparatory meetings could be held with Nigerian stakeholders on April 4<sup>th</sup>. The schedule of meetings (Appendix) offered the team the opportunity to talk with Nigerian government and private sector officials to reinforce the importance of the trade facilitation self assessment and to encourage as broad a participation as possible.

Mr. Adamu Abdulhahid from Nigeria's Ministry of Commerce and Industry served as the coordinator for the assessment in Abuja given that the primary contact, Mr. A. K. Usman, was on a long-term training course at the WTO in Geneva. Mr. Adamu arranged meetings with stakeholders from both the public and private sectors for Friday morning and individual meetings with several key Ministries in the afternoon (see Appendix for schedule). The team's visits on Friday were important because they provided further information to stakeholders about the forthcoming assessment and allowed the team to explain how the assessment would be carried out. The team's meeting with the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) was of particular value, because, despite the fact that Customs plays a key role with respect to trade facilitation issues, officials at NCS were not fully apprised of the details of the self-assessment and their involvement would have been minimal had the team not emphasized the importance of their involvement.

Unlike in East Africa, where it had been repeatedly necessary to encourage the local coordinator to invite stakeholders from both the government and private sector, we discovered that in Nigeria there has been great awareness of the need to improve trade facilitation. Several initiatives had been undertaken recently to highlight the issue, including a well publicized initiative by Nigeria's President Umaru Yar'Adua calling for 48 hour clearance of goods at Nigeria's ports. As a result, the WTO Trade Facilitation Self Assessment was well-timed to take advantage of the heightened awareness of trade facilitation issues, and there was substantial interest in participating in the workshop. This turned out to be a mixed blessing in the sense that budgetary



**Ms. Latanya Mapp Frett (USAID)  
addressing the opening session.**

constraints allowed only for 40 participants to be accommodated at the conference while the actual turnout was in excess of 100 individuals. Fortunately, the Nigeria Shipper's Council, a cosponsor of the self assessment, was able to step in and provide some additional funding to cover increased costs.

### **The Trade Facilitation Self Assessment**

The self assessment workshop commenced on Monday at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel (the schedule is attached in the Appendix). The opening ceremonies included opening comments by Mrs. Elizabeth Emuren, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Latanya Mapp Frett, USAID/Nigeria; and Mrs. D. Shall-Holma, Nigerian Shipper's Council which was a cosponsor of the event. (Opening statements are in the Appendix.) Additional opening welcoming remarks were also made by Mr. Badiji A. Abikoye, Director of Trade, Federal Ministry of Trade and Commerce.



**[left to right] Mr. Paul Fekete, COP FASTrade; Ms. Latanya Mapp Frett, USAID; Ms. Elizabeth Emuren, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry; and Mr. B.A. Abikoye, Director of Trade, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry at the opening ceremony.**

Following the welcoming remarks, FASTrade COP and Lead Facilitator Paul Fekete gave a presentation focusing on the WTO, the status of the trade facilitation negotiations in Geneva, their importance to Nigeria, and the link between the self assessment and the ongoing negotiating process on trade facilitation. Nigeria's Geneva representative,

Suleman Audu, offered additional remarks and pointed out that Nigeria's role in the trade facilitation negotiations has been minimal, largely because of the absence of direction and input from the capital, something he hoped would change as a result of the trade facilitation self assessment and the increased awareness that would result among Nigerian stakeholders.

After the lunch break, COP Paul Fekete provided training on the WTO's assessment methodology which would be used to carry out Nigeria's self assessment. Once the presentation had been completed, the self assessment commenced, with Nigerian participants divided into four working groups to begin the process of completing the assessment. Given the large number of attendees, the individual groups were larger than has customarily been the case. In addition, because planning had been based on the participation of approximately 40 individuals, there were insufficient copies of documents for everyone. This was remedied by asking groups to share documents for the duration of the assessment along with the reassurance that at the end of the week, each participant would receive a CD ROM disk which would have soft copies of the materials.



