

## Welcome Remarks

Noy Siackhachanh  
Director

Governance, Finance, and Trade Division  
Central and West Asia Department  
Asian Development Bank

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Risk Management and Post-Entry Audit  
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Thank you, Mr. Sethameteekul for the warm welcome.

Distinguished Country Delegates,

Resource Persons,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and delegates from countries joining the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program, I would like to congratulate Mr. Chavalit Sethameteekul for his appointment as Director General of the Royal Thai Customs (RTC). We look forward to strengthened cooperation between CAREC and RTC under Mr. Sethameteekul's leadership.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to RTC for their continued support to the CAREC Trade Facilitation Program and agreeing to co-sponsor this seminar. CAREC member countries will once again learn from RTC as they share Thailand's experience in addressing implementation challenges in joint customs control, risk

management and post-entry audit. In addition, valuable inputs from the World Customs Organizations (WCO) will enhance CAREC members' understanding of international best practices in addressing implementation challenges in these areas. In line with this, I would like to thank Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Deputy Secretary General, WCO, for his continued guidance to the CAREC Trade Facilitation Program's capacity building efforts. We look forward to interesting presentations from Mr. Takashi Matsumoto, Head of WCO Asia Pacific Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), and Prof. Florian Albuero, Fellow, Institute for International Policy.

This seminar was prepared following the request of the Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) for further training on this topic during the 5<sup>th</sup> CCC Meeting last October in Astana. As likewise agreed during that CCC Meeting, succeeding seminars should include a policy forum to develop an action plan to advance the Program's initiatives. As such, this seminar includes Working Group discussions to be led by the respective CCC Working Group Chairs, People's Republic of China for joint customs control, and Uzbekistan for risk management and post-entry audit. We look forward to your fruitful deliberation on your future work program in these areas. We have also allotted a session to discuss ongoing bilateral initiatives, such as efforts on harmonization of accompanying documents for goods in transport between Kazakhstan and PRC, and Mongolia and PRC; initiatives to pilot-test joint customs control between Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, and Mongolia and PRC; and efforts to prepare agreement on information data exchange between the Kyrgyz

Republic and Uzbekistan. We hope you can take advantage of this opportunity to discuss outstanding issues with your respective counterparts.

This seminar is part of CAREC Trade Facilitation Program's continuing effort to enhance the knowledge and skills of customs officials in light of rapidly changing trading environment. With increased trade volume and heightened security concerns, joint customs control, risk management and post-entry audit offer a solution to customs administrations in fulfilling their role of enhancing trade facilitation and ensuring the protection of society. This seminar will focus on the issues and challenges in implementing these tools and how to address them. We urge the participants to learn as much as they can in this seminar (including related policy, legal and regulatory framework) and to impart the knowledge gained to other customs officials back home.

In as much as all sessions facing us over the next two days are highly important, we welcome the presence of the heads of customs administrations in this seminar. Your attendance clearly denotes your strong commitment to this Program. It is thus not surprising why the Trade Facilitation Program continues to remain as the flagship program of CAREC.

Ladies and gentlemen, with this note, I look forward to your active participation and hope that this seminar will enrich your

understanding of trade facilitation issues and enhance your collaborative endeavors.

Thank you very much.