COUNCIL 2010: key moments

CITES: more pertinent than ever

COUNTERFEITING: action on all fronts
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View our video and see how our systems perform at www.perceptics.com/info or email sales@perceptics.com for more information.
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Special dossier: Council 2010
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Point of View
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Calendar of Events

It should be noted that these meetings are mentioned for information purposes and are not all open to the public. Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings are held in Brussels. Please note that these dates are indicative only and may be subject to change. This schedule is regularly updated on the WCO website: in the Members’ site, consult the “Information for delegates” section; and in public site, consult the “Events” section.

### October

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<td>International Customs Day</td>
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<td>Ad Hoc Group on Globally Networked Customs</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>Audit Committee, 5th Meeting</td>
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### Upcoming events:

- **1-2 March 2011**: 8th EastWest Institute Worldwide Security Conference
- **11-13 May 2011**: WCO IT Conference and Exhibition, Seattle (USA)
Dear Colleagues,

As autumn beckons in Europe, this edition of the magazine looks back on Council 2010 and the discussions and events that made these annual sessions so absorbing. Indeed, they say that a picture is worth a thousand words; well there are lots of them highlighting this event that have been included for your enjoyment.

Directors General of Customs who attended the sessions dealt with a variety of interesting issues; many household in nature, some of strategic value, and of course those that remain a priority for the Members of the WCO. While many issues are on the table each year, there are those which the Council will particularly emphasize, although this does not mean that the others are of lesser value. Undeniably all our issues are important but time is our master and so we deal with all, but select a few as our focus each year.

Council delegates took time out to discuss the question of risk management during a special panel session; these discussions were expanded later during the Risk Management Forum. Clearly the international Customs community now agrees that to secure and facilitate global trade with limited resources and finances can only be done by applying risk management principles globally. In fact the sheer volume of world trade leaves us without any alternative irrespective of what politicians may say. Risk management is the only way forward for Customs; our only job being to ensure its effective application underpinned by a capacity building programme to support WCO Members in their quest.

Then of course the Council touched on counterfeiting, more specifically the trade in fake medicine. This criminal activity causes overwhelming damage both socially and economically, and can have grave consequences for the health and safety of ordinary consumers. Former French President Jacques Chirac, who attended the sessions in part, quite rightly said that, “Medicine is not like other goods. No one in a position of power should allow health to be involved in a criminal economy.” I stand behind this and so do my fellow Directors General. Now we are even more determined to combat the fake trade using the variety of tools at our disposal.

The magazine also covers the growth in Customs capacity building and records our success in meeting increasing demands. But of course there are other factors too that we should not forget. Martyn Dunne, the Chairperson of the Council, is right when he says, “Successful leadership is vital for effective and sustainable capacity building.” We cannot become complacent but should instead continue to strive for better; to take our efforts to the next level.

Other areas of interest include the vicious trafficking in drugs and the positive results that the WCO is getting through coordinated targeting supported by effective operational training. You can read a trade colleague’s view on Customs networking in the next decade which provides food for thought, learn about the latest IPR tool for Customs, see how the Customs-Business Partnership continues to gather momentum, plus other interesting articles.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Kunio Mikuriya
SECRETARY GENERAL
• New Member
On 19 August 2010, Guinea-Bissau joined the WCO. The Organization now has 177 Members.

• On the front page
The trophy for the 2010 WCO Photo Competition was awarded to French Customs for a photo showing a Customs training instructor presenting a course to three “canine” students on how to combat drug trafficking (see p.26).

www.wcoomd.org

• Last minute
WTO news is now available on social media networks.
Facebook: www.facebook.com/worldtradeorganization
Twitter: http://twitter.com/wto_omc
YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/WTO
Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/world_trade_organization

• To read
The Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) has issued its new Newsletter (Volume 3, Issue 2, June 2010) with information on the current work of the STDF and its partners.

www.standardsfacility.org/files/Newsletter/STDF_Newsletter_8_Jun-10_E.pdf

A Report from the European Commission examines the application of the EU regulation on the control of the movement of cash. EU rules require passengers entering or leaving the EU with €10,000 or more in cash to make a cash declaration. The report outlines the measures Member States have taken to implement the regulation, and presents the number of cash movements registered and detected at Customs.

http://ec.europa.eu/prelex/detail_dossier_real.cfm?CL=en&DosId=199583

• Info
The European Commission has published a consolidated version of the Transit Manual that is available in English on the EC website and will eventually be published in all EU official languages.


The European Commission has also published its 2009 Annual Report on EU Customs’ actions to enforce intellectual property rights.


H1N1 enters post-pandemic period according to the WHO.

www.who.int/en/

• Appointments
Recently appointed Directors General: Ms. María Siomara Ayerán (Argentina); Mr. Juan Ricardo Ortega (Colombia); Lt. Gen József Béndek (Hungary); Mr. Atsuo Shibota (Japan); Mr. Angelito A. Alvarez (Philippines); Mr. Haja Isata Kallah-Kamara (Sierra Leone); Ms. Mária Machová (Slovakia); Mr. Nguyễn Ngọc Túc (Vietnam).

• For your diary
- 20 October: 1st World Statistics Day
- 10-13 November: 14th International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC), Bangkok (Thailand)
- 2-4 November: Second WCO Technology and Innovation Forum, Cairo (Egypt)
- 23-25 November: 5th WCO Picard Conference, Abu Dhabi (UAE)

• Recent accessions
Revised Kyoto Convention: Kenya and the Philippines (the Convention now has 71 Contracting Parties).
Harmonized System Convention: Liberia (the Convention now has 138 Contracting Parties).
Single Window Implementation

Tariff System Requirements

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- Facilitates quick and efficient transactions
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- Online duty calculator
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Endorsed by: (Head of Customs)

Europe Office: www.arcticgroup.se
Asia Pacific Office: www.arcticquator.com.my
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For over 50 years, AS&E has been developing, deploying, and supporting innovative X-ray detection systems that fit our customers’ real-world requirements. Our superior technology, robust range of products, and best-in-class service make it easy to see why AS&E is the industry’s most trusted partner.
Future containers may have no doors

Things are changing in the container world as a new type of intermodal cargo container without doors is about to go through sea-trials.

Instead of doors, this container has two integrated yet separable components: the bottom platform and the 'lid' which is actually the four walls and the top. Once the lid is connected to the platform, the 'no doors' container is dimensionally identical to standard ISO containers. The lid is raised and lowered by standard container handling equipment used at ports and cargo-loading facilities, and attaches to the platform with a super strong latching and locking mechanism. Once the container reaches its destination, the lid can be lifted off by a forklift truck using a spreader bar.

According to the inventor of the concept, doing away with doors on shipping containers will eliminate many weak links in the intermodal supply chain be they of a security or a structural nature.

In terms of structure this 'no doors' container is said to be stronger and greatly reduces the risk of collapse during shipment as it does away with the door frame which is inherently weaker than the rest of the box, thus weakening the entire structure.

From a security perspective the advantages are manifold. Customs and law enforcement authorities in particular benefit from increased security and easier inspection both of which impact positively on international efforts to secure and facilitate global trade. The following examples illustrate the benefits for personnel working at borders or with cargo:

- This container allows no access to unauthorized persons and once sealed, nothing gets in or out whether the container is onboard ship, in a stack at a terminal, on a railway carriage or on a truck. Even an unlocked 'no doors' container cannot be accessed without either a heavy lifting device or by cutting through the container walls. Any suspicious activities would be easily noticed, and the introduction of clandestine cargo quickly discovered.

- While the 'no doors' system helps prevent unauthorized access, anyone who is authorized has easy access to the content of the container, making inspection easier and faster. Once the lid is lifted, the contents are completely exposed without needing to move them. Nothing is more than 1.2 metres (four feet) away from an inspector who can verify manifests, scan, sniff, and visually assess the cargo without moving anything. Physical inspections can be completed in minutes, rather than the hours or days currently required unpacking, inspecting and repacking standard containers.

These are only some of the advantages linked to this new container that will benefit all involved in cargo handling and transport advocated by the inventor.

More information
burk@cakeboxx.com
www.cakeboxx.com

Besides archived WCO documents dating back to 1953, the library contains about 3000 sources of reference material, including encyclopedias and magazines, of which 600 currently appear in the catalogue. The library collection offers WCO staff, delegates and external visitors access, not only to technical Customs works, but also to economic and management literature as well as reference books difficult to find such as the Kirk-Othmer Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology.

It also provides WCO Members with research services, having already compiled several thematic dossiers on topics such as electronic signature systems, local clearance procedures, and the economic impact of counterfeiting.

Customs administrations and institutions working on subjects related to Customs' work and the Customs-trade environment are invited to participate in the further development of the library collection by providing it with their publications.

Located on the first floor of the WCO Headquarters building, the library welcomes all visitors, preferably by appointment to ensure a more personalized service.

The library's catalogue will soon be accessible online under the “Online Services” menu of the WCO website.

More information
edmond.galle@wcoomd.org
Tel. +32 2 209 9601
The welcome page of the French application called 'Douane Fr' invites you to travel in freedom; figuratively speaking, in the knowledge that you have all the right information at your fingertips to facilitate easy passage through Customs control points.

The Dutch application features pictures of scanned bags showing prohibited and restricted goods, and includes a currency converter; users are able to see what rules apply to these goods, and to calculate the value of purchased goods that can be taken back to the Netherlands before duties and taxes apply.

A smartphone is a mobile phone that includes features that you might find on a computer such as office software applications (agenda, emails, contacts database, document editing, etc) and multimedia applications (photos, music, videos, games, internet navigation).

To do so both administrations have embraced smart mobile phone technology and released an application that allows travellers to check the rules on what they cannot bring through Customs.

Both Customs applications provide travelers with information on what goods are forbidden, which are subject to specific formalities, what limits apply to quantities, and so on. Information on applicable duty-free travel allowances is also available.

The WCO is pleased to note that its Members are taking full advantage of available technology and even more pleased that they are using it to better inform people and travellers on existing import regulations. Their actions promote transparency, encourage voluntary compliance, and capture the spirit of the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention which advocates the dissemination of Customs information and the increased use of technology.

More information
www.douane.gouv.fr
www.douane.nl

The Club will contribute to Customs modernization by creating an interactive network that will stimulate reflection, exchange of ideas and innovation, all necessary to shaping solutions to the challenges of today and tomorrow.

An initiative supported by the World Customs Organization

www.club.wcoomd.org
Traders in fake products exploit the internet

Counterfeit and pirated goods being sold over the internet, which are mainly delivered via the post, do not appear to have been affected by the economic downturn according to the 2009 Report on EU Customs Actions to Enforce Intellectual Property Rights published by the European Commission. Increasing sales of these goods to European consumers are frustrating attempts to stem this illegal trade the Report further suggests.

The number of cases of goods being detained for infringing IPRs in the postal sector represents 34% of all cases and continues to grow strongly, with air and postal traffic now accounting for three-quarters of all cases. These figures highlight the fact that counterfeiters are concentrating increasingly on sales to individuals rather than dispatching bulk shipments to intermediaries that are expensive to send and could more easily be tracked.