**[left to right] Mr. Y.S. Labaran, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Mr. B.A. Abikoye, Director of Trade, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry; Paul Fekete, FASTrade COP.**

The opening session and the WTO Trade Facilitation Self Assessment received extensive Nigerian press coverage as did USAID's support for the initiative. (See Appendix for press articles.)

Most Nigerian government agencies with border control or trade facilitation responsibilities were represented during the course of the week's discussions. Some, like

the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) which serves to oversee SPS issues, was only able to attend for two of the workshop days.

Private sector participation was extensive. The Organized Private Sector (OPS) which consists of the National Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industries Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), and the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA) was represented. Other private sector entities, with a lower level of formal recognition by the government were also in attendance, such as the Importers Association of Nigeria. Individual companies such as Maersk Nigeria was also represented, and added significantly to an understanding of challenges facing trade facilitation. (The complete list of participants can be found in the Appendix.)



**FASTrade's Claire Avett (standing) facilitating Group I.**

One of the significant challenges during the assessment was guiding the discussion and trying to keep the self assessment moving forward. Based on the comments from participants, there had been limited opportunity for stakeholders interested in trade facilitation to gather together, despite the general acknowledgement that the country faced many challenges in this area. As a result, the initial stages of the assessment devolved into charges and counter charges among stakeholders seemingly most interested in assigning blame for the poor state of trade facilitation in Nigeria. With continued

encouragement, the tone of the workshop improved to the point where most, if not all participants recognized that the workshop offered the opportunity to appropriately identify trade facilitation constraints and start developing responses to the various issues. By the end of the workshop, there appeared to be some optimism that with continued focus on trade facilitation issues, and with a commitment of political will from senior government officials, progress could be made to improve Nigeria's trade facilitation environment.

Despite the large number of attendees, technical expertise related to many of the trade facilitation issues was not always available or information provided by different participants conflicted with each other. Thus, it was difficult to complete elements of the assessment, and/or to get the level of detail desirable for completing it in a comprehensive fashion. Those who were in attendance were dedicated to completing the document as thoroughly as possible, but given the breadth of issues touched upon, it was clear that additional technical expertise would need to be summoned to complete aspects of the assessment.

Most of the self assessment was completed by mid-Wednesday in the four individual working groups. Some groups moved more quickly, while others had more difficult issues with which to contend or engaged in more debate on various matters. Group IV, facilitated by Roy Skårslette, was able to complete their work on transit issues in short order and was able to provide assistance to the other groups, which were moving more slowly.



**Robert Ireland facilitating the work of Group III.**

current status of a number of issues in Nigeria—about which there was vociferous disagreement—as well as the wisdom of accepting a number of elements of the trade facilitation negotiations.

Once the individual groups' work was completed, all participants reconvened in plenary session on Wednesday afternoon to review the work of the individual groups and to provide additional input on issues where one or another government ministry official had not been a part of a group. The plenary session was also used to debate the

There were a number of substantive matters that caused difficulty during the process. Stakeholders found there to be overlapping responsibility among various Nigerian agencies. For example, even representatives of the Standard Organization of Nigeria and NAFDAC could not agree on their respective areas of jurisdiction with respect to SPS and TBT matters. Issues related to regional trade facilitation were largely set aside because of uncertainties among stakeholders about what level of harmonization would result from measures being undertaken within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and their impact on Nigeria. In addition, two issues caused great controversy during the assessment: 1) pre-shipment inspection (PSI) and, 2) the phasing out of mandatory use of customs brokers.

In the case of PSI, the Nigerian government has taken the official position that requirements for PSI have already been eliminated. Although a variety of companies are well-known to be operating in Nigeria, including, SGS, Cotecna, Cobalt Inspection Services, Global Scan, and Intertek, the government characterizes their work as Destination Inspection. During the self assessment, Group III's deliberations over the



**Roy Skårslette facilitating the work of Group IV**

standard (which included two representatives of the Nigerian Customs Service) led them to conclude that Nigeria was not in compliance with the PSI issue given the more expansive view of PSI services within the WTO and WCO. This prompted an official from the Finance Ministry to insist that PSI requirements had, in fact, been eliminated and even resulted in a

special visit from a more senior Finance Ministry official who made a special appeal to the workshop to declare that PSI was no longer a requirement for Nigerian traders. Notwithstanding these declarations, private sector participants, in particular, were adamant that PSI was still in place and should be stated as such in the final self assessment report.

