

**PROCEEDINGS**  
**SEMINAR ON TRADE FACILITATION AND ONE-STOP SERVICE**  
**27-29 July 2005, Bangkok, Thailand**

- Co-sponsored by the Thailand Customs Department and World Customs Organization (WCO), the Seminar was conducted in support of the member countries' efforts to broaden the trade facilitation agenda and move toward "single window" and one-stop services.
- The Seminar brought together 23 Customs officials from the seven member countries<sup>1</sup> joining the Trade Facilitation initiative under the broader Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program, including a senior official from the KGZ Border Guard Services. The list of participants is in Appendix 1.
- The Seminar presented (i) WCO's tools and instruments relevant to one-stop and single-window practices, (ii) experiences of Thailand and Japan in implementing single window and pilot-testing of one stop services, and (iii) field trip to the Bangkok Port. A half-day working group meeting was held to review the progress and suggest proposals for the three priority areas under the chairpersonship of the PRC Customs: (i) simplification and harmonization of customs procedures and documentation, (ii) joint customs controls, and (iii) regional transit development.
- The WCO tools and instruments relevant to the one-stop/single window practices include:
  - **Revised Kyoto Convention** which provides broad principles on single window and one-stop practices;
  - **New Framework of Standards** which promotes customs-to-customs and business-to-business cooperation and information exchanges to ensure security of the supply chain and logistics management in light of heightened security concern; (Some customs administrations are revisiting the data requirements of customs manifest and imports/exports declaration in light of the WCO's New Framework of Standards.)
  - **WCO's Data Model** which defines the maximum data requirements (by all the trade-related agencies) to facilitate one-stop/single window practices and consistent risk management approach among countries adopting the Data Model; and
  - **Unique Consignment Reference Number**, given to each consignment level, enables customs and traders to trace the movement of goods;
- While exchanges of information on manifest and exports/imports declaration are activities between importers and exporters, Customs can facilitate the process by (i) harmonizing the manifests and imports/exports declaration and (ii) establishing an electronic platform to facilitate the exchanges of manifest/declaration between traders.
- **Thailand's experience** shows having a vision and strong leadership from Customs Management to establish a world-class customs administration is essential to

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<sup>1</sup> Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, People's Republic of China, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

steadily move toward one-stop/single window practices, mobilizing public resources and gaining public support for customs modernization and single window practices.

- Major lessons learned from customs automation include (i) reforms of customs code to adapt to the simplified and ICT-enabled customs business process (therefore, business process reengineering is the first and most important step of customs modernization through information technology); (ii) consultation with the trade community to ensure the system is designed and implemented according to the needs and capacity of the trade community; and (iii) wide dissemination and public information campaign to ensure broad-based understanding and support for customs modernization and single window practices;
- **Japan's experience** with single window practice shows that efforts to measure clearance time and identify sources of delay (through a WCO's "time release study") could be a catalyst for unifying trade facilitation efforts by all the parties involved and encouraging other agencies to embark on trade facilitation efforts, and (ii) risk management is essential to reduce customs clearance time; for countries which are at early stages of introducing risk management, the "point system" for import profiling could be a practical and effective approach for accelerated implementation.
- Major proposals and initiatives recommended at the Working Group Meeting by the member countries are as follows:
  - **PRC Customs** made two proposals as the first step to harmonize and simplify customs procedures and documentation among the member countries: (i) harmonization of cargo manifest, and (ii) mutual recognition of customs inspections and seals/stamps. Efforts to harmonize data requirements for cargo manifests will facilitate data exchanges between exporters and importers for preparation of customs declaration, and therefore reduce customs clearance time and improve quality of trade statistics. Mutual recognition of customs inspection and customs seals and stamps provide an essential pillar for regional transit arrangement as shown by Thailand's transit initiatives with neighboring countries. The Secretariat suggested that these initiatives be pursued initially through a bilateral approach which can serve as an example for other countries to join the initiatives in the future.
  - **UZB Customs** responded positively to the PRC proposal.
  - **KAZ Customs** has made significant contribution to the trade facilitation program by joining the KGZ to implement (i) a pilot joint customs control and (ii) bilateral transit agreement. KAZ has taken a number measures to modernize customs services (i) introduction a web-based services, (ii) provision of scanner machine in priority posts; (iii) establishment of an e-logistics control system to manage transit movement through KAZ. KAZ has also developed a long term plan for e-government (to be realized by 2008) with e-customs as part of the integrated system. KAZ responded positively to the PRC proposal and suggested the proposal (with detailed step for implementation) be endorsed by the two countries' Customs Management at the upcoming CCC Meeting in Ulaanbaatar.

- **KGZ Customs** expressed commitment to the joint customs control with the KAZ, and underlined the need for dialogues and a consultation forum with all the border agencies and the trade community. KGZ is also developing a bilateral transit agreement with TAJ. The Secretariat expressed its support for the suggested forum among the KGZ borders agencies, and suggested that KAZ Customs be invited as observers.
- **AZE Customs** suggested the delegation of authority among the border agencies could be an option for simplifying border procedures. Experience in such practices elsewhere could be useful for the initiatives of the countries of the region on further facilitation of trade.
- The member country delegates and ADB expressed their deep gratitude to the cosponsors for the success of the seminar: Thailand Customs Department and WCO. Their participation and contribution to the seminar and working group discussions provided both country and international perspectives in the trade facilitation efforts and custom cooperation initiatives by the member countries.