Simplifying Trade Processes for Kenya's Competitiveness

For Immediate Release

Single Window gains momentum as more Government Agencies Cut-Off manual Systems

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The implementation of the National Electronic Single Window System in Kenya dubbed Kenya TradeNet System has gained momentum with more Government Agencies who issue shipment permits transitioning from their old (legacy) Systems and manual processes into electronic processing of trade documents through the Kenya TradeNet System, according to KenTrade Chief Executive Officer Mr. Alex Kabuga.

Mr. Kabuga said that he was encouraged by the support and commitment by Partner Government Agencies (PGA) to transition (Cut – Off) from their respective Systems to the Kenya TradeNet System adding that this was is in line with the government strategy of automating of international trade documents to enhance efficiency.

"The process of integrating the Kenya TradeNet System with various systems of government agencies and uptake by users since its official launch in May 2014 is progressing well with stakeholders already benefiting from implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System" he said.

He noted that the feedback received from various stakeholders indicate that traders and government agencies using the system are already realizing some benefits from using the Kenya TradeNet System. He cited the benefits such as enhanced efficiency and transparency as a result of reduced paperwork, less movements from office to office to make payments and getting government approvals from different government agencies among others.

Among the partner government agencies he mentioned whose systems have been integrated with the Kenya TradeNet System include the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Kenya and Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS). Integration with systems of other Partner Government Agencies such as AFFA-Tea Directorate, AFFA-Horticultural Directorate and Port Health Services is ongoing. To date, over 25 PGAs are using the System.

To ensure that other partner government agencies undertake smooth and quicker transition from their Systems to the Kenya TradeNet, a team from KenTrade led by the CEO has been visiting PGAs agencies who are yet to fully transition to the Kenya TradeNet System to discuss and agree on a cut – off date to ensure full utilization of the System. During the visits, Mr. Kabuga was accompanied by General Manager Operations Amos Wangora, Corporation Secretary Beatrice Kosgei, Trade Facilitation Manager Daniel Kiange and the Kenya TradeNet System developers.

The Interim Head of AFFA-Sugar Directorate, Ms. Rosemary Mkok said during KenTrade's visit that the Directorate is keen on integration with the Kenya TradeNet System as the System would drastically cut costs and time and enhance transparency in importation of Sugar. She committed to mobilize Sugar importers for sensitization and trained in readiness for cut off by end of March.

The Chief Executive Officer of Pests Control Products Board (PCPB) Mr. Peter Opiyo while receiving the KenTrade delegation noted that the Kenya TradeNet System was ready for use by the Agrochemical industry, local agents and importers. He added that immediate cut off from the PCPB manual processes to the Kenya TradeNet System would enhance their operations efficiently and effectively. He further noted that PCPB had organized a seminar for their stakeholders to inform them of the System cut – off date in March 2015.

KenTrade team expressed satisfaction during the visit to Kenya Diary Board (KDB), when the CEO Mr. Machira Gichohi emphasized his support to ensure the success of the Kenya TradeNet. He was happy that his staff had been trained on the Kenya TradeNet System usage.

The team also held very fruitful discussions with the Management of Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS) led by their Ag. Managing Director, Ms Esther Kimani and that of Port Health Services, led by Dr. Kepha Ombacho to review the progress in the implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System. The two PGAs reiterated their commitment to ensure their organizations were fully onboard the System by end of March 2015.

Mr. Kabuga reiterated during the visits that implementation of a complex and cross cutting project as Kenya TradeNet System required their commitment and support at the policy (CEO's) level to accelerate the uptake of the Kenya TradeNet System. He revealed that KenTrade was currently undertaking a change management program that would ensure that a systematic approach to deal with the change of transitioning from a manual to automated processes.

Meanwhile, KenTrade with support of Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF), organized CEOs forum last month as a strategy to aligning the stakeholder's institution to switch to transition into the new system. The initiative was aimed at

transforming the CEOs of partner agencies into Change Champions in their respective organizations.

Since the Kenya TradeNet System "Go Live" in October 2013, a lot of milestones have been achieved. Among the quick wins or gains so far include electronic confirmation of payments and provision of multiple payments instruments, dynamic risk management system accessible by the partner government agencies, introduction of the Unique Consignment Reference (UCR) concept in Kenya, Electronic application of permits by the traders on 24 hours basis, Electronic processing and approval of permits by the PGAs and real-time generation of reports.

 The implementation of the Kenya TradeNet System commenced in 2012 and the System went live in October 2013. The System was officially launched on May 2, 2014 in Nairobi by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda at invitation of President Uhuru Kenyatta. To date 17 modules have been successfully implemented with only 3 still under implementation.

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About KenTrade
The Kenya Trade Network Agency (KENTRADE) is a State Corporation under the National Treasury mandated to among other things, implement, operationalize and manage the Kenya National Electronic Single Window System as well as other trade facilitation initiatives. The Single Window System (also dubbed as the KenyaTradeNet System) is an electronic platform which integrates electronic systems international trade transactions with an aim of simplifying clearance processes of cargo passing through Kenyan borders. Additional info at www.kentrade.go.ke

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