With respect to the phasing out of mandatory use of customs brokers, Group III indicated that Nigeria was already in compliance with that standard, given that Nigerian statute allows for self-clearance. There were numerous expressions of disagreement with that position, and conflicting information about statutory requirements in this area. Private sector representatives refused to accept the view that Nigeria was already in compliance

with the standard, stating that while perhaps a legal possibility, self clearance was never available in practice to individual traders.

On both of these issues, debate during the plenary session continued for quite some time. Appeals were made to the facilitators for a judgment but the team responded by insisting that this was a matter for Nigerians to decide. In the end, Nigeria's Ambassador to the WTO, Fred Agah, made the recommendation that these matters be set aside and a commitment be made by government to review these issues.

Once the review process was completed, the plenary session turned, on Thursday, to the preparation of a PowerPoint presentation to be made to senior officials who would be in attendance on Friday morning. (The PowerPoint presentation is included in the Appendix.) The presentation summarizes the work of the assessment participants and identifies major barriers in the trade facilitation area, and Nigeria's needs and priorities for technical assistance. The presentation was also a means by which to encourage Nigerian government and private stakeholders to continue the process started with the workshop so as to further refine Nigeria's understanding of and participation in the WTO Trade Facilitation process.



**[left to right] Robert Ireland, Facilitator, WCO; Suleman Audu, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the WTO; Paul Fekete, Lead Facilitator, USAID FASTrade; Fred Agah, Nigeria's Ambassador to the WTO; Roy Skårslette, Facilitator, Directorate of Customs and Excise, Norway.**

The closing ceremonies were held Friday morning, with the summary presentation, made to the senior officials in attendance, and the distribution of certificates (see Appendix) to the workshop participants. Officials were present from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Nigerian Customs Service, Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Immigration Service, Nigerian Police, the Standard Organization of Nigeria, and the Shipper's Council. After the presentation was made by workshop participants, there was general agreement that Nigeria needed to continue the process of self assessment that had commenced with the workshop. There was also a consensus that the recommendations of the participants should be adopted. The recommendations included:

- *There is a need for political will to be committed to trade facilitation issues*
- *A mechanism should be established that will allow for more regular consultations on trade facilitation issues facing Nigeria's stakeholders*
- *The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry should convene a dialogue on unresolved regulatory and policy issues*
- *Lead agencies should take their trade facilitation responsibilities seriously in implementing their assigned tasks and sufficient resources should be devoted to these activities*

There was also a commitment to take the following early actions.

- *The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry will share the outcome of the self assessment with all the stakeholders—particularly those who were not present—and request their input*
- *The Ministry will convene another forum to finalize the self assessment within [4-6 weeks]*
- *The Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry will take a memo to the Federal Executive Council regarding the issues and recommendations that have been made related to trade facilitation*

## Appendix

### **Advance Meetings: Trade Facilitation Needs Assessment, Abuja, Nigeria, Friday April 4, 2008.**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Name/Institution</b>
10:00 – 12:00	Meeting with Government and Privates Sector Stakeholders
1:00 – 2:00	Federal Ministry of Finance Mrs. Margaret Olowu
2:30 – 3:00	Federal Ministry of Transportation Dr. Tunji A. Bolade and Mr. T. K. Kasali
3:30 – 4:00	Nigeria Customs Service Mr. A. K. Haliru
4:15 – 4:35	Standard Organization of Nigeria Mrs. Toyin Idowu



