PRESS RELEASE:

28th July 2017, Port Moresby.

The European Union (EU) in partnership with UNESCAP hosts workshop on a Single Window Initiative and UN Framework Agreement to boost trade.

A Single Window (SW) and role of the UN Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Paperless Trade workshop was held on 27th July 2017 at the Crowne Plaza, Port Moresby.

The workshop was attended by 23 officials representing a cross-section of Government Departments and agencies that have been identified as requiring access to a Single Window system.

Through the EU-Trade Related Assistance Project phase 2 (TRA2), the European Union is supporting PNG in its efforts to boost trade for economically sustainable development; that will assist with enhancing the benefits from PNG’s Free Trade Agreements, including the interim Economic Partnership between PNG and the EU.

The TRA2 project has already completed a SW feasibility study and roadmap for the establishment of a Single Window in PNG; in which the operational priorities, regulations and standards have been identified that are necessary for SW implementation.

The workshop was hosted in cooperation with UNESCAP, following on from the TRA2 SW Feasibility Study findings, to discuss how the UN Framework Agreement on Cross-Border Paperless Trade can assist PNG in moving towards the establishment of a SW that will enhance trade facilitation measures.

Mr Richard Yakam, First Assistant Secretary, Trade Division, Department of Trade, Commerce & Industry, opened the workshop and provided an introduction, highlighting the importance of Single Window systems and trade facilitation agreements that will enhance and boost trade for PNG.

The workshop was facilitated and presented by Mr. Sangwon Lim of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific with presentations by Mr. Timothy Little, Key Expert for EU Trade Related Assistance Project and Mr. Philip Mercado,
Assistant Secretary for the WTO Branch of the Trade Division of the Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry.

Presentations and dialogue included:

- The current status of PNG in implementing trade facilitation and paperless trade measures.
- Findings from a recent UN survey on trade facilitation and paperless trade regarding state of play at regional level.
- The Single Window concept, benefit and its implementation.
- Findings from the EU TRA Single Window feasibility study for PNG
- Creating a Single Window environment in PNG
- The UN Framework Agreement on cross-border paperless trade and its benefits in moving PNG towards a Single Window environment

Mr Lee concluded the workshop with a list of recommendations agreed by the participants, which included:

- The benefits of establishing a Single Window in PNG.
- The Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific as a facilitator for PNG to move towards Single Window environment and digital economy, including better meeting requirements from the WTO TFA and APEC Single Window Agenda.
- That the Government of Papua New Guinea sign the Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific as early as possible.
- That the GoPNG put in place a policy mandate to establish a Single Window by the end of 2017.

It was recommended that the EU and UNESCAP continue their support to PNG and to seek additional support and assistance from other international donors, such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, in particular in advocacy, master planning, policy support and capacity building for creating the Single Window environment in PNG.

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The European Union (EU) is represented by the Delegation of the EU to Papua New Guinea. HE Ioannis Giogkarakis-Argyropoulos is the Ambassador of the EU Delegation in Port Moresby. The European Union has 28 Member States including France and the UK, both also represented in PNG.

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