Over the years the internet has become an important vehicle for the sale of fake goods worldwide. Its global reach and accessibility, the possibility for traders to remain anonymous and for offers to be placed and withdrawn on a website instantly has made it one of the most attractive tools for the sale of counterfeit goods.

Overall, cigarettes (17%), tobacco products (19%), labels (16%) and medicines (8%) were among the main articles seized by EU Customs in terms of number of articles. However as in previous years, more and more of the products detained by Customs are for daily use such as shampoos, toothpaste, toys and household appliances. Added to this mix of products are those that are potentially dangerous to human health such as food, beverages and pharmaceutical products, accounting for 18% of the total number of detentions.

China continued to be the main source country for goods sent to the EU that infringe IPRs, accounting for 64% of the total amount of articles. For some product sectors, other countries were found to be the principle source of infringing articles: Egypt was the main source for the majority of toys intercepted; the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a major transit hub, shipped a whopping 74% of all seized medical products; and most food and alcohol that entered the EU illegally came from Turkey.

More information
Tigers fall under our environment spotlight in this issue as news on their survival is not good and what is even more significant is that it is the Year of the Tiger in the Chinese lunar calendar. The big cat, which is native to southern and eastern Asia, could soon become extinct unless urgent action is taken to prevent hunting and loss of habitat. According to the WWF there are possibly as few as 3200 tigers left in the wild down from an estimated 100 000 in 1900!

As 2010 is also the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity with the theme ‘Many Species. One Planet. One Future’, CITES Secretary-General Willem Wijnstekers (now retired) was not hesitant in saying, "If we use tiger numbers as a performance indicator then we must admit that we have failed miserably and that we are continuing to fail". For years the international community has called for urgent measures to be taken to protect the tiger and fight the illicit trade in tigers, their parts and any derivatives – prohibited by the CITES Convention since 1975.

South Asia contains a range of habitats of global significance to the planet that support a unique variety of animal and plant species such as tigers and other Asian big cats, rhinos, marine and freshwater turtles, pangolins and red sanders. However, this rich biodiversity makes it a major target for poachers and wildlife traffickers. This often involves trans-boundary landscapes and habitats, movements of people and goods across porous borders, and is increasingly characterised by organised criminal syndicates working in more than one country.

Traders operate in areas where local corruption and the absence of enforcement prevail, leading conservation experts to agree that a renewed and higher commitment to actively investigate illicit trafficking and prosecute criminals is more than ever a necessity. Intelligence sharing and cooperation between source, transit and consuming countries should also be improved.

On the plus side, mechanisms for sharing information do exist. The WCO has its Central Enforcement Network (CEN) for Customs administrations which enables reported seizures to be analyzed and trends and patterns to be identified. ENVIRONET, another WCO initiative, acts as a global communication tool to connect various bodies dealing with wildlife crime, including Customs, police, and anti-corruption bodies, as well as wildlife rangers and game park managers.

Customs officers at the frontline have very little time to detain any suspicious consignment for verification but ENVIRONET enables them to seek assistance from experts around the globe to facilitate rapid decision-making on the ground. By providing access to information such as seizure data and alerts, this tool also arms officials with the necessary knowledge and expertise to carry out their environment protection activities at the border more effectively and of course, much more efficiently.

There is a big bonus though – intergovernmental action against illegal wildlife trade is developing in the region. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has set up the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) and lately seven countries from South Asia have laid the foundation for a South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) as a coordinated regional response to combat illegal poaching and trafficking. Both Networks have benefited from inputs from the international community including the WCO. This bodes well for environment protection efforts in the region.
Since June 2010 billboards along the sides of roads in Vietnam remind residents and visitors that “Wildlife Trafficking is Punishable by Law”. They also provide telephone hotlines for reporting wildlife crime. Similar ASEAN-WEN public awareness campaigns supported by other organizations have been set up in Laos and Thailand.

Given the importance of the environment and the critical need to ensure its safety through fighting environment crime vigorously, the WCO calls on its Members to utilize the host of training opportunities offered by organizations such as CITES or regional wildlife enforcement networks such as ASEAN-WEN, and to use WCO tools that have been developed for better cooperation and enforcement.

A world without wild tigers would be a poorer world, so it is incumbent upon all of us to strengthen our resolve to work even closer together to protect our precious wildlife for the beauty and enjoyment of future generations.

More information
www.cites.org
www.asean-wen.org
www.worldwildlife.org

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Sports events are big business and the spin-off sales from merchandise are worth millions. For this reason companies who own international brands pay huge sums of money to supply products and associate their brands with significant sporting events.

With such riches on offer, it is little surprise that the Football World Cup, Olympics and other popular sporting events are prime targets for brand pirates. Counterfeit, sub-standard and unauthorized merchandise and improper use of logos and trademarks severely burden lawyers and Customs officials before the competition begins.

In the run up to the FIFA 2010 World Cup which ran from June to July, two operations targeting counterfeit FIFA goods were set up involving Customs administrations from the African continent and beyond.

During April 2010 the WCO, in cooperation with the Customs services of Namibia, Mozambique and South Africa, ran a special FIFA-dedicated border enforcement operation code named “Goals 2010” which targeted counterfeit FIFA goods being imported via the main seaports of the region. The five-day operation resulted in 24 containers being stopped for examination with more than 100 000 items of counterfeit or fake goods being intercepted. These goods included toys, shoes, sports-wear, labels, and bags and accessories for computers and mobile telephones.

Operation Goals 2010 was undertaken as part of Operation Vala, a wider ongoing project initiated by Customs administrations in the East and Southern Africa region in January 2010 which now includes 36 countries in Africa, Europe and Central America as well as the participation of the WCO’s Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) network. Vala, a Zulu word which means “to close or clamp down”, targets all kinds of counterfeit products including other dangerous goods such as illicit drugs as well as alcohol and tobacco products.

Counterfeit goods related to the 2010 FIFA World Cup that have been detained during Operation Vala include famous brand names associated with footballs, soccer boots, caps, sportswear, mobile phone covers, handbags, and a host of other products. Customs controls during these operations also led to the discovery of heroin, cigarettes, cannabis, cocaine and pain relief medication, such as buprenorphine, to name a few.

The combined effects of these two operations caused a warehouse in Johannesburg to run out of space to accommodate the wave of counterfeit and fake goods being brought into South Africa. From January to June 2010, South African Customs authorities had impounded fake World Cup goods worth 66 million South African Rand, or 8 million US Dollars – quite a tidy sum that has been lost to the bosses of this fake global empire.

It might seem harmless to buy a knock-off item; after all, the originals are out of reach for most who are longing for a real designer label. There is however a more sinister side to this illegal industry, with counterfeiting being far more harmful than it appears. In fact, experts recognize that the trade in counterfeit goods produces no real benefits for a local economy but does impose considerable costs on workers and the community.

Ahead of the event, the South African Department of Trade and Industry had said it was putting an emphasis on promoting genuine, locally-produced products during the 2010 FIFA World Cup to boost
Whereas some fake goods are of poor quality and bear only a passing resemblance to the genuine article, others are similar in almost every respect. Fake drugs for example are designed to look like real pills, and the best can fool a room of experts. This is what makes the task of distinguishing between fake and genuine products even harder.

To overcome the problems encountered by Customs when it comes to identifying increasingly sophisticated fake goods, the WCO launched a new tool known as the Interface Public-Members (IPM). It aims to establish an interface between Customs and the private sector and to facilitate cooperation between them; a key component of any anti-counterfeiting strategy.

The IPM, developed with the help of WCO experts, Customs officers in the field and rights holders, offers a variety of functions. Rights holders can input a wide range of product information into the IPM: fact sheets, packaging details, photos, comparisons between genuine and fake goods, established routings, rights holders’ contact details and case studies for use in the event of goods actually being detained or seized.

From the end of 2010, Customs officers will be able to access information on products provided by rights holders upon typing a product name, category or keyword into a multi-criteria search engine. Over and above facilitating actual product searches, the IPM will serve as a useful training aid for Customs officers.

Customs and rights holders will be able to use this interface as a secure means of communication to share information on a variety of issues such as training seminars, relevant studies and reports.

A database of national IPR legislation and a database of “request for intervention forms” – a request being a prerequisite for a Customs detention procedure – are currently under development.

Mindful of the problems posed by language barriers, the WCO intends to offer several language versions of the IPM. The interface text will also be able to be adapted linguistically to each individual rollout, if required.

As rights holders are responsible for the actual content of the interface, it falls to them to ensure that the interface is available in a language understood by Customs officers in a specific country they wish to target. To that end, provision has been made in the IPM for rights holders to include the same text in several languages.

The IPM will be available free of charge to Customs administrations as of December 2010, but must initially be installed on an administration’s intranet site. Moroccan Customs will be the first administration to roll out the tool on its national intranet from the end of 2010 onwards; rendering it accessible to over 1000 Moroccan Customs officers in the field. Mauritius and Mexico have also expressed interest.

The sale of fake Bafana Bafana jerseys not only cost the official supplier, Adidas, millions of dollars in revenue, it also contributed to job losses in the South African economy, since the original jerseys are manufactured by local producers. With high unemployment rates, this was something the country could ill afford.

Further operations to tackle this lucrative global industry in which organized crime is heavily invested will be undertaken on an ongoing basis by the WCO in conjunction with its Member Customs administrations and its international partners.

More information
communication@wcoomd.org
This year’s sessions of the WCO Council which were held in Brussels from 24 to 26 June saw Directors General of Customs, representing the Organization’s 176 Members, discuss a number of strategic and priority issues that impact on the global Customs and trade environment. Joining the Directors General were a number of observers from the trade community and other relevant regional and international organizations.

In reviewing the work undertaken by the WCO over the preceding 12 months and in setting the work agenda for the year ahead, Council delegates touched on Customs in the 21st Century, international tariff and trade management, trade facilitation and security, intellectual property rights and other enforcement issues such as drug trafficking and environmental crime, natural disaster management, and capacity building among others.

During a special panel session, delegates focused on risk management which is increasingly being applied by Customs to more efficiently manage global trade from a security and a facilitation perspective. More on this issue is taken up in the Events segment of this magazine which reports on the WCO Risk Management Forum that directly followed the Council sessions (see p.53).

Fake medicines being peddled around the world particularly in Africa and the health and safety consequences for ordinary folk also took centre stage during a special session attended by former French President Jacques Chirac and Belgium’s Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Didier Reynders.

Being the WCO’s Year of the Customs-Business Partnership, the Council took time to acknowledge the contribution of the private sector to the work of Customs by witnessing the signing between the WCO and some international trade associations of renewed Memoranda of Understanding to further enhance cooperation. Delegates accepted that this partnership will continue to be expanded at national, regional and international levels.

This edition’s Special Dossier highlights in words and pictures just some of the many issues and events that marked Council 2010.
Requests and subsequent delivery of capacity building support reached record levels during 2009 and the first half of 2010 Council delegates were advised. The Secretariat and WCO donor Members carried out more than 200 capacity building activities during this period – the highest delivery rate in the history of the Organization’s capacity building efforts.

Not only is service delivery high, the effectiveness of the delivery is more relevant and strategic. While requests by WCO Members for modernization assistance were initially very general or for ad hoc technical training, they are now more targeted to align with national strategic plans and action plans.