**WTO Trade Facilitation  
National Self Assessment of Nigeria's  
Needs and Priorities**



**April 7-11, 2008  
Abuja Sheraton Hotel  
Abuja, Nigeria**

**DAY 1: Monday, 7 April**

9:00 – 9:30 Opening Ceremony  
 - Mrs. E.B. P. Emuren, Permanent Secretary, *Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry*  
 - Ms. Latanya Mapp Frett, *USAID/Nigeria Mission Director*  
 - Mr. Paul Fekete, *Booz Allen Hamilton/USAID*

9:30 – 9:45 Introductions of Participants and International Officials

9:45 – 10:45 Session 1: Introduction to the WTO trade facilitation negotiations  
 - Negotiation mandate  
 - GATT Articles  
 - Members' proposals

*Speakers Mr. Paul Fekete Booz Allen Hamilton/USAID  
Mr. Suleman Adebayo Audu, Nigeria Geneva Representative*

10:45 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:00 Session 2: Introduction to the Needs Assessment Process and Tool  
 - Introduction to the self assessment tool

*Speaker: Mr. Paul Fekete, Booz Allen Hamilton/USAID*

12:00 – 12:30 Session 3: Self Assessment Of Needs And Priorities

Participants will work in working groups that contain representatives of each agency and private sector for completion of the needs assessment using the Needs Assessment Guide and Tool (TN/TF/W/143). Each working group will be assigned certain trade facilitation proposals from the Guide.

*Facilitators: Mr. Paul Fekete, Booz Allen Hamilton/USAID; Mr. Robert Ireland, WCO; Mr. Roy Skårslette, Norway Customs*

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch Break

1:30 – 5:30 Session 4: Self Assessment Of Needs And Priorities

**DAY 2: Tuesday, 8 April**

9:00 – 5:30 Self Assessment Of Needs And Priorities

**DAY 3: Wednesday, 9 April**

9:00 – 5:30 Self Assessment Of Needs And Priorities

**DAY 4: Thursday, 10 April**

9:00 – 12:30 Self Assessment Of Needs And Priorities

Participants continue work on needs assessment. As soon as each group completes their assigned proposals they should begin review of the assessments completed by the other groups.

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30 – 5:30 Report Preparation

Participants will review the results of the needs assessment and determine the conclusion of the results. These conclusions should be prepared in a PowerPoint presentation for the final reporting session.

**DAY 5: Friday, 11 April**

9:00 – 10:30 Report Preparation

10:30 – 11:00 Evaluation and Feedback on the workshop

11:00 – 12:30 Reporting Session

- Report is made to high level officials
- Discussion and feedback on findings
- Distribution of certificates

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch



**WTO Trade Facilitation  
National Self Assessment of Nigeria's  
Needs and Priorities**



**April 7-11, 2008  
Abuja Sheraton Hotel  
Abuja, Nigeria**

**OPENING STATEMENT**

Paul Fekete  
Lead Facilitator

Honorable Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

- It is a great pleasure for me and my colleagues to be here today in Abuja as facilitators of the national trade facilitation needs assessment workshop for Nigeria. I am joined by Robert Ireland from the WCO, Roy Skårslette from Norwegian Customs, and Claire Avett, from USAID's FASTrade Project.
- Speaking on behalf of both the WTO and USAID, I want to express our thanks for being invited to participate in your self-assessment of needs and priorities in the WTO trade facilitation negotiations.
- Since trade facilitation became a part of the WTO Doha Negotiations in 2004, it has been witness to a very active participation from the wide WTO membership, now comprising 151 Members. This has included not only developed countries, but also developing countries and even LDCs who share the collective interest to lower transaction costs for their traders and help expedite the clearance and release of goods across borders.
- It is important to mention that any future legal commitments in the area of trade facilitation will be linked to each country's implementation capacity. LDCs in particular will only be required to undertake commitments to the extent consistent with their individual development, financial and institutional capabilities.

