



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SINGLE WINDOWS

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CHALLENGES

DAKAR 5, 6 & 7 NOVEMBER 2008

Organized by :



Under the aegis of the Ministry of Economy and Finance



Republique du Sénégal

PARTNERS



With the support of:

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs
SWEDEN*

Sponsor:

Microsoft®

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I : PRESENTATION	3
A –GAINDE 2000.....	3
B – Partners	3
1. World Bank	3
2. Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT)	3
3. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	4
4. UN/CEFACT.....	4
5. International Finance Corporation (IFC)	5
6. SITPRO.....	5
C – ORBUS Single Window	6
PART II : CURRENT SINGLE WINDOW INITIATIVES	7
A – The Single Window Concept.....	7
B – Standards and Interoperability	7
PART III : PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE	8
A – Justification and objectives	8
1. Justification.....	8
2. Objectives	8
B – Target public	8
C – Expected results	9
1. For the African region.....	9
2. For all regions	9
D – Projected establishment of a Pan-African Alliance for E-business.....	9

PART I: PRESENTATION

A –GAINDE 2000

Boasting a long experience in the development of information systems, GAINDE 2000 is an editor and integrator of IT systems aimed at facilitating foreign trade procedures.

Its field of action consists in the development of applications meant to help step up the effectiveness of trade and transport. At the international level, GAINDE 2000 is renowned as a pioneer in terms of integration of trade facilitation solutions.

Engaged in the modernisation of Senegalese Customs and trade facilitation since 1995, our experts have developed skills in the following domains:

- ❖ Automated customs procedures ;
- ❖ Development of information systems ;
- ❖ Establishment of Single Windows (ORBUS) ;
- ❖ Implementation of automation projects ;
- ❖ Support and assistance (help desk);
- ❖ Training ...

B – Partners

1. World Bank

The World Bank is a key source of financial and technical support for all developing countries. This financial institution which is not an ordinary bank comprises two (2) development bodies:

- The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (**IBRD**) ;
- The International Development Association (**IDA**) under the control of its 185 member countries.

IBRD and IDA contribute each, in a different but complementary way, to the World Bank mission which is to alleviate poverty and step up the living standards throughout the world. IBRD addresses the situation of medium-income and solvent poor countries, while IDA focuses on the poorest countries of the planet.

Through these bodies, the World Bank grants to developing countries low-interest loans, interest-free credits and donations in domains including education, health, infrastructure, communication...

2. Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT)

AFACT is a non governmental and non-profit making organism set up by Asia Pacific member countries and private sector exports.

The forerunner of AFACT was ASEB (Asia EDIFACT Board) established in 1990 as a response to disseminate EDIFACT (Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport) policies and activities in the Asia-Pacific region.

AFACT aims to promote the commitment and development of trade facilitation, electronic business policies and activities in this region, mainly focusing on those promoted by UN/CEFACT (United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business). It also seeks to guide, stimulate, improve and promote the ability of business, trade and administrative organisations from members, as well as to exchange products and relevant services effectively within AFACT community.

Following are the main activities of AFACT:

- Analysing and understanding the key elements of international transactions;
- Working for the elimination of constraints ;
- Developing methods to facilitate transactions, including the relevant use of information technologies;
- Coordinating its work with UN/CEFACT and other relevant international, regional and non-governmental organizations;
- Stepping up cooperation among AFACT member countries ;
- Enhancing cooperation among AFACT members and promoting the objectives of the mission statement in the Asia Pacific region.

3. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (UN) in 1958 as one of the UN's five regional commissions. ECA's mandate is to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development.

ECA plays a dual role as a regional arm of the UN, and a part of the regional institutional landscape in Africa. Its strength derives from its role as the only UN agency mandated to operate at the regional and sub regional levels to harness resources and bring them to bear on Africa's priorities.

ECA seeks to provide a significant technical support to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and also to promote peer learning and knowledge sharing in a range of development areas including:

- Regional Integration, Trade and Infrastructure;
- Meeting the MDGs with a special emphasis on Poverty Reduction and Growth;
- Sustainable Development and Gender;
- Promoting Good Governance and Popular Participation;
- ICT, Science and Technology for Development;
- Statistics and Statistical Development.

4. UN/CEFACT

As an offshoot of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), UN/CEFACT has adopted an inclusive approach by welcoming the participation of UN member countries, inter-governmental organisations, sectoral and industrial associations recognised

by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC), as well as the private sector whence it draws most of its technical expertise.

The primary vision of UNCEFACT is to build a solid expertise with the view to facilitating the development of software packages accessible to small and medium enterprises and emerging economies, and enable them to embark on e-business practices.

5. International Finance Corporation (IFC)

The International Financial Corporation (IFC) is the World Bank institution in charge of operations with the private sector.

IFC grants investments and provides consultancy services throughout the world to promote, in developing member countries, sustainable projects that are economically profitable, financially and commercially solid and reliable on the environmental and social front.

The IFC approach lies on the principle that a well-established economic growth is essential for poverty alleviation and that this growth is based on the development of entrepreneurship and the furtherance of fruitful private investments, and that private enterprises need a propitious business environment to prosper and contribute to the improvement of the population's living conditions.

IFC endeavours to scale up its performances by promptly meeting the needs of its clients, by disseminating information on the operations that have yielded good results...