Improvement in delivery can also be attributed to the WCO’s regional approach. The increased role of WCO Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres is leading to faster and more tailored planning aimed at meeting regional needs. This combined and coordinated effort of the WCO and its Members is a clear indication that capacity building is changing at the ground level.

To further enhance its capacity building initiatives, the WCO is in the process of assessing progress made by Customs administrations in terms of reform and modernization since 2006 – the year when the Organization initiated its comprehensive capacity building strategy called the Columbus Programme.

In 2010 the WCO began analysing changes and progress with regards to the Columbus Programme. Thirteen key areas were identified as playing a crucial role in implementing a Customs modernization plan. To enable progress to be analysed, the WCO launched an implementation survey aimed at countries that were in Phase 2 of the Programme.

Preliminary results of the survey indicate that globally, over 80% of Members have documented modernization plans and central units for coordinating their strategies. In addition, over 75% have undertaken major organizational structural changes since 2006. The survey has also identified that more work needs to be done in the areas of risk management, and the use of non-intrusive inspection technologies and advance electronic information.

The final results of the survey will be used to analyse trends in relation to the Customs development agenda and will be used as one of the resources in making up a set of initiatives under Phase 3 of the Columbus Programme.

With technical assistance requests flourishing, these actions by the Secretariat will enhance the quality of the WCO’s capacity building support.
As this edition of the WCO News goes to print, delegates will be gathering in Brussels for the first meeting of the new Capacity Building Committee.

In 2009, the WCO Council recognised the vital role that capacity building plays in the work of the WCO, and agreed to the creation of a Capacity Building Committee. As both Comptroller of the New Zealand Customs Service and Chairperson of the Council, I strongly support the need for an effective capacity building programme.

Our aspirational goal of achieving a secure and efficient global supply chain can only be reached if all Customs services are operating at the same high standards. We need to work together on a global basis if we are to achieve our national objectives.

Effective capacity building has many important aspects. These include a driving force and a desire to change; well structured donor coordination, strong communication channels, and committed experts to carry out the work.

Underpinning all of these aspects is excellence in leadership and management. Not only is this excellence required to lead reform projects, it is also essential to the ongoing durability and strength of the reforms once they are implemented.

Organizational change of any significance requires management to do what they are paid for, that is, to lead. Successful leadership is vital for effective and sustainable capacity building.

The base for leadership and management excellence are the values that leaders demonstrate every day through their interactions with their management teams, with their officers, and within their respective communities.

As an international Customs community we rely on the revised Arusha Declaration on integrity for guidance. Under the section on "leadership and commitment" it states that “Customs managers should demonstrate a clear and unequivocal focus on integrity and be seen to set an example that is consistent with both the letter and the spirit of the Code of Conduct”.

The Arusha Declaration provides a strong values-based foundation and, through the Customs in the 21st Century framework, we have a clearly articulated vision of what is required from a modern Customs service. The next step is to ensure that we have a clear vision of what constitutes excellent Customs-specific leadership, and how to develop current and future leaders within our administrations.

A number of studies have identified that employees are more likely to act with integrity when morale is high, when human resource management practices are fair, and when there are reasonable opportunities for career development and progression (this is also noted in the Arusha Declaration). Morale or ‘esprit de corps’ is also directly linked to the quality of leadership and management.

As well as good quality leadership, continuity is an important aspect to consider. Leadership continuity can provide a feeling of stability and security. Although leadership should not be stagnant, there are risks with having a constantly changing leadership. This can provide uncertainty within an organisation and is not conducive to effective functioning within management or within the officer ranks.

To date, the WCO Capacity Building Directorate has produced some excellent work. Their programme of diagnostic missions has been very successful and work is well underway on implementation of the findings contained in reports generated by these missions. We now need to ensure that the Capacity Building Committee provides the impetus and direction needed to implement and drive this work even further.

“Our aspirational goal of achieving a secure and efficient global supply chain can only be reached if all Customs services are operating at the same high standards”

...by Martyn Dunne, Chairperson of the WCO Council
Counterfeiting

Chirac applauds Customs' fight against fake medicine

As part of its campaign to mobilise the international community against the traffic in fake medicines, Jacques Chirac, in his capacity as the President of the Chirac foundation, addressed Council delegates.

"Medicine is not like other goods. No one in a position of power should allow health to be involved in a criminal economy" declared the former French President who also applauded Customs administrations' efforts to combat fake medicine as well as the WCO's extensive anti-counterfeiting training and enforcement activities.

In October 2009 Jacques Chirac and Presidents Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso and Boni Yayi of Benin joined by other senior dignitaries, launched the Cotonou Declaration calling for more awareness and political action to fight the crime of trafficking fake medicine. Numerous Heads of State, the United Nations Secretary-General and other international organizations have committed to the ideals of the Declaration.

During President Chirac's visit, Secretary General Mikuriya signed the Cotonou Declaration as a symbolic gesture of the WCO's commitment to combating the increasing trade in fake medicines. He said, "Customs administrations have been tackling the trade in fake medicines for a long time and have emphasised the need for a concerted international response to the problem, so I am pleased that through the Cotonou Declaration we can form a united and formidable front to stop this illegal cross-border trade."

Also in attendance during Chirac's visit, Didier Reynders, the Belgian Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, declared that Belgium would ensure that the fight against fake medicine remains a priority during their six-month term as holder of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union (effective 1 July 2010).

Mexico receives top IPR award

The 2010 WCO IPR trophy was awarded to the Mexican Customs and tax administration for demonstrating keen commitment in combating counterfeiting and piracy, and for having achieved remarkable results in its fight to combat fake medicines. During 2009 it seized more than 38 million counterfeit items including 45 tons of fake medicine.

This trophy which is awarded on an annual basis to a deserving WCO Member is dedicated to Yolanda Benitez, a Customs official at the Ciudad del Este Customs Terminal in Paraguay, who was shot dead by traffickers for her efforts to combat the illegal importation of several container loads of counterfeit CD-ROMs.

Former French President Jacques Chirac awards the trophy to Alfredo Gutiérrez Ortiz Mena, Director of the Tax Administration Service (SAT), who is accompanied by Customs General Administrator, Juan José Bravo Moisés.
Customs-business partnership

WCO and the private sector demonstrate their commitment to working closer

Being the WCO’s Year of the Customs-Business Partnership, the Council acknowledged the contribution of the private sector to the work of Customs by witnessing the signing of renewed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the WCO and the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, the Global Express Association, the International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations, and The International Air Cargo Association respectively.

The Customs-Trade partnership is a priority activity for the WCO and its Members, and the Organization is committed to continuing its efforts to reinforce the partnership between Customs and business both nationally and internationally.

More will be done in the months ahead to ensure that the WCO’s partnership approach gathers momentum as the business community plays a key role in efforts by Customs to secure and facilitate global trade and in ensuring compliance at borders.

WCO honours John Raven

In keeping with the spirit of the WCO’s commitment to enhancing its working relations with the private sector, Secretary General Mikuriya took the opportunity to present a special gift to John Raven, representative of The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) and former Director General of the International Express Carriers Conference (now the Global Express Association), for his long-term engagement with the global Customs and trade community which has lasted over 60 years.

The Secretary General referred to John Raven’s great insight and ability to understand complex issues, and the respect he generates for his knowledge, his determination, his focused approach, and his great sense of humour. Council participants gave John a standing ovation.

John Raven shares his thoughts with WCO News readers on “Customs networking in the next decade” in the Point of View section of the magazine (see p.32).
Council 2010 in pictures
Natural disaster management

The Council endorsed the creation of an Ad Hoc Working Group for Natural Disaster Relief to explore how Customs can be better enabled to react more effectively, efficiently, speedily and appropriately in cases of natural disasters, using Members’ experience in dealing with such disasters.

When disasters occur, cross-border trade rules applicable to consignments containing humanitarian assistance – particularly for highly regulated items such as foodstuffs, medication, medical equipment, vehicles and telecommunications – are complicated by the imperative need for speed, the unfamiliarity of some donors with local rules, and the disruption of normal procedures.

This new Ad Hoc Group is required to present a strategy in June 2011 that should include a set of very practical recommendations for Customs. It must also offer the WCO Secretariat guidance on any necessary training and capacity building activities that should be organized in close coordination with the Organization’s regional structures (Regional Offices for Capacity Building and Regional Training Centres) and its partners such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

Both the IFRC and OCHA, who were observing the 2010 sessions, expressed their satisfaction with the Council’s decision:

- The OCHA observer remarked that despite the existence of various tools, Conventions and protocols, humanitarian agencies continued to encounter serious problems with the importation of relief consignments. He explained that OCHA had already signed special agreements with Customs authorities in Nepal (2007), Honduras (2008) and Mali (2009) to facilitate Customs formalities applicable to humanitarian aid in times of crisis. Similar Customs agreements with several other countries were currently at a very advanced stage of negotiation. He added that OCHA is available to assist with the implementation of the provisions set out in these Customs agreements. In Nepal, for example, once the agreement had been signed, OCHA had begun working hand-in-hand with Nepalese Customs to put the necessary measures in place, and had delivered a training programme to Customs officers both in the capital and at border posts. OCHA is ready to share its experience with other States wishing to sign similar agreements.
The IFRC observer said that in past disasters, the Federation and its members had been frustrated by substantial delays in clearance by the multiple ministries often involved, by difficulties in obtaining duty and fee waivers, and by confusion over paperwork. At the same time, the IFRC was very conscious of the enormous difficulties that Customs authorities themselves faced in these circumstances. He added that the IFRC was convinced that advance preparation of Customs issues that arose in disaster settings was critical in order to avoid bottlenecks on the one hand, and a chaotic uncontrolled international response on the other. In addition, the IFRC had also set up a consultative mechanism to draw up model national legislation covering international aid in the event of a disaster.

In view of the nature of the subject to be dealt with, it is expected that participants in the Ad Hoc Working Group will be officials with expertise in, and responsibility for, devising and implementing natural disaster relief policies, strategies and practical procedures in their home administrations. The Working Group will operate under the overall direction of, and report in the first instance to, the WCO Permanent Technical Committee.

WCO Members continue to accede to the Organization’s key instruments; a clear demonstration of the crucial role they place in assisting Customs administrations to meet the challenges and opportunities of today’s global trading environment.

During the Council sessions delegates witnessed Philippines and Kenya deposit their instruments of accession to the Revised Kyoto Convention which now numbers 71 Contracting Parties given its importance to Customs modernization and trade facilitation.

Liberia followed by depositing its instrument of accession to the Harmonized System Convention which now has 138 Contracting Parties, making it one of the Organization’s most successful Conventions and a critical instrument in managing international trade.
2010 WCO Photo Competition

"A teacher and his attentive students" is the caption of this year’s winning entry from the French Customs administration showing a sniffer dog instructor "teaching" four Labradors seated on chairs about the different categories of drugs.

The WCO’s second photo competition attracted entries from 30 Member Customs administrations and all the photos were put on show during the Council sessions.

A poster of the winning photo is on display in the lobby at WCO Headquarters.

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Elections

Two new Directors to join the WCO in January

During the 2010 Council sessions, Directors General of Customs elected senior officials from China and South Africa to replace two incumbent Directors whose terms in office were coming to an end.