- As called for in the trade facilitation negotiating mandate, the self assessment of trade facilitation needs and priorities is a very important element in the trade facilitation negotiations, not only to help developing countries and LDCs identify their needs and priorities vis-à-vis the proposed trade facilitation measures, but also to enhance their participation in the trade facilitation negotiations in Geneva.
- Many Members have stressed the need for support in conducting their self assessment. For that reason, the WTO Secretariat has developed an extensive program of technical assistance that is funded by WTO Members through a special trust fund. We are here, with USAID's support this week to assist you by facilitating your work as you assess your needs.
- The main objectives of this five day workshop are:
  - To help Nigeria identify its technical assistance and capacity building support needs and priorities to implement WTO Members' proposals on how to clarify and improve GATT Articles V, VIII, and X.
  - To help Nigeria determine its national negotiating position on each of the proposed measures.
  - To help maintain a national inter-agency dialogue among the stakeholders on trade facilitation.
- This week, we bring together Nigerian officials from a variety of ministries and government entities as well as from the private sector to carry out the national self assessment. Let me stress that this is not a normal training seminar or diagnostic mission, but rather a workshop where all of you will be undertaking the actual assessment. I and my colleagues are here only as facilitators to guide the process. At the end, this will be a Nigerian product.
- For those senior officials who will be unable to stay with us throughout the week, let me invite you to return on Friday, at 2pm, when the results of the self assessment will be reported out and next steps will be considered.

- It is our hope that after this week, you will continue to work regularly with each other in order to provide the necessary support for your negotiators in Geneva as the negotiations progress.
- We are confident that with your active participation and cooperation, we will bring this week's efforts to a success.

Thank you.

**Talking Points**  
**WTO Trade Facilitation**  
**National Self Assessment of Nigeria's Needs and Priorities**  
**April 7, 2008**  
**Abuja Nigeria**

*Ms Latanya Mapp Frelt*

Protocol:

Welcome to the WTO Trade Facilitation: National Self Assessment of Nigeria's Needs and Priorities; which is coming up at a very appropriate time. The government of President Umaru Yar'Adua has a seven point agenda that seem acceptable to various sections of the economy. There is a trade policy reforms initiative that has been reported, which promises to boost activities in the Trade and investment Sector. I have gone through "Doing Business 2008", a publication to the World Bank, which compared trade and investment regulations in 178 countries and Nigeria was ranked 108. It is therefore apparent that we need to examine the situation critically in order to suggest specific policy reforms that could make Nigeria one of 20 top-most economies in the world by the year 2020.

It is my pleasure to be part of this very important event in which participants will receive tools and kits that will equip them for an exercise which will definitely benefit the Nigerian economy and by extension the welfare of the citizenry. The USAID has packaged this project to provide assistance to countries that recognized the importance of understanding the technicalities required at WTO negotiations and the desire to strengthen their position, through a self assessment of the needs and priorities.

Participants have their expectations from this exercise and I hope these will be realized. However, we would like to encourage this to be a two-way flow of information between the facilitators and the participants. Nobody could claim to know about the intricacies of your trade in Nigeria more than the stakeholders. There are certain things that are of common knowledge, such as tariffs, the charges, the general cost of administrations, and perhaps the weaknesses of the infrastructural support.

I am pleased to announce that USAID Nigeria will support the Government of Nigeria to conduct full assessment of the trade sector in order to bring it to the standard of international best practice. The outcome of the assessment will be used in designing our proposed Trade and Investment Capacity



**OPENING SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/CEO NIGERIAN SHIPPERS' COUNCIL (NSC) AT THE NATIONAL SEMINAR ON TRADE FACILITATION ORGANISED BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, NSC AND USAID FROM 7<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2008 IN ABUJA**

The Honourable Minister of Commerce and Industry

The Honourable Minister of Transportation

The Chairperson USAID in Nigeria

Permanent Secretaries in the two Ministries

Directors and top officials of the Ministries

Chief Executives of Parastatals and Agencies

Representatives of all stakeholders

Ladies and Gentlemen of the press

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the opening of this important event. This workshop is coming at a very auspicious time in the affairs of our nation as it underscores the determination of the present administration to bring the nation into the league of the top developed economies in the world by the year 2020.

