Administrative Arrangement
between
the World Customs Organization
and
the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission
on
the activities of the WCO Regional Customs Laboratory

The World Customs Organization (hereinafter referred to as the “WCO”), and the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission (individually a “Participant” and together the “Participants”) agree the following.

Customs administrations face enormous challenges due to increasing volumes of trade, the globalisation of trade, and regional integration. Changing trading patterns, the need to facilitate further trade and the requirement to achieve more with limited resources call for enhanced cooperation between the WCO and its members' customs administrations.

International and regional cooperation provides a useful framework for promoting customs effectiveness and efficiency. In this sense, the WCO plays a central coordinating role in improving the administration of customs matters.

The European Commission’s Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union (hereinafter referred to as DG TAXUD) coordinates the implementation of the customs Union policy by the customs administrations of the Member States of the European Union.

The participants therefore desire to cooperate in order to improve the regional interaction and economic development of WCO members.

The dissemination of information as well as providing training and technical assistance is indispensable for the harmonised implementation of key customs-related international conventions, recommendations and other standards. It is in particular the role of the WCO to provide relevant and meaningful training and technical assistance to its members in respect of chemical analysis for customs purposes, as well as in
respect of other related scientific matters.

Customs laboratories are important elements of customs administrations and the analytical and scientific support they provide contributes significantly to achieving Customs mission.

DG TAXUD coordinates the customs laboratories of the Member States of the European Union inside the Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN), which is a permanent expert group of the European Commission. The European customs laboratories work together to coordinate their activities, pool resources and share their knowledge and expertise. This requires networking (European Union and worldwide), benchmarking, updating of databases, cooperation with other stakeholders and information initiatives.

The Participants intend therefore to cooperate as follows:

1. DG TAXUD as coordinator within the framework activities of the Customs Laboratories European Network (CLEN) intends to put the available CLEN expertise at the disposal of WCO members for "supporting activities" in the field of Customs Laboratories and tariff classification. "Supporting activities" include:
   - organising workshops and seminars;
   - organising training courses;
   - providing trainers and experts in the requesting country;
   - enabling access to proficiency tests dedicated to customs matters;
   - analysing samples using sophisticated methods;
   - Sharing data in Customs Laboratories European Network databases.

2. The WCO intends to confer the status of WCO Regional Customs Laboratory (hereinafter referred to as the "RCL") on the customs laboratories of the European Union, as coordinated by DG TAXUD via the Customs Laboratories European Network.

3. DG TAXUD (located in Brussels, TAXUD-UNIT-A4@ec.europa.eu) collects the requests for cooperation submitted by the WCO. DG TAXUD and the WCO Secretariat should designate liaison officers to coordinate matters arising from this
cooperation.

4. The WCO intends to provide, in the context of the RCL's operation, regional training, technical assistance and an information-sharing service in respect of chemical analysis for customs purposes, as well as for other related scientific matters.

5. DG TAXUD, as coordinator within the framework of the activities of the Customs Laboratories European Network, intends to provide training manuals, conference rooms, laboratories and other facilities for the operation of the RCL. The conditions of the joint supporting activities should be agreed between the participants in each case separately.

6. This Administrative Arrangement may be amended and supplemented by mutual consent of the participants.

7. This Administrative Arrangement does not entail any financial commitment for the participants. Each participant bears the costs deriving from activities undertaken under the auspices of this Arrangement.

8. This Administrative Arrangement is not intended to create any rights and obligations under international or domestic law.

9. This Administrative Arrangement is without prejudice to the rules and practices of the participants on the protection of confidential and sensitive data.

Signed in Brussels on xxxxx 2020 in two copies.

For the World Customs Organization

For the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission