



**ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SACU,
MS PAULINA M. ELAGO
ON THE OCCASION OF THE WCO-SACU PROJECT
MANAGEMENT MEETING**

**4 February 2015
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

**Madam Chairperson of the Steering Committee,
National Project Managers,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the SACU Secretariat offices for the Project Management Meeting of the WCO-SACU Customs Development Programme. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the organisers of the meeting for having opted to use our facilities, to host the meeting. I do hope that the amenities at your disposal will be adequate to enable you to realise the objectives of your meeting.

Chairperson,

I would also like to acknowledge the guidance of the steering committee to date, in the implementation of this programme. This is the second phase of the programme and I do hope that we will continuously draw lessons from the first phase to improve delivery of the set objectives in the different programme intervention areas.

Let me also welcome the new member of the team Mr. Dalton Ncamiso Nxumalo who has recently taken up the role of the Regional Programme Manager and urge all of us to afford him all the necessary support to deliver on his mandate, over the next two years.

Chairperson,

The WCO-SACU Customs Development programme is one of SACU's flagship programmes that is driving the Trade Facilitation agenda in the region. As the secretariat, our commitment is to afford you the necessary support to facilitate effective implementation of the programme. We do hope that the resources that are committed to this venture will enable successful delivery of the programme's objectives.

As National Project Managers, you have an important role to play within the structures of SACU to coordinate this strategic programme. As such, we all need to work together. We all expect diligence in monitoring and implementation of the programme.

I implore you to take advantage of this opportunity and work towards the results and outcomes that would make a real difference in SACU.

Whilst a lot of progress has been made in the implementation of the programme under your stewardship, I believe even more can be achieved. To that end, I would like to challenge you this year to also focus on showcasing the results of your major achievements in trade facilitation right from national level to regional level.

With the increasing focus on Trade Facilitation globally, emanating from the conclusion of the Agreement on Trade Facilitation (ATF) in Bali in December 2013, the pressure is on most Customs Administrations to ensure compliance with the commitments under the Agreement. Our work under this programme touches on some of the deliverables expected under the ATF.

Let us therefore ensure that we assist our region to step up its game and be counted among those regions that are compliant.

Lastly, I am aware that you will be reflecting on the 2014 programme implementation and working on Annual Work Plan and Budget for 2015. Let's make sure that our plans are as realistic and practical as possible for maximum impact in the different programme areas. I wish you a fruitful working session.

I thank you.