**OPENING ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER  
OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, ENGR.CHARLES C. UGWUH, OON  
AT THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION NATIONAL SELF ASSESSMENT  
OF NIGERIA'S NEEDS AND PRIORITIES WORKSHOP, SHERATON  
HOTEL & TOWERS, ABUJA, 7<sup>TH</sup> – 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2008**

The Honourable Minister of State for Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Abuja,

Distinguished Senators,

Honourable Members of House of Representatives,

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Abuja,

The Mission Director, Shawn L. Cromer, USAID, Nigeria,

The Team Facilitator, Mr. Paul Fekete, BAH/USAID,

The WTO Representative,

The Chief Executive, Nigerian Shippers Council,

The Directors, Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Abuja,

Distinguished Resource persons,

Other Invited Guest,

Gentlemen of the Press,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to declare open this Important Workshop on WTO Trade Facilitation National Needs Self Assessment for Nigeria. Your overwhelming presence at this occasion is a clear demonstration of the shared vision and collective resolution of this Administration to work together with the Organized Private Sector (OPS) to



## >>WTO: Nigeria, Others Seek Commitments In Trade Negotiations

Nigeria and other member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are in deep discussions with the authorities of the organization with the aim of enjoying the full benefits of the current Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN).

The minister of commerce and industry, Engr. Charles Ugwu, who disclosed this yesterday, at WTO Trade Facilitation National Self-Assessment of Nigeria's Needs and Priorities Workshop, held at Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Abuja, also added that to realize the benefits the affected member states, especially developing countries, have to such new commitments in the area of trade facilitation.

According to the minister who was represented on the occasion by the permanent secretary of his ministry, Mrs Elizabeth Umoru, the continuous flow in the volume of goods and services traded globally, due to incensitization and computerisation of business transactions, has made urgent the need to make the rules more uniform, user friendly and efficient.

While maintaining that the aim of the negotiations is to further expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, such as goods in transit and to promote technical assistance and support for capacity building in the area under review, Ugwu stressed, "It would, therefore, interest you to note that Nigeria and other members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), are negotiating new commitments in the area of trade facilitation under the current Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN)".

He further said that part of the aim is to assist Nigerian businesses to have their goods and services expedited and cleared via simple customs formalities and border procedures, expressing the hope that the outcome of the needs assessment would be able to assist the country to negotiate more effectively on technical assistance, special and differential treatment as well as on trade facilitation measures that would form the final results of the negotiations.

Such results, according to the minister, are expected to identify, among others, measures currently under negotiation in which Nigeria is already in compliance; measures that would need delayed application or other special and differential treatment; and measures capable of resulting in technical assistance and capacity building.

Meanwhile, the lead facilitator, representing United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Mr. Paul Fekete, in his opening statement, noted that many member-states had stressed the need for support in conducting their self assessment.

He added that due to this reason, the WTO secretariat has developed an extensive programme of technical assistance that is funded by the organization members through a special trust fund, stressing, "we are here with USAID's support this week to assist you by facilitating your work as you assess your needs".

According to Fekete, the aim of the five-day workshop include, helping Nigeria identify its technical assistance and capacity building support needs and prioritise to implement WTO members' proposals on how to clarify and improve GATT Articles V, III, and X.

He added that helping the country to determine its national negotiating position on each of the proposed measures, and to maintain national inter-agency dialogue among the stakeholders on trade facilitation, are other key objectives of the forum.

Similarly, Mr. Latsaga Maphish of WTO Trade Facilitation Unit told the participants that USAID Nigeria is pleased to support the Nigerian government to conduct full assessment of the trade sector with a view to bringing it to the required standard of global best practice, emphasising that the outcome of the assessment would be used in designing the WTO proposed Trade and Investment Capacity (TIC).

