



29 June 2009

Outcome of the 113th/ 114th Sessions of World Customs Organisation
(WCO) Customs
Co-operation Council 25 - 27 June 2009, Brussels, Belgium.

1. Customs Directors General representing the 174 Members of the World Customs Organization met in Brussels from 25 to 27 June 2009 to discuss a wide range of Customs issues during the Annual Sessions of the WCO Council.
2. The SACU Secretariat which was invited on an observer status was represented by Mr. Yusuf Daya, Deputy Director Trade Facilitation.
3. With respect to the WCO 'Customs in the 21st Century' strategic policy, the Council agreed to the establishment of an Ad Hoc Group for steering a globally networked Customs (GNC) feasibility study. The Group has been mandated to provide leadership and guidance on how the Organization can develop GNC and related matters including the development of a prospectus on the feasibility of achieving GNC, and to make recommendations on capacity building for WCO Members concerning areas identified in the feasibility study. They also discussed the foundations for

coordinated border management, accepting that the concept should be further developed in order to establish global best practice, in addition to strengthening cooperation and communication around this issue with other border regulatory agencies and stakeholders from the private sector.

4. Turning to the global financial crisis, the Council adopted a “Resolution on the WCO continuing response to the global economic downturn” which incorporates seven recommendations for Customs administrations as well as five WCO response actions. The Council felt that, if widely pursued, these measures will not only facilitate trade but will restore confidence in the international trading environment as a means to bringing an early end to the crisis.
5. To give effect to the importance of Customs capacity building and to ensure more involvement by WCO Members, Directors General of Customs established a Customs Capacity Building Committee as one of the Organization’s permanent working bodies. The Council also approved the Terms of Reference for the new WCO Counterfeiting and Piracy Group and clarified the Terms of Reference of the Enforcement Committee with reference to firearms and health and safety.
6. The annual WCO Yolanda Benitez Trophy for combating counterfeiting and piracy was awarded to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’s Customs administration for the great number of seizures of counterfeit goods that could affect

people's health and safety, including automobile parts, toothpaste and detergent. Three special anti-counterfeiting and piracy awards were awarded as follows: to Belgium for the biggest seizure in Europe of counterfeit anti-malaria drugs; to Saudi Arabia for its work in raising awareness in the Middle East by organizing the first pan-Arab conference on this issue, by its commitment to building the capacity of Customs and by translating WCO documentation into Arabic; and to Uruguay for results obtained in terms of seizures of goods that endanger people's health including fake drugs and tequila.

7. On a lighter note, the photo competition which the WCO decided to hold this year with the theme "Customs in action" was won by Denmark with a photo depicting Chili the Customs sniffer dog, on the runway alongside a stationary aeroplane, who is said to have a "nose for success"!
8. During the last day of the Sessions, the Council elected Mr. Sergio Mujica Montes from Chile as the Organization's Deputy Secretary General for a five-year term with effect from 1 January 2010.
9. Commenting on the outcomes of the 2009 Sessions, the WCO Secretary General, Kunio Mikuriya, said, "*I am delighted at the results as the decisions taken by Customs Directors General will support and reinforce the Organization's efforts to prepare itself for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century trade environment*". He added, "*I am equally encouraged by the positive response from the Council to my efforts to transform*

the Secretariat by focusing on three priorities, namely, governance, capacity building and research, and to enhance programme delivery for the benefit of all WCO Members" .

10. Mr. Mikuriya then took the opportunity to congratulate the newly appointed Deputy Secretary General, saying " *The elections took place in a fair and transparent manner and I am looking forward to welcoming Mr. Montes on my management team when he takes up his post at the Secretariat*". The Secretary General concluded, " *I would like to congratulate all the countries that have received awards, with a special thanks to Chili the Danish Customs dog for contributing to better Customs enforcement*".

11. The margins of the 113/114 WCO 2009 Annual Council Sessions saw Cuba, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka accede to the Revised Kyoto Convention on the simplification and harmonization of Customs Procedures, raising the number of Contracting Parties to this important WCO trade facilitation instrument to sixty-two. In addition, Mongolia signed an agreement with the WCO which foresees the installation of the WCO e-learning programme in the Mongolian Customs administration, and a tripartite agreement between the WCO, Canada and Haiti was signed which supports Customs capacity building activities by the WCO and Canada in Haiti. The WCO also signed an agreement with Kazakhstan on the establishment of a WCO Regional Training Centre in Astana, whilst Japan and the

United States signed a mutual recognition agreement as recommended in the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade.

END

SACU Secretariat

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