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**BARBADOS**

**Investment facilitation Needs assessment workshop**

**date/Time: 13-14 February 2025 (09h00 – 16h30)**

**Location: To be confirmed**

**CONTEXT**

Barbados’s participation in the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement signals the effort and commitment of the country to continuously improve its investment climate to attract and retain foreign investment. Implementation of the IFD Agreement is expected to further increase transparency in investment policies, streamline investment related administrative procedures, and make it easier to invest in the country.

In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados, supported by the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) is conducting an investment facilitation needs assessment to assess the country’s investment facilitation frameworks against the requirements of the IFD Agreement, identify potential gaps and develop action plans, as well as develop targeted technical assistance and capacity building initiatives that can support Barbados in further enhancing investment facilitation efforts.

This two-day workshop aims to bring together all stakeholders related to investment facilitation to go through the IFD Agreement, building knowledge on its provisions, and use the Self-Assessment Guide to consult with the stakeholders to collect information on the regulatory and institutional frameworks as well as practices related to the IFD Agreement. This will provide inputs for analysing Barbados’ current investment facilitation framework and developing action plans for addressing potential gaps and challenges.

**OBJECTIVES**

* Enhanced understanding of the WTO IFD Agreement, as well as good practices in investment facilitation
* Consult with the stakeholders on the regulatory and institutional framework as well as practices in relation to the IFD Agreement – to secure information required to advance Barbados IFD self-assessment and develop implementation roadmaps.
* Discuss and develop a preliminary categorization of the IFD provisions, which will serve as a basis for preparing a notification and developing an implementation roadmap.

**AGENDA: 13-14 February 2025**

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| **Day 1: Tuesday, 13 February 2025** | |
| **TIME** | **DETAILS** |
| **09h00 – 09h15** | **Opening Remarks**   * *Barbados* * *International Trade Centre* * *Inter-American Development Bank* * *World Trade Organization* |
| **09h15 – 10h00** | **Setting the Context: Investment Facilitation – Relevance and Process**   * Relevance of the IFD for developing countries and importance of the needs assessment process – *Quan Zhao, Senior Programme Officer – Trade Policy, Division for Market Development, ITC* * Regional and country perspectives on investment facilitation – *Krista Lucenti, Lead Specialist and Regional Coordinator, Caribbean, Trade and Investment Division, IDB* * Needs Assessment – Information Collection Process – *Paula Byer, Director of Foreign Trade (ag.), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade,* *Barbados* * Overview of the IFD Agreement and the IF needs assessment Guide – *Pamela Apaza, Legal Affairs Officer, Trade in Services and Investment Division, WTO* |
| ***10h00 – 10h15*** | ***Refreshment Break*** |
| **10h15– 11h00** | **Section II: Transparency of Investment Measures**   * Recap of provisions (Plenary) * Q&A |
| **11h00 – 12h30** | **Section II: Transparency of Investment Measures**   * Breakout sessions * Presentation of the discussion outcomes (Plenary) |
| ***12h30 – 13h30*** | ***Lunch Break*** |
| **13h30 – 14h15** | **Section III: Streamlining and Speeding Up Administrative Procedures**   * Recap of provisions (Plenary) * Q&A |
| **14h15 – 15h00** | **Section III: Streamlining and Speeding Up Administrative Procedures**   * Breakout sessions |
| ***15h00 – 15h15*** | ***Refreshment Break*** |
| **15h15 – 16h15** | **Section III: Streamlining and Speeding Up Administrative Procedures**   * Breakout sessions (Continued) * Presentation of the discussion outcomes (Plenary) |
| **16h15 – 16h30** | **Closing of Day 1** |

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| **Day 2: Wednesday, 14 February 2025** | |
| **TIME** | **DETAILS** |
| **09h00 – 09h15** | **Recap of Day 1 and Plan for Day 2** |
| **09h15 – 10h00** | **Section IV: Focal Points, Domestic Regulatory Coherence and Cross-Border Cooperation**   * Recap of provisions (Plenary) * Q&A |
| ***10h00 – 10h15*** | ***Refreshment Break*** |
| **10h00 – 12h00** | **Section IV: Focal Points, Domestic Regulatory Coherence and Cross-Border Cooperation**   * Breakout sessions * Presentation of the discussion outcomes (Plenary) |
| ***12h00 – 13h15*** | ***Lunch*** |
| **13h15 – 14h00** | **Section V: Sustainable Investment**   * Recap of provisions (Plenary) * Q&A |
| **14h00 – 15h00** | **Section V: Sustainable Investment**   * Breakout sessions |
| ***15h15 – 15h30*** | ***Refreshment Break*** |
| **15h30 – 16h00** | **Section V: Sustainable Investment**   * Breakout sessions (Continued) * Presentation of the discussion outcomes (Plenary) |
| **16h00 – 16h30** | **Closing Segment**   * Q&A and Follow-Up Steps |

**Mode of Delivery**

* Participants will be organized into groups during the breakout sessions for the purposes of facilitating open discussions on each of the sections of the Agreement. Each group will assess Barbados' current laws/legislations/practices against the IFD Agreement provisions, identify the time and resources needed to address any gaps, and develop a consensus-based roadmap for the future implementation. Each group will select a team leader and rapporteur to facilitate the process.
* Participants are requested to be present across the duration of the programme – to ensure that all relevant agencies are effectively represented throughout the information collection process.
* The WTO Investment Facilitation Needs Assessment Guide will be circulated to participants ahead of the programme - to enable preparation and allow for constructive discussions during the breakout sessions. All participants are kindly requested to review and prepare accordingly for these discussions, so that the breakout sessions are as constructive and informative as possible.

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