

OTTAWA DECLARATION

(June 1987)

DECLARATION OF THE COUNCIL
FOR MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE YEAR 2000

(Ottawa Declaration)

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL,

NOTING that the Convention establishing a Customs Co-operation Council gave as its purpose :

"to secure the highest degree of harmony and uniformity in Customs systems and especially to study the problems inherent in the development and improvement of Customs technique and Customs legislation ... ",

"to promote co-operation between governments in these matters, bearing in mind the economic and technical factors involved",

NOTING that the Council's Plan for the 1980's has guided the Council's work in an organized and productive fashion,

HAVING REGARD to the Conventions and Declarations previously adopted by the Council, specifically the Seoul and the Brussels Declarations,

RECOGNIZING that the period leading up to the year 2000 will present a variety of challenges to Customs administrations world-wide and will require concerted and co-ordinated efforts to keep pace with the environmental changes which will precipitate these challenges, including :

- growing international trade and interchange, and global interdependence,
- growth in world population; increasing concern for the global environment,
- substantial increase in international travel, illicit drug traffic, prohibited goods and commercial fraud,
- technological advances in communications, transportation and detection techniques,

RECOGNIZING that such developments have an increasing impact on Customs administrations and will bring into question the appropriateness of existing Customs operations and procedures,

CONSIDERS that the CCC should continue :

- promoting the adoption of the Harmonized System, the GATT Valuation Code and the Kyoto Convention as standard bases for tariff classification, valuation and Customs procedures in modern trade,
- ensuring uniform application of the Harmonized System and Valuation Systems,
- promoting further development of standard documentation and uniform Customs procedures to simplify Customs processes and remove barriers to international trade, and

- developing improved methods of control and enforcement and generating co-operation among Members to ensure that Customs services are able to respond to the serious problems of narcotic traffic and commercial fraud facing them in the next decade,

CONSIDERS that it is necessary to review and confirm the Council objectives as the basis for the Plan for the 1990's which will reflect Member's needs in a modern Customs environment, and considering that needs will have to be established in a period of financial restraint,

DECLARES :

- that it will endorse the development of a planning perspective which takes account of changing world conditions during the next decade and will prepare Customs administrations for the foreseeable challenges of the year 2000;
- that the primary objectives of the Council for the 1990's will be :
 - I. to encourage harmonization and simplification of Customs processes and to promote co-operation among Customs administrations by :
 - (A) in respect of the Harmonized System, promoting the widest application of the System for Customs tariffs, for production, trade and transport statistics, for freight tariffs and for commercial commodity description and coding systems through :
 - updating regularly the system to reflect changes in technology and in patterns of international trade so that it continues to be a relevant document for purposes of modern trade,
 - securing uniformity in the interpretation and application of the System by preparing Explanatory Notes, Classification Opinions, or other advice and recommendations, and collecting and circulating information concerning the application of the System,
 - developing a data base for the aforesaid purposes, including a system for collection and dissemination of national classification decisions of interest to Members, thus enabling the CCC to act as a clearing house on classification matters,
 - (B) promoting the widest adoption and implementation of the GATT Valuation Code by providing technical assistance and advice to Members while ensuring uniform application of the Brussels Definition of Value by those countries still applying it, and
 - developing a data base and a system for the collection and dissemination of national value decisions which will permit the CCC to act as a clearing house on value matters,
 - (C) developing and promoting standard Customs documents for multiple Customs procedures and standardized data systems permitting automated exchange of data,

- (D) studying modern Customs processes, developing standardized and simplified Customs procedures and intensifying promotion of the Kyoto Convention and other Council instruments which advocate such processes and procedures,
 - (E) actively identifying new techniques and disseminating information about them among Members, with practical implementation measures,
- II. to develop improved control and enforcement capabilities by :
- (A) working in collaboration with Members and interested organizations in developing ADP techniques and systems of relevance to the Customs,
 - (B) studying new Customs control methods to ensure adequacy of enforcement while simplifying and speeding up Customs processes,
 - (C) promoting greater co-operation in the enforcement area by developing programmes and strategies to fully implement the Brussels Declaration through :
 - intensifying adoption of the Nairobi Convention and Council instruments which provide for mutual assistance and co-operation,
 - maximizing exchange of information and intelligence by the most timely and efficient means,
 - increasing co-operation and exchange of information through computer systems with other enforcement agencies, both nationally and internationally,
- III. to improve the human resources, the organization and management of Customs administrations by :
- (A) promoting regional programmes and regional initiatives in training of Customs officers and officer exchange programmes,
 - (B) providing a forum for management-level discussions on topical Customs questions,
 - (C) developing programmes and strategies for implementing the Seoul Declaration through the development of model training programmes and the provision of expert assistance, particularly in relation to the Harmonized System and the GATT Valuation Code,

AND re-emphasizing that International Customs Day, January 26, will be an occasion for all Members to promote the image of Customs services and to make their objectives and role better known to users and the general public,

DIRECTS THE SECRETARY GENERAL to take such steps as may be necessary to implement this Declaration.

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