Gaozhang Zhu (currently Director General for International Cooperation at China Customs) will replace Michael Schmitz as Director of Compliance and Facilitation, and Erich Kieck (currently Group Executive for Strategy and Policy at the South African Revenue Service) will fill the shoes of Lars Karlsson as Director of Capacity Building. They will join the WCO Secretariat in January 2011 for a five-year term.

As head of the Compliance and Facilitation Directorate, Zhu will oversee the WCO’s SAFE Framework of Standards, the revised Kyoto Convention, the WCO Data Model, and other key instruments and programmes that touch on health and safety, environment crime, and drugs trafficking among others.

Kieck, in turn, as head of the Capacity Building Directorate will be responsible for the Columbus Programme, eLearning, donor coordination, management development, integrity, and a host of other priority initiatives that touch on capacity building, technical assistance and training.

Both of them are wished much success in their future positions.

Members elected to serve on WCO working bodies

**COUNCIL**
Chairperson: M. DUNNE (New Zealand)

**Finance Committee**
Chairperson: T. SCHOENECK (Germany)
Vice: B. O’HEARN (United States)
Members: Burkina Faso, China, European Union, France, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Mongolia, Netherlands, Panama, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States

**Capacity Building Committee**
Chairperson: C. HENDERSON (Canada)
Vice: J. LIIU (China)

**Permanen Technical Committee**
Chairperson: K. SUBRAMANIAN (India)
Vice: J. N’DRI (Côte d’Ivoire)

**Enforcement Committee**
Chairperson: U. BRUCK (Israel)
Vice: J. DINKINS (United States)

**Harmonized System Committee**
Chairperson: R. TANAKA SENEVIRATNA (Sri Lanka)
Vice: R.P.D. THARAKA SENEVIRATNA (Sri Lanka)
Lessons
Chairperson: L. PING (China)
Vice: K.J.B. KAWANDA (Dem. Rep. of Congo)

**Policy Commission**
Chairperson: M. DUNNE (New Zealand)
Vice-Chairpersons:
R. DIAZ MONROY (Guatemala), D.I. ABDULLAH (Nigeria), A. BELLO (Morocco), R.M. MALINGA (Uganda), P. PUNANT (Thailand)
Other Members: Australia, Bahrain, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Congo (Rep. of), Korea (Rep. of), Côte d’Ivoire, European Union, France, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Zimbabwe

**Audit Committee**
Chairperson: J. FEEHILY (Ireland)
Vice: M. PINTOSALAZAR (Ecuador)
Members: Ecuador, Gabon, Ireland, New Zealand, Tanzania, Tunisia

**Integrity Sub-Committee**
Chairperson: E. KLOSTER-JENSEN (Norway)

**Private Sector Consultative Group**
Chairperson: T. HESSELINK (EU)

**SAFE Working Group**
Chairperson: T. HESSELINK (EU)

**Scientific Sub-Committee**
Chairperson: I.S. REESE (United States)
Vice: F.M. SIEBERTH (Austria)

**HS Review Sub-Committee**
Chairperson: Y. NOVIS (Brazil)
Vice: J. BIRKHOFF (Netherlands)

**HS Working Party**
Chairperson: R.P.D. THARAKA SENEVIRATNA (Sri Lanka)
Effective since 26 January 2009, the regulation does not replace the 24 Hour Advance Manifesting requirements, but rather supplements it with additional data for CBP to use in their cargo risk assessment processes.

The WCO SAFE Framework of Standards (SAFE) lists the maximum number of data elements that Customs should require for international trade security purposes. Some of the elements contained in “10+2” are already included in SAFE. During the Council sessions, WCO Members decided that the remaining “10+2” data elements in so far as they relate to maritime traffic should be incorporated into the SAFE Framework.

The US ISF requires 10 data elements from importers or their agents 24 hours prior to vessel departure. Out of the “ISF10” data elements, six of them are found in the Framework: Seller, Buyer, Ship to Party, Importer of Record Number, Consignee Number, and Commodity Tariff Number.

The Additional Carrier Requirements (the “+2”) that form part of the US legislation require ocean carriers to provide two new data sets: the Vessel Stow Plan, which contains information about containers loaded aboard a vessel; and Container Status Messages, which identify movements or changes in load status of those containers.

To expand on the above, the first of the two data sets – the Vessel Stow Plan – has 10 individual elements of its own, and of these, seven are contained in the SAFE Framework. The second of the two data sets – the Container Status Message – has six individual data elements of its own, of which two appear in the SAFE Framework.

On 13 and 14 October 2010 the WCO SAFE Working Group will meet to discuss the practicalities surrounding the inclusion of the remaining “10+2” data elements.

**Importer Security Filing (ISF) – the “10”**

The ISF, requires importers to electronically transmit to CBP 10 data elements 24 hours before loading any container onto a ship bound for the United States. These 10 data elements are:

1. Importer of record number*
2. Consignee number*
3. Seller (or owner) name and address*
4. Buyer (or owner) name and address*
5. Ship-to name and address*
6. Manufacturer (or supplier) name and address
7. Country of origin
8. Commodity Harmonized Tariff Schedule number (HTSUS)*
9. Container stuffing location
10. Consolidator (stuffer) name and address

**Additional Carrier Requirements – the “+2”**

The Additional Carrier Requirements require that the ocean carrier transmit to CBP the following:

1. Vessel Stow Plan (VSP) to indicate the location of each container on the ocean vessel. The data elements are: (1) Vessel name*; (2) Vessel operator*; (3) Voyage number*; (4) Container operator; (5) Equipment number*; (6) Equipment size & type*; (7) Stow position; (8) Hazmat code*; (9) Port of load*; and (10) Port of discharge.

2. Container Status Messages (CSM), which detail information on the movement and status changes of a container as it travels through certain parts of the supply chain. The data elements are: (1) Container number*; (2) Event code being reported; (3) Date and time of event; (4) Status of container (full or empty); (5) Event location; and (6) Vessel identification*.

*elements already in the SAFE Framework
SAFE Package launched

June 2010 marked the fifth anniversary of the endorsement by the WCO Council of the SAFE Framework of Standards to secure and facilitate global trade.

Since this historic occasion much has been done to encourage implementation of the SAFE Framework by WCO Members, including in 2007 the addition of a major section on the conditions and requirements for Customs and Authorized Economic Operators.

Capacity building assistance under the WCO Columbus Programme remains a vital part of the implementation strategy, and WCO Members that have requested support are receiving it in a structured and on-going manner which will ensure sustainability in implementing the SAFE Framework.

To further support implementation, the WCO SAFE Working Group and other WCO bodies, along with the Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG), have developed a number of instruments and guidelines.

In order to bring together this important body of material in one convenient place, the WCO was pleased to present Council delegates with this SAFE Package which incorporates all these instruments and guidelines.

As the SAFE Framework continues to be more fully implemented by WCO Members it is clear that a substantial amount of additional support material will be developed in the future and it is envisaged that the SAFE Package will be able to be readily updated and expanded.

The WCO Secretariat hopes that Members and its partners from the business community and other international organizations will find the SAFE Package and its contents a valuable aid both in understanding the dynamics of this major WCO instrument and in its global application and implementation.

The SAFE Package may be downloaded from the WCO public website.
More pictures from the Sessions
Participants, with relatively limited official life-spans, could hardly expect to get more than a very modest grip on such long-term objectives but, in any event, the most speculative factor in centennial prognostications and conceptual togetherness has to be the varied, currently diverging natures of Customs themselves.

While these services share a few common purposes and practices they must respond to many different priorities with greatly varying resources. Almost all are economic lock-keepers but some are primarily policemen and others basically tax gatherers. Some play a major part in national budgetary calculations and are a dominant force in Revenue. Others, now seen by politicians and the public as border protection agencies in a stern struggle with international terrorism, look to Justice or Defence for support and direction.

Lines of command are subject to unexpected or disruptive changes. One North American Customs service has been moved into and out of Revenue in very few years while a European counterpart has been chopped into two quite separate policing and tax collecting agencies – a curious contradiction of the current facilitation drive for coordinated border management.

The innocent observer, therefore, can only wonder what sort of corporate Customs entities will in fact be charged by governments to fight or fumble their way across the next 90 years or seek containment or connection within and through some notional network which will certainly need a period of institutional incubation.

If Customs themselves are simply products of political equations, devised at a higher policy level, can business make its voice heard there and, if so, what messages should it be carrying and sending about really joined-up Customs management?

To bring the enquiry down to more practical dimensions what, in terms of current WCO pre-occupations, would most international businesses want to see in the Customs policy inbox over the relatively “manageable” period of the next 10 years? How do they see Customs developing some necessarily modest communication and cooperation arrangements over the same period against this background and in relation to the global trading networks already managed by many multinational companies?

One useful move, given the continuing absence of direct terrorist activity in international trade and sustained reductions in protective import duties, would be one or two trial sharings of departmental interest between Security/Revenue and Trade/Transport.

In a sane and peaceful world Customs’ primary concern would be to give compliant traders and carriers every reasonable procedural assistance in moving goods across national frontiers and already numerous and constantly expanding public interest and trade agreement restrictions, so as to give full rein to global business as a proven powerful factor in economic growth, associated employment and political stability.

Part of that process was already foreshadowed before 9/11 by the opening stages in the WTO Trade Facilitation Negotiations where Trade Ministers are the sole arbiters and architects of a wide-ranging set of Customs procedural reforms.

Trade will not in fact expect such interdepartmental shifts to take place overnight or in a decade. Continuing political preoccupations with security have propelled some of the most powerful Customs services in a completely contrary direction. As the second decade progresses without any sign of terrorist activity involving international trade, much might be done, however, by judicious interdepartmental “immigration” just as Customs experts have been progressively recruited to many WTO facilitation delegations. Progress at the all-important political level could also be assisted by interdepartmental cooperation in the now numerous essays in integrated (or coordinated) border management.
Continued peace in international trading channels should throw constructive doubts on many of the currently accepted Customs wisdoms. One obvious candidate for re-consideration is the detailed Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) mechanism that has been wheeled in to persuade already well-documented, fully compliant traders that they are gaining something from increased security constraints. The three-tiered EU model with its ragged-edge approach to a reliable “you give us this and we’ll give you that” table d’hote menu, including, as it does such vague components as “fewer” delays and “lesser” physical inspections, is a far, frustrating cry from the flexible realism of the WCO revised Kyoto Convention’s “Authorised Person” where the benefits are specific and Customs concessions depend on a prudently undefined degree of “compliance”.

When combating assumed terrorist intentions of moving dangerous goods over long distances in fully documented “legitimate” trade channels, the defences and deterrents that seemed effective for North America and Western Europe have been seen by some influential governments as good for the rest of the world. So many Customs policy-makers are now urging and justifying general application of AEO regimes, even though, for the trading community it is already evident that benefits are limited and costs profuse.

In countries where official behaviour cultures are weak, computer resources modest, ordinary valuation and classification procedures badly implemented, and the modest requirements of the revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) still unacceptable, the additional complications of the AEO concept will represent an incitement to additional legal and irregular charges and new, uncompensated obstacles to trade expansion.

Furthermore none of the major highly computerised, well-administered Customs services already applying complex AEO systems will ever grant mutual recognition to countries only able or willing to enforce the sort of watered-down versions now being proposed for wider Customs consumption.

