

Welcome Remarks

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To the Seminar on Implementation Challenges in Joint Customs Control,
Risk Management and Post-Entry Audit
7-9 February 2007, Bangkok, Thailand

Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Deputy Secretary General of the WCO

Ms. Noy Siackhachanh, Director, Governance, Finance and Trade Division, ADB

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to meet you here in Bangkok and address the opening of this Seminar on Implementation Challenges in Joint Customs Control, Risk Management and Post-Entry Audit. On behalf of the Royal Thai Customs, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to our eminent country delegates, resource speakers and representatives from ADB. Please allow me to extend my deepest appreciation to Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Deputy Secretary General of the WCO, for joining us in this high-level regional seminar.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our sincerest gratitude to ADB for continuing to recognize the Royal Thai Customs as an important partner of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program's trade facilitation initiatives. This Seminar is a continuation of the Royal Thai Customs' collaboration with ADB, which started with the Seminar on Trade Facilitation and One-Stop Service held here in Bangkok on 27-29 July 2005.

That seminar presented modern customs tools for trade facilitation developed by WCO, and highlighted the Royal Thai Customs'

experiences in customs reforms and modernization. As an offshoot of that seminar, the Royal Thai Customs and ADB prepared a joint publication entitled "Customs Reforms and Modernization: Strategy and Experience of Thai Customs." This paper provides an overview of the customs reform and modernization strategy implemented by the Royal Thai Customs as well as the issues and challenges that it faces as it embarks on a more integrated trade facilitation effort in partnership with the private sector and in cooperation with trade-related agencies.

The topics covered by our three-day seminar are among the priority areas of CAREC's Trade Facilitation Program. Joint customs control enables customs of neighboring countries to carry out inspection simultaneously, thus expediting trade flows and bringing substantial gains to all parties involved in cross border trade. Effective risk management and post-entry audit allow customs administrations to ensure smooth and speedy flow of legitimate goods, and to protect public interest by preventing contraband goods from entering the country. These tools effectively balance customs administrations' dual function of trade facilitation and control, to ensure revenue collection and protection of public interests. We hope that this seminar will be a forum for CAREC member countries to exchange ideas and share experiences in order to move toward the goal of customs reform and modernization.

In closing, allow me to wish you a successful seminar. I hope you will have a pleasant and memorable stay here in Bangkok.

Thank you very much.