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Session 5

STRATEGIES AND EXPERIENCE SHARING ON PROMOTING CUSTOMS COOPERATION

BACKGROUND

Transit is a procedure which allows goods to move under Customs control from the Customs office of departure to the Customs office of final destination. Dysfunctional Custom transit procedures increase transportation costs and constitute a major obstacle to international trade. There has been considerable discussion in the international community around how to ensure a secure and efficient transit system.



To develop an effective and efficient transit system, a number of factors should be considered.

For instance, well-designed guarantee systems that cover the payment of import duties, taxes and other charges are essential for the smooth movement of transit goods. Information sharing among Customs offices and streamlined documentation flows make transit procedures straightforward and transparent. Customs seals are mechanisms that ensure the physical integrity of the goods, making certain that the goods present at the start of a transit operation will leave the transit country in the same state and quantity. We have to find a fine balance between integrity of the process, efficiency as well as the reduction of costs of doing business.

The World Customs Organization (WCO) is an independent intergovernmental organization established in 1952. The WCO represents 180 Customs administrations around the globe that collectively process

approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the voice of the international Customs community. The WCO develops and maintains instruments, standards and tools related to all Customs competencies including trade facilitation and delivers capacity building, technical assistance, and training to requesting Customs administrations to assist them with reform and modernization.

With the aim to support the economic development of LLDCs and improve Customs transit procedures around the world, the WCO is developing new Transit Guidelines, which provide strong guiding principles for effective Customs transit, in cooperation with the UNOHRLLS and other development partners.

This session will consider possible contents of WCO Transit Guidelines and discuss good regional or national practices on Customs transits.