Given that the “full-dress” AEO concept is at the moment seen as a fixed element in both the WCO’s Customs in the 21st Century vision and its Globally Networked Customs building block, how could this turn of the enforcement screw be micromanaged over a reasonably foreseeable period, to link Customs services and yield truly extra and not just compensatory facilitation returns?

The most effective – because it is familiar and proven – path will lead through a comprehensive WCO membership adoption of, and full compliance with, the revised (and eventually further revised) Kyoto Convention.

The RKC Management Committee should take some of the wind out of the alarmist sails by redrafting the Authorised Person Standard so as to offer an AEO concept usable, in the next 10 or 20 years, as a practical facilitation tool by relatively modest Customs services and intimately related at every stage of drafting and application to key elements in the WCO Capacity Building Directorate’s work programme.

One important provision would be a definition of Mutual Recognition that would give this invaluable piece of inter-institutional cross-bracing a pre-global testing ground in innovative regional arrangements where qualifying compliance would be judged primarily on sustained, satisfactory performance in respect of Customs duties and taxes.

The main architects of the necessary return to procedural reality, however, ought to be the WCO SAFE Working Group. Their first task should be to seek to link and subject operational risk management to constantly updated risk assessment. No one would expect security agencies to give us a view of their strategic risk ratings but trade and Customs alike are, at least, entitled to ask that the responsibilities cast on them should reflect perceptions and judgements based on 2010 experience and not 2001 speculations.

A second and simultaneous task would be to seek some shift back towards pre-9/11 data frugality. Somewhere in a more rational future we might hope for a retreat from transaction-based controls to the old familiar post-entry audit systems for fully compliant traders. These might need to be achieved, gradually perhaps, through a decompression chamber of continuing advance data supply arrangements, but with small and diminishing core data sets finishing, ideally, with just a truly uniform Unique Consignment Reference (UCR) identification tag.

This activity would require the Group to sift through all the new C-TPAT and AEO requirements to separate out elements that could really answer facilitation needs. What, for example, is the true scope of advance data supply, what are the really essential
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data elements and for what control purposes, and how and when are they most easily available from commercial systems? What benefits could spring from Mutual Recognition applied in a purely positive facilitation context without the external pressures of extra control constraints?

If and when the Group can tease out useful answers to such queries it might pass the results to the RKC Management Committee for scrutiny as possible new standards in a new revised text. Finally the Group would need to look at whatever proposals might emerge from the continuing internal discussions on Globally Networked Customs. They could anticipate and prepare for this work by considering their own needs and hopes from various degrees and types of Customs-to-Customs cooperation.

Given the now extensive and constantly increasing spread of global commercial networks sending raw materials, components, sub-assemblies and finished products across and often back again over many national frontiers it would be tempting to seek connections to similar, operationally-related, facilities in the Customs community. There is a patent impossibility, however, in relating systems controlled at single global points to any set of individual systems some of which could be resolutely opposed to any comprehensive information sharing let alone central overall management. The underlying differences are enormous. Apart from the variation on departmental dependence already mentioned, there are massive variations in resources and behaviour.

These considerations in no way argue against a steady advance in Customs cooperation. The CEN provides a basic example and resource. The WCO, itself, is a corporate meeting point and catalyst for global information exchange, consultation and accord. It has already in hand various elements, including the WCO Data Model, the RKC, the HS, and, hopefully, a growing interest in and support for a true UCR, without which modern Customs global networking will be impossible. The real question is how far they can be brought into play behind a working managerial concept, and how far they would imply new acceptable and sustainable WCO responsibilities.

There are a number of hopeful instances where successes in Customs automation or acute needs for revenue protection are already stimulating regional or sub-regional cooperation to exchange varying types and volumes of control and facilitation information. Adding these and bilateral agreements together could offer the WCO and its trade partners a manageable stage towards a Globally Networked Customs concept which, carefully examined, is likely to throw up a coordinating practicality very near to a differently structured and more generously funded WCO. Given the complexity of all these factors the eventual outcome, whatever it may be, is almost certainly tucked safely away at or beyond the far end of the next decade.

Meantime it would be timely for a small group of interested multinational companies, perhaps through the International Chamber of Commerce, to consider, with the WCO Ad Hoc Group on Globally Networked Customs and/or the WCO Information Management Sub-Committee, how far and in what ways they might be able to offer piggy-back facilities to Customs services from certain developing countries, in trial efforts at first, to facilitate inter-Customs communication.

"Continued peace in international trading channels should throw constructive doubts on many of the currently accepted Customs wisdoms."

More information john.raven@scarlet.be

John Raven represents The International Air Cargo Association (TIACA) from his base in Brussels.
While Customs administrations around the world generally have similar responsibilities at borders, their additional ones may differ from country to country. One such responsibility is human trafficking. Both the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency are part of the country’s wider law enforcement network involved in combating this form of illegal activity – traffickers taking advantage of human vulnerabilities leading more often than not to misery and suffering.

To combat human trafficking through enhanced public awareness, victim assistance programmes, and law enforcement training and initiatives, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – which includes both CBP and ICE – launched its “Blue Campaign” in July 2010. The campaign draws its name from international anti-trafficking efforts that have adopted a “blue” theme; an example being the Blue Heart developed by the UNODC (UN Office on Drugs and Crime) to help raise international awareness about this form of crime.

The Blue Campaign features dedicated websites, informative material, ads and videos, and focuses on raising the awareness of the general public to recognize indicators of human trafficking as well as educating potential victims about the risks they could encounter and their rights in the United States should they fall prey to traffickers. It is also aimed at enforcement agents working at airports, seaports and border crossings as they are often the first people to encounter potential trafficking victims and routinely encounter incidents.

A case in point is the 2007 one at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport involving a grandmother and what she said were her two young grandchildren. Alerted by discrepancies with the travel arrangements, a CBP officer referred the “family” for secondary checks. Traditional interviewing techniques and a sixth sense made CBP officers dig deeper. A review of the grandmother’s past travel history provided details about a previous interception in December 2005 in Detroit where she had been caught attempting to smuggle children into the US once before. This information and the lies she had told CBP officers at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport led to her arrest and later conviction for attempting to smuggle children into the country although she maintained it was at the request of the children’s parents.

Another case in point is that of 10 year old Shyima Hall, a human trafficking victim in California, whose everyday existence was hopeless drudgery, living in penury and servitude, all the while being verbally abused. Her experience began in 2001 when a businessman brought her to the US from Egypt, telling immigration officers at Los Angeles International Airport that he was accompanying his “adoptive daughter” on a trip to a theme park. Instead, the man delivered her to a wealthy Egyptian couple who forced her to work seven days a week.

Human smuggling: the facilitation, transportation, attempted transportation or illegal entry of a person across the border either clandestinely or through deception, such as the use of fraudulent documents.

Human trafficking: the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of force, coercion, abduction, fraud or deception, for the purpose of exploitation including prostitution, forced labour, and slavery.
communicating with victims. The online training program is being translated into several languages and will be available internationally.

Human trafficking occurs in every legitimate and illegitimate labour sector in society, yet victims’ experiences are all remarkably similar. Their captors often confiscate their passports and use threats and abuse to keep them isolated and fearful as they force them to work in deplorable and often dangerous conditions. It is nothing less than a modern-day form of slavery closely linked to commercial sex and forced labour exploitation.

The role played by Customs officials both at the border and internally to stop this "trade in humans" is applauded.

As part of the awareness campaign, CBP employees are reaching out to travellers who appear at face-value to be vulnerable to trafficking or potential victims by providing information cards in different languages. Additional outreach and training activities include the development of an online training course for enforcement officers, and the publication of information and learning resources on the CBP and DHS websites. These tools are aimed at better equipping enforcement officers to identify potential traffickers and their victims, and to be able to distinguish between human trafficking and human smuggling. They also provide information and details on the global trafficking network as well as guidance on understanding and communicating with victims. The online training program is being translated into several languages and will be available internationally.

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Two ongoing campaigns on human trafficking predate the DHS “Blue Campaign”: ICE’s “Hidden In Plain Sight” has targeted 14 US cities and is available in eight languages and CBP’s “No Te Engañes” has aired in El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico and includes two radio segments.

More information
http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/humantrafficking.shtm

a week cleaning their opulent home and caring for their five children while being forced to sleep on a bare, dirty mattress in the garage and wash her clothes outside in a bucket neither attending school nor receiving medical or dental care. Luckily an anonymous tip alerted ICE officials to her plight and after a full-scale investigation her captors were convicted.
The WCO’s newest Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) should be up and running by the beginning of next year, in a newly constructed modern building situated in the heart of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan.

With the establishment of an ROCB in Azerbaijan, which is part of the WCO Europe region, all six of the Organization’s regions now have dedicated ROCBs to cater for their capacity building needs. These Offices perform a vital role in tailoring and adapting capacity building initiatives, technical assistance, and training requests to suit regional dynamics.

Thanks to a generous contribution from the Government of Azerbaijan and the full support of the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the State Customs Committee, the premises, furniture, equipment, vehicles, maintenance costs and staffing costs for technical and administrative personnel will be provided by the ROCBs Azerbaijani hosts.

At the time of going to press, the process of confirming who would head the ROCB is still underway within the region.

More information
capacity.building@wcoomd.org

Europe's first ROCB takes shape

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Exemplary cooperation between two Customs administrations led to the seizure of anabolic steroids and the arrest of a South African man in Cape Town, South Africa.

On Tuesday 23 March 2010 the South African Revenue Service’s Customs administration (SARS Customs) received information that the French Customs authorities had intercepted a parcel from Taiwan destined for South Africa containing suspected illegal anabolic steroids. The parcel was being transported by a well known international courier company and was declared as containing gifts, specifically, a teddy bear and potato chips to the value of 87 000 US Dollars.

A decision was then taken to conduct a controlled delivery of the consignment by the Customs Border Control Unit and enforcement divisions of SARS with the assistance of the South African Police Service (SAPS). With the full support of French Customs, the necessary legal mandates to conduct the controlled delivery were obtained and arrangements made to have the parcel delivered to South Africa.

The parcel was received by Commander Taljaard, the National Commander of SARS’ Customs Detector Dog Unit, on Friday 26 March and preparations were made to deliver the parcel to the owner. During Monday 29 March Commander Taljaard – dressed in a loaned t-shirt from the courier company – delivered the parcel to “Mr. D. Jan” as indicated on the delivery note.

Upon acceptance of the parcel, “Mr D. Jan”, whose real identity is Mr. Johan van den Berg, had the parcel opened in his presence and was arrested by the SAPS Organised Crime Unit. Customs and SAPS officials found empty potato chip packets, a teddy bear, and Pringles potato chip tubes stuffed with 50 000 illegal anabolic steroids! A raid later carried out at the suspect’s business premises, known as the “Nut Shop”, and at his residence resulted in the seizure of other substances, including liquid steroids, as well as tablets, syringes and documents.

Gene Ravele, Chief Officer for Customs and Border Management at SARS, said that while the controlled delivery proved to be successful, what really made this “operation” a success was the fact that they were able to coordinate state agencies towards a common goal while collaborating closely with their international counterparts. He added that the sharing of this type of information between Customs authorities had resulted in a significant seizure, more of which were expected in the future.

