

Speech by Vice Minister Liu at the 3rd Meeting of the Customs Cooperation Committee

Distinguished Director-Generals of Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC)

Respected Ms. Noy Siackhachanh, Director of Department of East and Central Asia of the Asian Development Bank,

Dear delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, on behalf of China Customs, please allow me to extend my heartfelt thanks to Azerbaijan Customs for hosting and organizing this important meeting. I would also like to express our high appreciation to ADB for its significant support to the meeting.

As an important region connecting the continents of Asia and Europe, central Asia, which holds abundant resources and centuries-old history of civilization, enjoys obvious geographical advantages in the economic globalization. Apart from this, vast potential of economy development is the foundation and superiority for regional Customs cooperation. Despite of the economic difference, the development of the countries in this region is highly mutual – complementary. Therefore, strengthening regional Customs cooperation and optimizing external circumstance would greatly benefit the growth of the regional economic and social development.

China Customs has attached great importance to the Central Asia Customs cooperation. We believe that customs cooperation based on equality, mutual-trust and mutual-benefit, in this region will usher in a new era, though carrying out closer communication and exploring broader fields of cooperation. With the assistance from the regional members, China Customs will coordinate with ADB actively and launch various customs cooperation programs within our available resources and make more contributions to the trade facilitation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Now we are delighted to see that with the support given by ADB, we have achieved great success in seven-priority areas in the previous year since the 2nd CCC meeting:

1. A workshop on Development of a Simplified Transit System of CCC Members was held successfully in Bishkek in February, 2004. The development tendency of regional transit system and the bilateral transit agreement between Kazakh and Kyrgyz were discussed during the meeting.

2. Consensus was reached with the efforts made by statistics experts from China customs and Kyrgyz customs after rounds of negotiations on statistics exchange agreement between us, which were signed during the Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's visit to Kyrgyz in September.
3. The statistics experts of China Customs and Kyrgyz Customs met in Beijing in March, 2004. through communication of the statistic method and system, they fully analyzed and discussed the difference of statistical data in bilateral trade.
4. A CCC seminar on Customs Reform and Modernization was held in Beijing in April, 2004. The meeting mainly focused on three aspects. Firstly, communication on respective experience of revising their Customs laws and regulations in line with Kyoto Convention and related WTO Agreements; Secondly, experience exchange on developing a simplified transit system, including comparison study on the transit agreement between Kazakh and Kyrgyz; Thirdly, discussion on the Draft of Establishing a Regional Information Platform under the topic of information sharing.
5. A Forum on Public-Private Partnership for Customs Modernization was held in Manila in October 2004. The delegates shared their national experiences regarding the establishment of a favorable customs-business relationship aiming at a win-win scenario and the importance of risk management in the progress of customs modernization drive.

Ladies and gentlemen:

The regional Customs cooperation has achieved new progress this year with the participation of the member administrations and with the support from ADB. China Customs stand by ADB's proposals on strengthening the work of CCC working group. In order to promote our existing seven-priority areas, CCC working groups and shepherds of each item should play a constructive role in pushing forward the action plans step by step which will further the cooperation of CCC Customs. Hopefully, the results of implementing these action plans can be reviewed at the 4th CCC meeting of next year.

Next year, with ADB's kind assistance, China Customs would like to carry out some regional communications and study activities within our available resources. We plan to host a regional workshop on Risk Management and a TIR training course in the coming year. It is our pleasure to share experiences of customs management with regional members and contribute to the trade facilitation and regional customs cooperation.

Thank you!