

Forum on Customs Transit System

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Opening Remarks

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Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good Morning!

On the occasion of opening session of Forum on Customs Transit System under the framework Customs Cooperation Committee in central Asian countries, it gives me a great honor on behalf of General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China to extend my warm welcome to all the delegates from CCC member administrations, delegates from private transport associations, and representatives from IRU, UNECE, UNESCAP and WCO for taking part in the Forum, I would like to avail myself to express our gratitude to ADB for cosponsoring this Forum. My thanks also go to Shanghai Customs for their warm hospitality and considerate arrangement to the success of this forum.

Since the launching of trade facilitation program in 2002, Customs cooperation in our region plays more and more important role in the promotion of trade facilitation and has made positive achievements. Not long ago, the Fourth Meeting of the Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) was convened in Ulaanbaatar to review the progress and give guidance on priorities and future direction of the Trade Facilitation Program. As one of the priorities of trade facilitation program, Customs transit development has already been incorporated in the schedule of working programs by member countries. Customs transit systems are devised to facilitate the effective and efficient movement of goods across the border under Customs seals in international trade and to provide the

required Customs security and guarantees. The TIR Conventions has been widely recognize that it is one of the most successful international transport conventions and is in fact so far the only universal Customs transit system in existence. The TIR transit regime has formed the basis for many regional transit systems and has thus contributed to the facilitation of international transport, especially international road transport worldwide.

Promotion of bilateral transit arrangements in our region and China's accession to the TIR Convention are two priorities of the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation trade facilitation program. To promote these initiatives, this Forum will focus on the topic of Customs transit system and discuss with you the best international practices and share country experiences learned from different perspectives both on Customs and transport associations. In my view, in the process of trade facilitation, active participation and all-out support of both Customs and transport sector are strong impetus to trade facilitation, which is the common goal of Customs and private sector. Therefore, we are honored to invite experts from IRU, UNECE, UNESCAP, WCO and country transport sectors to share their best practices and knowledge with us. It is my sincere hope that the Forum on Customs Transit System being held in Shanghai, while drawing from the achievements already made worldwide, and will result in more communications and extensive consensus.

Facilitation of international trade is an inevitable requirement to the Customs management in economic globalization and fast development of science and technology. Following the economic globalization, there will be more frequent flow of goods, services, information, capital and passengers among different countries in the world. This will bring heavy workload to Customs management. Constant changes and innovations of the contents and ways of international economic cooperation will bring new functions and tasks to Customs management. Facing such a demanding challenge and opportunity, China Customs has made steadfast efforts for many years in facilitating international trade. As a matter of fact, China Customs has never stopped its endeavor to explore ways to facilitate trade within the region and to raise the efficacy of Customs work while giving a lot of attention to the learning of the experiences from other member administrations and transport sectors on transit system. China Customs has being engaged in the process of study and exploration of the potential accession to the TIR Conventions over the years. Two delegations were

sent to the Europe for information sharing and experiences learning as an initial concrete step. I do believe that this Forum offers us a good opportunity for communication among all Customs administrations and transport sector in our region to share and learn the best practices and experiences and enlarge our knowledge from the valuable presentation made by experts from international organizations in the field of transit system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On this splendid season, as we are gathering in the beautiful city of Shanghai, located on the coast of the East China Sea, there has never been any places other than Shanghai that holds so much attraction for its remarkable changes taking place over the past decades. I hope you could take this opportunity to get more knowledge about Shanghai and China.

Finally, I sincerely wish this Forum a round success and wish all of you a pleasant stay here in Shanghai.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.