This is a key guide for trade negotiators, particularly those from developing countries, to help them understand the issues around trade facilitation that will be of importance in World Trade Organization talks on this subject.

Trade facilitation has formed a part of the WTO work programme since 1996, though no significant progress has yet been made in launching negotiations, mainly due to the opposition of a number of developing countries. Following the failed Cancun meeting in 2003, WTO members formally agreed to commence negotiations on trade facilitation.

The main aim of the trade facilitation negotiations is to clarify and improve the provisions of three GATT 1994 articles, on freedom of transit, on fees and formalities connected with importation and exportation, and on the publication and administration of trade regulations, with a view to expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods through customs.

The negotiations also aim at providing technical assistance to developing and least developed countries with a view to strengthening their technical capacities for the application of innovative techniques and methods in the clearance of goods, and for the gradual acceptance of the obligations and new rules that may be adopted in the Doha Round.

This book provides background information and identifies the points that may need further examination by the negotiating parties. It also contains suggestions on how the negotiating approaches adopted under other WTO Agreements (such as the Agreement on Customs Valuation, Rules of Origin, Technical Barriers to Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures), could be taken into account while developing new rules in this area.

Contents

PART ONE Background and Context
PART TWO Legal Forms, Codification and the Modalities for the Negotiations
PART THREE Trade Policy Issues
PART FOUR Techniques and Methods used by Customs in the Clearance of Goods
PART FIVE Transit Trade and Landlocked Countries
References, Index

Please turn over for a more detailed contents list

Authors

VINOD REGE is a Multilateral Trade Adviser to the Geneva Group of Commonwealth Developing Countries, funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

ISABELLA KATARIC is a consultant to the Commonwealth Secretariat on the Joint Project, Commonwealth-ITC (UNCTAD/WTO).

www.thecommonwealth.org/publications
**Contents**

**PART ONE Background and Context**
Chapter 1: Historical background of the inclusion of the subject of trade facilitation and the mandate for negotiations  
Chapter 2: Description of the trade facilitation work undertaken by selected international and regional organisations

**PART TWO Legal Forms, Codification and the Modalities for the Negotiations**  
Chapter 3: Legal forms for the codification of the rules and modalities for negotiations on rule making  
Chapter 4: Technical assistance and capacity building  
Chapter 5: The Extension of Special and Differential (S&D) Treatment to developing countries in accepting obligations under the Agreement  
Chapter 6: Dispute settlement  
Chapter 7: The 'Single Undertaking' concept and the continuation of the negotiations after the conclusion of the Round. A possible structure of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation

**PART THREE Trade Policy Issues**  
Chapter 8: Publication obligations  
Chapter 9: The level of fees connected with importation and exportation  
Chapter 10: The establishment of appeals procedures at the national level  
Chapter 11: The simplification of formalities and procedures  
Chapter 12: The establishment of a mechanism for the exchange of customs related information among WTO member countries  
Chapter 13: Preshipment inspection

**PART FOUR Techniques and Methods used by Customs in the Clearance of Goods**  
Chapter 14: Risk management and other techniques in the clearance of goods: authorised importers and exporters  
Chapter 15: Facilitating the release of goods through customs: pre-arrival clearance, one time shop, and single window clearance

**PART FIVE Transit Trade and Landlocked Countries**  
Chapter 16: Transit trade and landlocked countries

References  
Index