More information
Raksha Moodley
South African Revenue Service
rmoodley@sars.gov.za

In 2009, the French Directorate-General of Customs and Indirect Taxes set up a mechanism for determining the Customs accreditation ranking through which their operator certification process is implemented.

There are three rankings, the highest being reserved for operators holding Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) “Customs simplification” certificates and combined (or “Full”) “Customs simplifications and security and safety” certificates.

Each accreditation level offers a package of Customs procedures, simplifications and facilitation with respect to inspections. Level 3, reserved for AEOs, grants operators access to the full range of Customs procedures as set out in a European Community Regulation, and also offers them advantages when it comes to inspections.

Operators holding “Customs simplifications” and “full” AEO certificates are notified that they enjoy reduced levels of physical and document inspections on almost all goods. This reduction takes into account an operator’s accreditation ranking, including the type of goods that will be imported and/or exported, and trade flows.

Automated Customs clearance tools have, therefore, been modified with this aim in mind, enabling the system to instantly identify a declaration lodged by an AEO. In this way, French Customs receives immediate notification of an operator’s AEO status prior to deciding whether or not to conduct a physical inspection.

More information
www.douane.gouv.fr
A small scale trader waits in the shade of a tree at the Mwanza Border Post between Malawi and Mozambique. Somewhere inside, a clearing agent is completing complicated paperwork on his behalf for a sum of money. The agent will deal with Customs officials, go over forms, calculate import duties and taxes and so on or sometimes even disappear with the trader’s money!

Even for veteran traders, the technicalities of Customs border transactions remain opaque and paying for a clearing agent is a necessity. Some will try to escape from border controls and resort to smuggling, risking confrontation with law enforcement officials.

Those waiting patiently are deeply envious of their counterparts whose business takes them across the borders between Malawi and Zambia and between Zimbabwe and Zambia; they are enjoying the benefits of the Simplified Trade Regime developed by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and implemented between these countries in April and June 2010 respectively.

Cross-border trade is a lifeline

Cross-border trade is an important source of income for many people in the region, especially women. Since the launch of the Free Trade Area by COMESA Member States in 2000, small scale cross-border traders have not been able to significantly benefit from COMESA tariff preferences. To do so, goods traded among COMESA Member States that meet originating criteria have to be accompanied by a COMESA Certificate of Origin.

The process of obtaining the Certificate of Origin is rather involved and in many cases issuing authorities are situated far from where many small scale traders operate. Unlike big and established companies, small scale cross-border traders do not have the resources to go through the process of getting the Certificate and end up spending more time clearing their goods at borders.

Simplified trade regime

The Simplified Trade Regime (STR) applies to consignments of up to USD 500 or less and was developed to allow cross-border traders to benefit more readily from COMESA trade preferences. Under the STR traders can fill out a Simplified Certificate of Origin on which they must enter the full details of the exporter and importer, a reference number and the country of origin. The Certificate can be obtained from local Customs offices or at the border.

Use of the Certificate enables traders to enjoy duty and quota free entry of their goods provided the goods appear on the Common List of products to be traded under the STR system. It must be submitted together with the
COMESA Simplified Customs Document and needs to be filled in by the trader at the border post and certified by a Customs official.

To further assist these traders, the simplified form contains a glossary of terms so if a trader does not know the meaning of "Port of clearance", "Net weight" or "Declaration by exporter/importer" for example, the explanations are right there.

VAT collection and payment procedures however do not fall within the STR system and traders must comply with national laws in this respect.

Boosting cross-border trade for food security

Goods eligible for the COMESA STR are dominated by agricultural products and the STR is seen as key to achieving sustainable food security in the region. The kind and quantity of food available on one side of a border is often quite different just 20 or 50 kilometers away, and small scale traders on either side of a border are critical to meeting local demands that larger importers do not.

The STR dovetails neatly with trade programmes such as the European Union’s Regional Food Security and Risk Management (REFORM) Programme that has as one of its objectives the enhancement of cross-border trade in agricultural commodities. Areas of surplus food production should have ready access to markets, especially those close to borders so a stable and uninterrupted demand for food from neighbours will result in farmers in surplus regions investing more to ensure long-term supply. This scenario leads inevitably to wider regional economic and social development.

Raising awareness

Ignorance about the simplified documents by both traders and Customs officials is seen as one of the major hurdles in implementing the STR. Is it therefore important to make the procedure widely known and understood so that the private sector can take advantage of COMESA’s preferential rates, which will make local industry more competitive in the region.

The new rules are expected to help eliminate bribes and corrupt practices at border posts as well as encourage traders who previously evaded border posts to legally clear their goods through Customs. Countries will then be able to gain a better picture of real trade volumes between them.

COMESA expects to see the STR implemented across its membership by the end of 2010. A similar regime in a slightly different form was implemented by the East African Community in 2007.

More information
www.comesa.int
Enhancing integrity through modernization

Prior to a Customs administration engaging in any integrity development process, it is vital to ensure that it forms part of a comprehensive modernization programme. This is re-enforced by the WCO’s Revised Arusha Declaration on Integrity which states, among other things, that corruption often occurs in situations where outdated and inefficient practices are employed and where procedures are slow and burdensome.

Part of an integrity programme’s success depends on the way its implementation is mapped out. To that end the WCO proposes a pilot project approach which usually begins with the development of an Integrity Action Plan, one or two elements of which can be piloted over a set period of time. This approach must be highly focused and requires a high degree of involvement by both the beneficiaries and those delivering assistance. If carried out effectively, the pilot should yield tangible results over a short period of time.

By way of example, Cameroon Customs asked the WCO to review and validate its Integrity Action Plan, of which one of the recommendations was to set up an Internal Audit Unit. This work will be carried out in the context of a pilot project to be implemented by Customs using external expertise and will be monitored by the WCO.

Another example is Moroccan Customs’ establishment of an Observatory to enhance integrity and fight corruption. Thanks to the administration’s ongoing modernization process, the prerequisites were already in place. The Observatory was launched as a pilot project and its operation and output are currently being assessed.

Lessons learnt during the life of these pilot projects are extremely useful to the Customs administration concerned and to the WCO and its Members.

More information
capacity.building@wcoomd.org
Introduction
Abu Dhabi is the largest of seven Emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a federation of states situated in the south east of the Arabian Peninsula. As the capital of the UAE, the City of Abu Dhabi is a cosmopolitan metropolis and the centre of the country’s political and industrial activities as well as a major cultural and commercial focal point.

The UAE is a member of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), as well as the UN, the WCO, the WTO, the IMF, INTERPOL, the WHO, OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), and the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) among others.

Vision
Established in 1962, the Department of Finance (DoF) is the main Abu Dhabi government entity facilitating the achievement of the Emirate’s policy agenda as well as its strategic vision to continue creating a secure urban investment environment and laying the pillars of sustainable development for an open and competitive economy.

The vision of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Department of Finance, is to adopt the highest quality standards throughout DoF’s network – encompassing over 40 governmental entities – that are clear and efficient. This vision is supported by DoF Undersecretary, H.E. Hamad Al Hurr Al Suwaidi, who plays a key role in adapting the ideas and launching initiatives to turn them into distinct practices and methods that develop the institutional role of the Department.

To meet its goals, the DoF strives to enhance its human resource skills and employs the finest IT applications across its five main directorates: Customs, General Support Services, Government Budgeting, Government Accounting, and Information Technology.

Customs strategy
The Customs Administration has undergone major reform and modernization to become a leading Customs agency in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. This rapid development has seen Customs transform into a modern organization focused on facilitating trade whilst ensuring appropriate controls. As part of Abu Dhabi 2030 (a visionary development plan) and the DoF 2010-2014 Strategic Plan, Abu Dhabi Customs is committed to consistently delivering high quality services to all levels of business and society.

Developing business relationships with key stakeholders has been the foundation for implementing electronic pre-clearance options, electronic e-payment facilities, and membership of The Golden Card to accredited clients. Complementing this strategy is the implementation of a sophisticated risk management system that is an integrated organizational process based on the latest global models, including the WCO SAFE Framework.
of Standards and its integral Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) concept. This risk management model will be expanded throughout the UAE and incorporates best practice analysis technology and techniques including strategic assessments and network sharing.

A key initiative has been the installation of modern detection technology including x-ray, backscatter and radiation equipment in a range of fixed and mobile operational environments for the treatment of imported and exported goods. Other initiatives include the creation of a WCO Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), a WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) National Contact Point with electronic links to a range of stakeholders including INTERPOL, the Chamber of Commerce & Industry and other clients. In addition, Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) have been developed with trading partners to increase information sharing and exchange.

To ensure the security of global trade, IPR and Anti-Money Laundering/Counter Terrorism Financing Units have been established and Memoranda of Understanding concluded with HM Revenue & Customs in the UK, the US Department of Homeland Security, the US Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency, as well as other European Customs administrations.

A series of skilling programmes have been initiated to rapidly accelerate staff competencies and in this regard, Customs’ partners in France, the UK, the US and other countries have delivered a range of ongoing programmes covering anti-money laundering, cash couriers, inspection techniques, trade, classification, valuation, origin and preference among others. The capacity and knowledge of Abu Dhabi Customs officials will be further strengthened by the building of a Customs Training Academy at Al Ain, one hour from Abu Dhabi city.
The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, known by its acronym CITES or ‘the Washington Convention’, is an international agreement between governments aimed at ensuring that the international trade in species of wild animals and plants does not put their survival at risk.

It was adopted on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975. The Convention is legally-binding on States-Parties, which have adhered to it, but it is not generally self-executing. This means that domestic measures must be adopted which provide for a Party’s implementation of its obligations under the Convention. In this connection, Customs law is an important source of legal authority for CITES-related implementation and enforcement.

The Conference of the Parties (CoP), the supreme decision-making body of the Convention, held its fifteenth meeting in Doha (Qatar) from 13 to 25 March 2010. During this meeting the 175 States-Parties welcomed John Scanlon by acclamation to the post of Secretary-General of the CITES Secretariat. He replaced Willem Wijnstekers who held the post from April 1999 until 30 April 2010.

Mr. Scanlon agreed to answer a few questions put to him by WCO News.

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**WCO News (WN):** You have just been elected to the post of Secretary-General of the CITES Secretariat after serving as Principal Advisor to UNEP’s Executive Director on Policy and Programmes. What are your initial impressions as Secretary-General?

**John Scanlon (JS):** It is an extraordinary Convention that has served the international community well. Its operational focus is a great strength and it stands out amongst other conventions for its pragmatic approach and on-the-ground achievements. We are fortunate to have a highly skilled and dedicated team working in the Secretariat. Nevertheless, there is scope for us to modernize some of our practices, further enhance some of our partnerships, and explore innovative options for addressing issues that emerged at CoP15 in Doha. We have a good opportunity to make real progress in these and other areas, before CoP16 takes place in Thailand during 2013.

**WN:** The CITES Convention celebrated its 35th Anniversary on 1 July 2010. What noteworthy achievements have been attained since 1975?