6. SITPRO

SITPRO is the first trade facilitation agency and is renowned as the global leader in this domain. For 35 years, SITPRO has been at the vanguard of efforts aimed at easing international trade.

Its main objectives are:

- Reducing the costs of transactions, particularly for enterprises;
- Helping the United Kingdom to take up the challenges of globalisation.

SITPRO has the mission to facilitate international trade, influence the simplification of trade procedures, promote the best trade practices, prop up the development and promotion of international standards for trade documentation, and work for a better cross-border regulation and the removal of obstacles in international trade.

Its activities are centred on 4 themes:

- E-Business and documentation standards;
- International trade practices and procedures;
- Commercial agreements and capacity building;
- Services trade.

C – ORBUS Single Window

ORBUS is an application for the electronic collection of pre clearance documents. The platform interconnects all the administrative bodies involved in the processing of import/export formalities and enables clearing agents to submit their requests through a unique electronic form.

All the processes are automated and the result is available both in soft and hard copies (printed on security paper with hologram). The solution is flexible and adjustable to comply with the different technical, organisational and geographic constraints.

With the ORBUS system, it is possible to:

- Bring trade stakeholders closer ;
- Improve working conditions ;
- Simplify and harmonise pre clearance documents collection procedures;
- Reduce costs and time ;
- Introduce ICT in the administration and trade spaces.

PART II: CURRENT SINGLE WINDOW INITIATIVES

A – The Single Window Concept

A “**Single Window**” is an environment meant to accelerate and simplify the flows of information between the business community and public administrations and to bring significant advantages to all stakeholders involved in cross-border exchanges.

- On the theoretical front, the Single Window can be defined as **“a system enabling traders to provide information to a unique structure in a bid to meet all the regulatory prescriptions related to imports and exports”**.
- Practically, a Single Window environment is characterised by a unique gateway, **material** or **electronic**, for the submission and processing of all data and documents required for the release or clearance of goods subject to an international transaction.

The Single Window concept has recently appeared on the public administration scene. Its advent seems to have been prompted by the heavy processes that have urged the administrations to step up their services.

B – Standards and Interoperability

Standardisation of data is a key element for the interoperability of systems. UNeDocs has been chosen as the standardisation model (incorporates WCO data model). WCO data model and UNeDocs, which are build on a set of international standards including the revised Kyoto Convention, are landmark instruments in the efforts at ensuring interoperability of Single Windows and facilitating the cross-border exchange of data.

However, even though some countries operate through their own standards, all administrations agree that cross-border data exchange would be easier if all of them use a unique standard, which is the UNeDocs.

PART III: PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE

A – Justification and objectives

1. Justification

Staged at the initiative of the Government of Senegal, in partnership with UN/CEFACT and several international partners, the Conference was meant to be a platform of exchanges on the Single Window concept, gathering delegates from different regions of the world, with contributions from countries boasting an experience in the matter, organisms facilitating the establishment of Single Windows and international experts.

This first edition was expected to enable participants to have a clear idea of the concept and delve into the different establishment approaches.

2. Objectives

- Increase awareness of the establishment of Single Windows at global level;
- Greater sensitising on international standards sustaining Single Windows and cross-border data exchange ;
- Disseminate information and experiences at global level ;
- Encourage the establishment of regional Single Windows in the African context ;
- Give more visibility to European Union member states on the progress made in other parts of the world (Asia, Africa) ;
- Lay the foundations for the establishment of Pan-African Alliance for E-Commerce.

B – Target public

- Heads of revenue collection agencies and Finance Ministries ;
- Ministries of Transport and Ministries of Commerce ;
- Port authorities ;
- Single Window Operators ;
- The private sector ;
- International organisations such as IMO, ISO, UNCTAD, WCO, WB, WTO, UNECE and representatives of international associations involved in trade facilitation ;
- Participants in the UN/CEFACT Forum;
- Donors ...

C – Expected results

1. For the African region

- Establishment of an African network of Single Windows fashioned after the Pan-Asian Alliance for E-Business ;
- Creation, in the next three years, of a model of regional Single Window for West Africa.

2. For all regions

- Increase the interest of African governments and the private sector in the Single Window Concept with the view to facilitating the establishment thereof at national level;
- Promote regional and inter-regional cooperation worldwide.

D – Projected establishment of a Pan-African Alliance for E-business

A project is currently underway to set up the African Alliance for E-Commerce fashioned after its Asian counterpart. The Alliance is expected to step up cooperation and initiate common projects for the interest of member states individually, but also for the interest of economic regions.

More specifically, the Alliance's objectives are the following:

- ❖ Set up a platform of exchange of Single Window experience in Africa to enable countries of the region to have a reference framework;
- ❖ Establish a framework of skills to help countries of the region to develop their Single Window project ;
- ❖ Set up a platform of sharing of resources and skills to facilitate the establishment of regional Single Windows;
- ❖ Ensure Africa's representation in international forums and contribute to the development of the concept at global level, but basically in Africa;
- ❖ Apply international standards and norms relative to the establishment of Single Windows, and promote them on the continent in a bid to ensure interoperability with other regions without substantial efforts;
- ❖ Promote regional and inter-regional Single Windows in Africa;
- ❖ Be a focal point for development partners and international institutions interested in the promotion of Single Windows in Africa.