DATA EXCHANGE AND INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR CUSTOMS AUTOMATION

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Dear Forum participants,

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers of the forum, specifically the General Customs Administration of Mongolia and the Asian Development Bank.

It could be said with confidence that the presentations of the member states of the CCC on the Data Exchange and Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) for Customs Automation and reporting on progress made and future plans in this field have become a tradition.

In our opinion, this forum could become an important and one of the most productive meetings in the history of the CCC when we can not only confine ourselves by the discussion of the issues reflected in the agenda, but we could also adopt the decisions on their practical realization.

As you must be aware, the annual session of the Committee on Customs Cooperation took place in June in Brussels at the Headquarters of the World Customs Organization (WCO). The main outcome of the session was the unanimous adoption by the heads of customs administrations representing 166 members of WCO of the Framework of Standards on Safety and Simplification of World Trade (Framework of Standards of WCO). Based on the principles of cooperation, the Framework of Standards strengthen the ties between the customs administrations and businesses that call for the introduction of 17 standards that regulate safety and simplification of world trade.

During the period after Shenzhen seminar (June 7-10 июня, 2005, PRC), certain works in the field of development of ICT have been accomplished at the customs services of the Republic of Uzbekistan with the consideration of the abovementioned standards.

One of the requirements of the Framework of Standards of the WCO is that "Non-intrusive inspection (NII) equipment and radiation detection equipment should be available and used for conducting inspections, where available and in accordance with risk assessment. This equipment is necessary to inspect high-risk containers or cargo quickly, without disrupting the flow of legitimate trade." (Standard 3).

In this area, a project called Monitoring of Border Zones of Uzbekistan with the Purpose of Detecting Nuclear Materials to prevent the distribution of weapons of mass destruction.

The purpose of the project is to create a system that detects radioactive materials and prompt informing of customs and border service units. The project is intended to be implemented for two years. Until now, we have conducted pre-project investigations, and developed and approved technical tasks and the technical and working project of

the system is being created. Within the framework of the project, portal monitors and telecommunication equipment with the minimum penetrating capacity of 256 k/sec.

The Scientific and Research Institute of Nuclear Physics of the Republic of Uzbekistan is involved in the implementation of the project to ensure further exploitation of the equipment. In accordance with the Standard 7, "Customs administrations should provide for joint targeting and screening, the use of standardized sets of targeting criteria, and compatible communication and/or information exchange mechanisms; these elements will assist in the future development of a system of mutual recognition of controls."

Let me kindly remind you that a meeting of working groups on the development of information & communication technologies was held on the final day of the Shenzhen seminar (June 7-10, 2005, PRC) of the Committee on Customs Cooperation under the leadership of the head of the delegation of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan. He presented a brief report on works accomplished by the State Customs Committee of the RU, specifically, he presented the works accomplished in finalizing the draft **Concept** on the creation of a uniform information zone (UIZ) taking into consideration the suggestions and comments received from the participants of the CCC, preparation of the draft **Agreement** on Electronic Exchange of Information on Foreign Trade Transactions among Customs Administrations of the members of the CCC and UIZ **pilot project** in several member states of the CCC.

After the presentation of the chairperson, the participants of the forum were presented a draft UIZ of the CCC member states. The draft has fueled interest among the participants and active discussions.

ADB hired an international expert to analyze the draft UIZ (**Mr. Tan Sian Lip**) who presented a special document during the session comparing the CCC draft UIZ and the TradeNet information system. The TradeNet information system (Singapore) provides the customs agencies of Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore etc. with the possibility of exchanging in real time with data preliminarily inform about the delivery of freight. During his presentation, the expert informed that the main elements of the CCC UIZ conform to the elements of the TradeNet and the proposed approaches to its realization are correct and perspective.

The approach on the establishment of the system on inter-state exchange of information proposed by the Uzbek side was also approved in general by all participants of CCC. ADB and the PRC have highlighted the valuable methodological and organizational works accomplished by customs agencies of Uzbekistan in introducing the ICT.

At the same time, the representatives of customs administrations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have expressed their readiness to participate in the realization of UIZ pilot project and duly organize meetings at technical specialist level with the aim of processing required details.

Moreover, few comments and suggestions were made with regard to the draft UIZ as well as the draft Agreement on Electronic Exchange of Information on Foreign Trade Transactions among Customs Administrations of the members of the CCC. In particular:

-Azerbaijan: accountability in ensuring information safety should be reflected in the Agreement and bring the data exchange in line with the requirements of the WCO Framework of Standards;

- Kyrgyzstan: the Agreement should be open for other countries who agree with its provisions and the information received through the UIZ should not be distributed to

the third parties, including the ministries and authorities of receiving states without the consent of the provider of the information;

- Mongolia: make the names of customs agencies corresponding to each other.

Finally, it was decided to request the ADB in writing to provide financial resources for the realization of the UIZ pilot project among customs agencies of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

To date, all comments and suggestions made were taken into consideration and the revised version of the draft Agreement on Electronic Exchange of Information on Foreign Trade Transactions among Customs Administrations of the members of the CCC were preliminarily delivered to the CCC member states. We hope that the CCC will make an appropriate statement with regard to the realization of the abovementioned projects.

Thank you for your attention.