**JS:** Patterns of wildlife trade today are very different compared to what they were three or four decades ago – the Convention’s robust regulatory regime, and its flexibility and adaptability, have been of immense benefit to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and it has contributed to the recovery of species which were on the brink of extinction, such as crocodilians and vicuña.

The reason for the success of CITES are many and varied but three stand out:

- The quality of the original text of the Convention adopted in 1973. It is focused, practical and flexible and it establishes a
clear, robust international regulatory regime to address commercial and non-commercial trade in wild plants and animals, as well as their parts and derivatives – a regime that has evolved to meet emerging challenges and that has stood the test of time.

As an aside, during the negotiation process, which concluded in Washington DC in 1973, governments worked with representatives of the Customs Cooperation Council (now known as the WCO), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the precursor to the WTO) and the FAO to ensure that the treaty would be consistent with their respective rules.

• The commitment of the Parties to implement the Convention, ensuring that trade in wild plants and animals is legal, traceable and sustainable. And they have done so by putting into place national level Management and Scientific Authorities, and domestic measures to enforce the Convention, that have been the engine of the Convention and that have ensured its success.

• The relationships that have been forged in the implementation of the Convention with a broad range of entities both within and outside the UN. These entities include other conventions, the FAO, the ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization), the World Bank, the WTO, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNODC, the WCO, INTERPOL, the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), the WWF, TRAFFIC, the private sector and academic bodies, and many others.

WN: 2010 is the United Nations’ Year of Biodiversity. What are CITES’ priorities in terms of reconciling preservation and sustainable development, and promoting greater synergy with other conventions also covering biodiversity?

JS: Species are the building blocks of ecosystems. As recognised in the preamble of the Convention, they have value from aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational and economic points of view. No one convention or organization can do it all – we are interdependent and each has its role to play. CITES focuses on ensuring that no species of wild animals or plants becomes or remains subject to unsustainable exploitation through international trade.

This year CITES participated in the third and final meeting on the establishment of an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). We are contributing to the work on international environmental governance being led by UNEP, to enhance our collective efforts to help build the capacity of developing countries to implement CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions.

With the FAO, the ICCAT (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna), the ITTO and others, we are helping countries to strengthen their regulation of the international trade in commercial fish and timber species. We also contributed towards the UN High Level Event on Biodiversity in September.

In addition, we are working with a broader suite of conventions, the WCO and UNEP within the Green Customs initiative. Effective global implementation of the Convention is heavily dependent upon a strong partnership with the WCO. Customs services are the ‘front line’ for CITES implementation as they control the exit and entry points for wildlife products.

WN: In these times of crisis and budgetary restrictions, what measures will the Secretariat be taking to simplify CITES resolutions and decisions and ensure that they take fuller account of economic realities, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention?

JS: We are constantly looking for ways to make it easier for Parties to implement the Convention, as well as ways to better deliver services to the Parties. In particular, we have been working on collaborative initiatives to develop knowledge management protocols and electronic tools to lower the costs, as well as the carbon footprint, of CITES implementation.

"Over the past few months, we have also reviewed and restructured the Secretariat in order to align ourselves to better meet the expectations of the Parties."

The Secretariat developed an e-permitting toolkit to assist Parties that is fully compliant with the WCO Data Model. We also worked with the WCO to develop the CITES module in its e-learning programs and are also keeping abreast of developments related to e-government and the Single Window environment. Finally, we developed an interactive course on CD-ROM exclusively tailored for Customs officials. We are also working with the FAO and others on sharks, UNEP and others on knowledge management, IATA on its e-freight project, as well as with the WCO and others on integrated border management and domestic law enforcement.

With regard to the adoption of new resolutions and decisions by the CoP, it was agreed by the Parties, several years ago, that any proposals for new tasks to be undertaken that have financial implications must be accompanied by a budget and an indication of the source of funds.

In advance of each meeting, we use the lessons learned in implementing the Convention over the previous couple of years as a basis for reviewing the existing resolutions and decisions and proposing revisions – with the aim of ensuring that the body of CITES ‘soft law’ remains relevant and useful to the Parties.
Decisions of the CoP are also reviewed at each CoP meeting and revised, retired or continued, as appropriate.

Over the past few months, we have also reviewed and restructured the Secretariat in order to align ourselves to better meet the expectations of the Parties.

WN: Curbing the illicit trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora requires monitoring of trade, especially at borders. To that end, the CITES Secretariat has been working closely with enforcement agencies, and Customs in particular, for many years now. However, monitoring alone is not enough. It must be supported by law enforcement agencies that act as a deterrent. How does the Secretariat plan to sensitize the judicial system to the threat hanging over our environmental heritage from this illicit trade?

JS: We recognize the vital role of the judiciary in responding to illegal wildlife trade and are delighted that Customs authorities are regularly working with prosecutors to bring offenders before the courts, rather than relying on confiscations or limited administrative penalties. This is something I particularly appreciate as a former practicing lawyer who prosecuted and defended court actions. Along with our partners in UNEP, we have a long history of interacting with the judiciary. Our inter-active CD-ROM training module on enforcement matters contains sections specifically designed for prosecutors and judges. We are glad to see judicial regional networks have been, and are being, established to focus exclusively on environmental crime. There are, for instance, very active networks operating in South and Central America.

We are also keen to make better use of and contribute to initiatives such as ECOLEX (a web-based, single window for environmental law information), which has a Judicial Portal where judgments on environmental matters from across the globe can be shared. Our contacts with individual members of the judiciary are also growing. I recently hosted a visit from a Justice of the High Court of Brazil, who also serves as Co-President of the International Network for Compliance and Enforcement, to discuss how we could enhance efforts to work with the judiciary.

WN: What are your priorities for the next five years?

JS: My priorities are determined through the decisions of the Parties. In this context, as Secretary-General, over the next five years my focus will include:

• Further enhancing our relationship with major inter-governmental partners, such as other conventions, UNEP, the FAO, ICCAT, the WTO, UNCTAD, the World Bank, UNODC, the WCO, INTERPOL, ITTO, etc. and with other international organizations such as the IUCN.

• Addressing key issues to do with how CITES can best address commercially harvested marine and timber species, including clarification of issues such as the definition of the introduction from the sea with respect to species taken in the high seas.

• Exploring innovative ways to implement the Convention and ensure it continues to evolve in meeting changing circumstances and expectations, including with respect to the listing of species on the Appendices and their review.

• Promoting critical partnership initiatives, such as integrated border management, Green Customs, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (comprising the WCO, CITES, INTERPOL, UNODC and the World Bank), and the UNEP Knowledge Management Initiative.

• Mobilizing additional resources for the Parties to enhance implementation of the Convention, including exploring opportunities for CITES Parties to recover the costs of CITES implementation through permit or other administrative fees and to access Global Environment Facility funding.

• Promoting and supporting efforts to enhance national capacity in science, compliance and enforcement, in a manner consistent with the role of a convention secretariat.

• Encouraging non-party States to accede to (join) the Convention.

• Making maximum use of modern technology to enhance the capacity of the Secretariat to serve the Parties, including developing online capacity building tools and supporting electronic permitting (which is compliant with the WCO Data Model).

• Ensuring that the Secretariat is deploying its resources in the most efficient and effective manner to serve the needs and expectations of the Parties, and that it has sufficient resources to carry out the functions entrusted to it by the Parties.

More information
www.cites.org

John Scanlon took up his position as Secretary-General of CITES on 3 May 2010 after having served from 2007 as Principal Advisor on Policy and Programme to UNEP’s Executive Director in which capacity he also led the UNEP internal reform team. A lawyer by training, he has had a long and distinguished career in environmental law, policy and management at national and international levels having held a number of senior influential positions both in Australia, his home country, and abroad.
Why did you write this book?

The idea mainly came about as a result of training we have done in various countries over the years, both for the WTO Secretariat and for donor organizations. Given the technical nature of this Agreement, we thought it would be useful for Customs officers, importers, and trade policy officials to have a user-friendly but comprehensive explanation of the terms and purposes of the Agreement.

The book is timely given that the WTO valuation system recently celebrated its 30th anniversary.

That’s true, and during that time there have been interpretations of the Agreement by national governments, the WTO and WCO valuation committees, and the WTO dispute settlement body. We tried to capture this in the book.

In writing the book, what did you find most interesting?

The negotiation history, which we thought important to include in explaining the underlying purposes of the Agreement. GATT historical documents that have only recently been made accessible give a fascinating overview of tensions between WTO Members, compromises that were made, and how the text of the Agreement reached its current form. We also enjoyed designing the case studies and test questions, many of which were based on valuation problems and experiences of countries where we have worked.

The WCO Technical Committee on Customs Valuation publishes explanatory material on Customs valuation, such as the Valuation Compendium. How does the book fit with this body of material?

Our book is intended to provide guidance on interpretation of the Agreement, so of course we reference WCO technical committee decisions. These decisions are important pieces of the overall picture we were trying to create of the meaning and purpose of the legal text.

Your book seems to be in the style of a “how-to” manual or a “dummy’s” guide to valuation. Is that intentional?

That kind of plain-language guide was our model, given that the book evolved out of training material used in technical assistance projects.

More information
http://onlinebookshop.wto.org
It is vital that we unite and coordinate our day-to-day efforts to combat, in all its forms and on every front, the creeping poison that is illicit drug trafficking whose spread around the world is fuelled by globalization,” said Secretary General Mikuriya, who counts on the active participation of WCO Members to combat this scourge.

WCO Members are now accustomed to holding a range of activities to mark this day; operations to destroy narcotic drugs and chemical precursors seized by Customs or jointly with other agencies, public drug awareness campaigns, heightened controls, symposiums to demonstrate that they are mobilized against illicit drug trafficking, and so on.

To carry forward the spirit of anti-drugs day and as a follow-up to Operation Cocair 1 in December 2008, the WCO Secretariat rolled out Cocair 2 at 25 international airports from 14 to 20 June 2010. Cocair 2 brought together 22 countries from West and Central Africa as well as Brazil and Morocco, and was aimed at intercepting shipments of cocaine and other drugs bound for Europe. This operation was conducted in partnership with the European Commission, INTERPOL and the UNODC, with the support of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILOs) for West Africa, Central Africa and Western Europe.

Over the course of the operation, Customs services, working closely with other drug enforcement agencies, used CENcomm, the WCO’s secure communication system, to exchange information. The positive results were not long in coming. Twenty-five significant seizures were made; some highlights in this respect included:

- 1 seizure of over three tonnes of chemical precursors in Côte d’Ivoire, intended for companies in Benin and Guinea.
- 1 seizure of 1870 kg of herbal cannabis in Gabon.
- 12 seizures in Brazil, Cape Verde, Gabon, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, and Senegal, totalling in excess of 15 kg of cocaine of which three quarters involved swallowed drugs.
- Several interceptions of money, one seizure of a hunting weapon and ammunition, and one seizure of a false passport.

Looking beyond this immediate success in terms of seizures made, other objectives of the operation were achieved, including the strengthening of controls in airports, particularly at export, sensitizing airport inspection services to the risk of smuggling, gathering information on the status of cocaine trafficking, and enhancing information sharing between Customs and police services.

Let’s work together to fight the real threat posed by drugs!