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Tuesday, April 08, 2008

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Tuesday, April 08, 2008

**WTO, USAID back Nigeria on trade***From Emeka Anuforo, Abuja*

**THE** World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have joined forces with the Federal Government towards enhancing the country's ability to negotiate more effectively at international fora, particularly in the areas of technical assistance, special and differential treatment.

Both bodies are also supporting the Nigerian Government to conduct a full assessment of the trade sector in order to ensure it meets international best practice standards.

The WTO and USAID said they were convinced that this would bring about rapid and sustained improvements in the trade and investment sector, as well as generate employment and alleviate poverty.

To facilitate the process, the WTO and USAID began a self-assessment workshop on Nigeria's needs and priorities yesterday in Abuja.

The workshop brought together Nigerian officials from a variety of ministries, government agencies, and the private sector. The workshop also intends to help maintain a national inter-agency dialogue among stakeholders on trade facilitation.

Speaking at the programme, a representative of the USAID Mission Director in Nigeria, Miss Latanya Mappfreh, stressed the need to critically examine the nation's trade and investment sector and proffer specific policy reforms that could make Nigeria one of the 20 top economies in the world by the year 2020.

She noted that the sector had the capacity to reduce Nigeria's overdependence on oil as a source of foreign exchange earnings.

The lead facilitator of the WTO Trade Facilitation Programme for Nigeria, Mr. Paul Fekete, in his presentation maintained that the self-assessment of trade facilitation needs and priorities was a very important element in the negotiations, not only to help developing countries and less developed countries identify what their economies needed, but also to enhance their participation in the trade facilitation negotiations in Geneva.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 8 2008

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**Nigeria, others negotiate new commitments in trade facilitation -Ugwuh**

By ATIKU S. SARKI, Abuja

The minister of commerce and industry, Engr. Charles C. Ugwu has said that Nigeria and other members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are negotiating new commitments in the area of trade facilitation under the current Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN).

According to him, the aim of the negotiations is to further expedite the movement, release and clear goods including goods in transit and to enhance technical assistance and support for capacity building as well as assist Nigerian businesses to have their goods cleared through simple customs and border procedures.

The minister disclosed this at the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation National Self Assessment of Nigeria's Needs and Priorities Workshop yesterday in Abuja.

He said that this was designed to identify the needs and priorities for Nigeria in the area of trade facilitation.

The workshop which was facilitated by the WTO secretariat in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), he said, is working together to support Nigeria's participation in the WTO negotiations on trade facilitation under the Doha Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiation.

The minister who was represented by the permanent secretary of the ministry, Mrs. Elizabeth Berudicta Umoren said Nigeria as a signatory to WTO remains strongly committed to the principles and objectives of the multilateral trade system through the pursuit of liberalized trade and dynamic economic policies.

In the pursuit of these commitments, Engr. Ugwu said that they must reflect on the opportunities as well the challenges facing the developing economies of countries like ours particularly with respect to the role of the WTO in shaping international economic relations and ensuring an open international trading system for equitable distribution of trading opportunities to our countries and people of the world.

Engr. Charles while assuring that Nigerians are determined to remain steadfast in their commitment to the objectives of trade facilitation under the WTO guidelines, also assured that Nigeria will continue to support concrete proposals that would produce the necessary reforms to address existing imbalances in ensuring that our economic development aspirations are enhanced, protected and sustained.

Earlier in her opening speech, the Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), Mrs. D. Shail Holma had observed that the workshop was coming at a time when the present administration was determined to bring the nation into the league of top developed economies in the world by the year 2020.

The executive secretary said that the volume of international trade has grown rapidly in recent years and the speed of transaction has become an essential element in competitiveness.

According to Holma, the problems contributing toward this dismal state of trade practice include unnecessary and excessive data and documentation requirements, lack of transparency of customs, excessive clearance times, lack of coordination and the absence of modern techniques.

While appealing to all participants at the workshop to avail themselves of the opportunity provided by the workshop to enlighten public on the subject matter involved, the NSC Chief Executive Officer also implored them to contribute ideas and suggestions that will assist in engendering increased level of trade facilitation for Nigeria.

