



Confederation of Danish Industry



ISSUE BRIEF: non tariff barriers to trade

Casablanca, Nov. 24-25, 2010

INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT

- Great Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) lacks implementation of the various protocols. The political will is absent and the discussions in the Arab League is politicised by the Israeli – Palestinian crisis. In order to advance the intra-Arab trade, focus on economic and especially technical barriers to trade is essential. This covers a wide range of issues, from technical specifications, labelling, common standards, administrative procedures, taxes, tariffs etc.
- Achieving long term results demands a dedicated political advocacy process towards the different governments and regional bodies. Achieving short term results demands developing a tool box of more practical trade enhancing components that does not involve government.

MAIN DELIVERABLES

- Identifying concrete examples of technical barriers to trade by conducting membership survey in participating countries (prioritise 5 challenges and describe perceived solutions).
- Develop a report on the network that can be submitted to the Arab league
- Develop a more solid database on existing market legislation to better inform the business environment (internet site)
- Establish a complaint mechanism for dispute settlement at administrative level (not a pan Arabic judicial court).

PURPOSE

- Reduce transaction costs and the uncertainty of exporters when exporting in the region.
- Increase market knowledge on trade legislation
- Secure that norms and standards are brought to similar levels in the different countries.
- Align export documentation and procedural/administrative legislation/practises to secure increased trade flows.
- Facilitate a stronger awareness at the political level of the technical barriers to trade and the lost opportunities for increased economic growth and prosperity

SUB THEMES

- engineering industries
- Chemical sector
- Processed foods
- Textiles

TIME SCEDULE

| | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|---|------|
| Action between meetings | <p>10 Dec. Send out draft survey</p> <p>15 Dec. Reply on survey from organisations</p> <p>20 Dec. Final survey in 3 languages</p> | <p>Distribution of survey to member companies</p> <p>21st of January Reply on surveys</p> | <p>10 Feb. First analysis of responses</p> | | | | |
| Meeting | | | | <p>16-17 March: WG2 in Damascus</p> | <p>WG3 in Lebanon</p> | <p>Annual Meeting</p> | |
| Outcome | | | | | | <p>Policy statement Strategy and implementation</p> | |