



Message from the World Customs Organization

International Customs Day 2014

This year's International Customs Day heralds the launch of the WCO Year of Communication, a year in which we, as a Customs community, move to further enhance our communication strategies and worldwide outreach programmes.

Under the slogan "Communication: sharing information for better cooperation," we are signaling our aspiration to do more at the national, regional and international level to raise awareness of the vital role Customs plays in international trade, economic prosperity and social development.

Communication is a sharing process which fosters cooperation, and as Customs is at the centre of a network of relations, developing a sound internal and external communication strategy promotes transparency, facilitates dialogue, builds trust and ensures mutual understanding.

With our unique expertise, Customs has made great strides over recent years in achieving better visibility with national governments, international organizations, the business sector, the donor community, development banks and other international trade stakeholders.

Good communication practices by WCO Members are abundant: national Customs websites, specialized magazines, media outreach and social networks are trailblazing the way towards greater awareness of the contribution of Customs to a more resilient trade environment.

Complementing these efforts, the WCO Secretariat also has a number of communications tools to help get the word out, including the Organization's new dynamic website, its popular and insightful WCO News magazine and our growing online social media presence.

Just as important, is the WCO's efforts to engage as many Presidents, Ministers, leaders and international policy makers as possible in order to defend Customs' interests, further raise its profile and create better awareness of the opportunities and challenges it faces.

It is equally imperative that we also focus on how we communicate with our stakeholders and partners, how we listen to their feedback and how we decide to respond, as this will encourage stronger support for the work we do and ensure greater buy-in to WCO strategies.

In fact, communication is a two-way process by which information and knowledge are exchanged and shared between individuals – it is not only about sending a message or passing on information, it is also about exploring, discovering, researching and generating knowledge.

As in previous years, I am fully convinced that Customs administrations and the greater Customs community will rise to the occasion, committed to actively taking the communication theme forward and thereby ensuring the success of the WCO Year of Communication.

Wishing you all a joyful International Customs Day!

Kunio Mikuriya
Secretary General
26 January 2014