On 26 June 2010 the WCO Secretariat celebrated the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking pioneered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as Customs plays a significant role in the fight against this dangerous phenomenon since it is responsible for over half of all drug seizures worldwide.
Finally, much of the success of Operation Cocair 2 is down to the practical and operational training session conducted during the preparatory phase. This also came to light during the debriefing sessions on both Cocair 1 and 2. All the authorities that took part were unanimous about the benefits derived from the training, not only before and during but especially since the first operation.

Prior to the operation, just after the second practical training session held in April 2010 which focused on observation, product recognition, risk analysis, selection, targeting and information and intelligence exchange, the Gambian Customs administration made a significant seizure in June of 2.3 tonnes of cocaine concealed in an underground room inside a warehouse located on the outskirts of Banjul. This seizure, made in close cooperation with other drug enforcement agencies including SOCA (the United Kingdom’s Serious Organised Crime Agency), also resulted in the confiscation of sizeable quantities of weapons and cash.

Additionally, during the course of the operation, Togo sent an alert to Côte d’Ivoire, informing them of a stop at the port of Lagos in Nigeria by a vessel named the "MV Nashville" that was flying the Austrian flag and which had set sail from the Netherlands, and which was carrying toxic waste and other hazardous goods. Deeming the information reliable after cross-checking it, Côte d’Ivoire Customs alerted its competent authorities who consequently prevented the vessel from entering Ivorian waters. As a result, and thanks to the responsiveness of the Cocair 2 mechanism, the polluting vessel was immediately turned back to Rotterdam, far from African territorial waters.

Services continue to rally their forces in a seamless manner following Operation Cocair 2 and, boosted by this new-found dynamism, have redoubled their efforts by intensifying controls as evidenced below:

• On 21 June, French Customs in Guadeloupe (an overseas department in the French West Indies) intercepted a yacht flying
a British Virgin Islands flag with 385 kg of cocaine concealed in its hold (an investigation is underway).

• On the same day, Brazilian Customs officers seized 1724 kg of cocaine at Santos seaport that was bound for Barcelona in Spain.

• On 25 and 30 June, Bangladeshi Customs officers made two discoveries respectively involving 975 kg and 274 kg of herbal cannabis on their national territory.

• On 29 June, the Thai Customs Department intercepted 10000 methamphetamine tablets at the border with Laos.

• On 30 June, Ukrainian Customs officers seized 151 kg of cocaine at Odessa seaport that had been consigned in Bolivia.

Phases 1 and 2 of Operation Cocair fall within the scope of a much wider-reaching sustainable capacity building project for Customs administrations and other services responsible for combating drug trafficking in the targeted region, and is expected to last a minimum of three to five years. This is Project "Aircop", funded by the European Commission, coordinated by the UNODC, and implemented by the WCO and INTERPOL working closely with the region’s WCO Members as well as the RiLOs.

The project’s objective is to improve border controls and management through enhanced cooperation between services and more effective information sharing and analysis via the CEN-comm for WCO Member Customs administrations and I-24/7 for police services. This project aims to set up joint task forces specialized in targeting and risk analysis at Africa’s international airports, with a view to extending the project’s scope to Latin America. While this may undoubtedly seem an ambitious goal, it is commensurate with the seriousness of the problem faced by countries.

Some photos taken around the world tell the story of Operation Cocair 2 and the events on 26 June 2010. A promotional poster for anti-drugs day, produced by the Secretariat and available to Members, may also be freely downloaded from the WCO website.

More information
enforcement@wcoomd.org
This statement by Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), was made on 26 June 2010 during the release of the UNODC’s World Drug Report 2009 to mark the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking that is celebrated annually on this day. Clearly Costa was alluding to the undeniable link between drugs and crime, and between traffickers and organized criminal syndicates.

The World Drug Report examines trends in the production, consumption and trafficking of drugs in 2009. Globally there has been a decrease in the production of cocaine and heroin, with the trend being downwards for other drugs such as cocaine, cannabis and opiates also. Conversely, the number of seizures of “amphetamine-type” stimulants is increasing, and the number of countries where these drugs are manufactured is also rising sharply.

In addition, the Report looks at how routes are evolving in response to changes in behaviour patterns, as well as presenting the initiatives taken in terms of improving information exchange and conducting joint anti-drug operations. It also devotes particular attention to the impact of drug-related crime and the measures taken to tackle it. In this connection the Report addresses the issues of doing away with drug controls and legalizing drugs. In presenting the Report, the UNODC Executive Director said there was no miracle cure for the problems of illicit trafficking and drug abuse, and legalizing drugs was not the solution. Societies should not have to choose between public health and public security; they should be able to accommodate both, if more resources were set aside for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, and dynamic efforts were made to combat drug-related crime.

Finally, the Report endeavours to put forward recommendations for combating drugs more effectively; these include treating drug addiction as an illness, eradicating “free-for-all” zones in cities in order to deal with the vulnerability of certain specific populations to drugs and crime, better targeting of enforcement activities in order to increase the effectiveness of detection and repression activities, and improving and strengthening the collection of data, in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

The UNODC World Drug Report complements the WCO’s own annual Customs and Drugs Report; the former deals with the issue of drugs as a whole, while the latter endeavours to present a global analysis of illicit drug trafficking based on reported seizures carried out by Customs, either alone or jointly with drug enforcement agencies. Both the WCO and the UNODC work in close partnership to fight the scourge of illicit drugs and will continue to grow their flourishing working relationship.

More information
Risk management needs to be implemented across an organization

More than 200 delegates from Customs administrations, international organizations and the private sector participated in the WCO Risk Management Forum from 28 to 29 June 2010. Bringing together a wide range of risk management expertise in various fields in the speakers and audience, the forum provided good insight into the way risk management is conceived and implemented around the world and the many issues and complexities surrounding the concept.

Speakers in Panel 1 stated that risk management is something that needs to be implemented across the organization from the highest decision-making level to the field level. From an organizational perspective, risk management provides Customs administrations with a structured framework for decision-making and enables better allocation of resources leading to more efficient achievement of organizational goals. At the operational level risk management enables Customs to better achieve the balance between facilitation and control and to concentrate on goods and passengers posing the highest risk.

The discussion in Panel 2 clearly showed how important early and accurate data are in managing risk. At the same time intelligence has a key role in supporting risk management practices. In facilitating information and intelligence flows both in the intra- and inter-agency contexts, different automated information exchange and analysis tools can tremendously facilitate the work of Customs and other border agencies. One of the key messages which emerged was the importance of the Customs-Trade partnership, enabling more efficient risk management practices through the provision of timely and quality data.

Discussion on revenue-related risks in Panel 3 clearly showed that risk management can assist in improving revenue collection, often assisted by information technology (IT). Cooperation with tax administrations in sharing information is identified as one powerful measure. The importance of measuring the performance of a risk management system was also underlined.

The presentations and discussion in Panel 4 indicated that when managing security-related risks, there is a need for good national and international cooperation between different border control agencies. While the risks might be perceived from different angles, the ultimate goal of other border agencies is similar to that of Customs. Therefore it is essential to ensure consistency in risk management among border agencies. This cooperation should also include the private sector.

During Panel 5, it was apparent that modern technologies provide us with great risk management opportunities. Technologies such as database management and inspection technology should be used to the greatest extent possible to facilitate the management of various risks in the operating environment. However, it should be remembered that these tools are supportive in nature and should not be considered as a ready-made solution. It takes time to deploy a risk management system as it is a continuous learning process. In this context, the value of skilled and trained officers at all levels of the organization should not be underestimated.

Panel 6 pointed out that capacity building and technical assistance are important to enable further implementation of risk management. The WCO supports its Members in applying WCO tools and in maximizing the use of information technology, but above all what is necessary is to change the culture by embracing facilitation to implement risk management.

Based on audience reactions during the forum, Customs administrations understand the different risk management concepts rather well. Therefore, the future challenge relates to putting this theory into practice. To assist in this regard, several risk management regional workshops will be organized by the WCO and will take place during 2010/2011.

Acknowledging the implementation challenge, the Secretary General of the WCO concluded the forum by saying, “The regional workshops will have an operative focus concentrating on different implementation aspects of the risk management culture. We need to hear from you about your problems, how you overcame them and what the remaining challenges are.”

More information
www.wcoomd.org/event.htm
Given that capacity building is one of the most important cross-cutting issues for the WCO, the Secretariat working jointly with the Association of Customs Representatives in Brussels (ACRB) invited members of the Association to an Awareness Workshop on Capacity Building and Customs Modernization that was held from 12 to 14 July 2010. The ACRB is a voluntary and informal networking community of Customs Attachés who serve as a link between their national administrations and the WCO Secretariat.

Aimed at improving understanding of the importance of Customs capacity building and to ensure more involvement by WCO Members, presentations during the Workshop covered a range of topics including an introduction to the Columbus Programme, capacity building delivery, resource management, the development of tools and instruments, regionalization, education, integrity, and management development.

The challenges in the delivery of capacity and lessons learned were also discussed, and a case study on launching a Customs modernization process gave participants a good insight into planning and implementing key modern Customs components.

Participants were satisfied with the outcomes of the Workshop as it had contributed to the enhancement of communication between the Secretariat and WCO Members. In addition, the Workshop had placed Customs representatives in a better position to engage their administrations on Customs capacity building issues from an informed perspective.

More information
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Second WCO Technology and Innovation Forum opens soon

The second WCO event focusing on inspection equipment and hardware used in Customs operations will take place in Cairo, Egypt from 2 to 4 November 2010.

This year’s forum is organized around the theme: “Smart Borders, Enabling Technologies” and participants will discuss the efficient use of technology at the border.

Demonstrations of new and emerging technologies will complement the forum.

You are invited to visit the forum website for registration details and see the latest list of confirmed speakers, sponsors and exhibitors.

More information
http://www.wcoomd.org/event_2tif.htm

The “Partnership in Customs academic research and development”, known as the WCO Picard Programme, provides a framework for cooperation between Customs and the academic world.

Held annually, the 2010 Conference that will take place in Abu Dhabi (UAE) from 23 to 25 November 2010 is organized by the WCO in partnership with the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) and the University of Canberra’s Centre for Customs and Excise Studies.

This year participants will focus on four specific issues: Customs-Business partnerships; performance measurement; Customs and revenue collection; and the impact of climate change on international trade and Customs management in the post-Copenhagen era.

Visit the Conference website to register your attendance or for further details.

More information
WCO Publications: Online databases

- Facilitate cross-border transactions with version 3 of the WCO Data Model!
- Find the Explanatory Notes and the Classification Opinions in the Harmonized System database!
- Find all the Articles of the Revised Kyoto Convention and the accompanying Guidelines in this online edition!
- Improve your knowledge of Customs Valuation! The Customs Valuation Compendium is now available online!

For more information: http://publications.wcoomd.org
or contact us at: info@wcoomdpublications.org
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Provides risk assessment and management capabilities to any electronic document including Port or Airport Manifest, Customs declaration, regulatory certificates.

Risk engine built on auto-adaptive risk criteria mechanisms and Memory Based Reasoning.

On-line charts on revenue trends and cargo dwell time, performance of Customs offices and staff appraisal, compliance status of brokers and importers.

SMS or email alerts when sudden drop in revenue collection, high risk consignments or any user defined event, for Customs and Ministry of Finance executives.