In his remark, the USAID Nigeria Mission Director, Mr. Paul Fekete said that the self-assessment of trade facilitation needs and priorities are very important elements in the trade facilitation negotiations, not only to help developing countries but also to enhance their participation in the trade facilitation negotiation in Geneva. Mr. Fekete explained that the WTO secretariat has developed an expensive programme of technical assistance that is funded by WTO members through a special trust fund.

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**WTO Trade Facilitation  
National Self Assessment of Nigeria's  
Needs and Priorities**



**April 7-11, 2008  
Abuja Sheraton Hotel  
Abuja, Nigeria**

**CLOSING STATEMENT**

Paul Fekete  
Lead Facilitator

Honorable Guests  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

- It has been a great pleasure for us to be here this week as facilitators of the national trade facilitation needs assessment workshop for Nigeria. Speaking on behalf of both the WTO and USAID, I'd like to thank my colleagues, Robert Ireland, Roy Skårslette, and Claire Avett for their support throughout the workshop. In particular I would like to thank the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for its support of the workshop. I would also like to single out and thank Suleman Audu and Adamu Abdulhahid for all the work they have done in support of this effort.
- We have appreciated your warm hospitality, your hard work, and your commitment to making this assessment a success. At the opening session, we cautioned you that this would be a workshop of a different nature, and you have all met and exceeded the challenge through your commitment and wholehearted participation in the assessment.
- When we started the assessment, we indicated that the main objectives would be to:
  - Help Nigeria identify its technical assistance and capacity building needs and priorities in relation to implementation of WTO Members' proposals on how to clarify and improve GATT Articles V, VIII, and X.
  - Help Nigeria determine its national negotiating position on each of the proposed measures.

- Help maintain a national inter-agency dialogue among the stakeholders on trade facilitation.

In each of these areas, the participants of the assessment have met or exceeded the objectives that were laid out at the commencement of the effort.

- Sadly, we will be leaving Nigeria, and so the ongoing responsibility for continuing the national dialog on trade facilitation issues falls to all of you. We hope that the decisions reached during this workshop with respect to the way forward will guide you and will serve to provide the necessary support for your negotiators in Geneva.

Thank you.



## National Self-Assessment of Trade Facilitation Negotiation Needs and Priorities for Nigeria

**Integrated Registration List**  
**April 15, 2008**  
 (Click to open contact list)



NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT LIST OF PARTICIPANTS  
 FOR COUNTRY: Nigeria  
 DATE: April, 7<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> 2008

(Use if complete list not otherwise available. You may want to have sign in every day if participants change frequently but there is no need to repeat contact information. Please send to the WTO with the participant evaluation)

*Please initial on each day of attendance*

S/N	NAME	AGENCY	CONTACT INFORMATION	Attendance				
				Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
1	Funmi Oluigbemi	Federal Ministry of Commerce & Industry	Address: Old Secretariat Area 1, FCT Abuja, (Room 216, Trade Dept.) Phone: +2348033456111 Fax: E-mail: funi2009ng@yahoo.com					
2	Edike, E.C.B.	Nig. Customs Service	Address: 29, Ware House Road, Apapa, Lagos Phone: 08033377070 Fax: E-mail: eponvici@yahoo.com					
3	Muhu, I. M	Nig. Customs Service	Address: Wuse Zone 11, Abuja Phone: 08033216999 Fax: E-mail: mimshworld@yahoo.com					

# WTO Trade Facilitation Self Assessment of Needs – Nigeria

Needs and Priorities  
in the WTO  
Trade Facilitation  
Negotiations

Workshop  
*Abuja, Nigeria*  
*April 7–11, 2008*



(Click on graphic to open PowerPoint Presentation)

# **THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

hereby acknowledges the participation of:

in the

**National Self-Assessment of Trade Facilitation Negotiation Needs and  
Priorities for Nigeria**

presented by the WTO in cooperation with USAID

**Abuja, Nigeria  
April 7 – 11, 2008**



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