



Brussels, 21 March 2018.

## TRANSIT

### **Update on recent activities in the area of transit**

#### **(Item IV. a on the Agenda)**

#### **Background**

1. During the Joint Meeting of the Permanent Technical Committee (PTC) and the WCO Working Group on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFAWG) in October 2017, the Secretariat presented information on the Global Transit Conference that was held in July 2017 and the launching of the Transit Guidelines, as well as the WCO plans for future work in the area of transit. The delegates to the Joint Meeting were informed that the WCO was putting the focus on the implementation of the Transit Guidelines and the collection of best practices. In this context, the Secretariat was planning the delivery of a series of regional workshops with a view to promoting the Transit Guidelines and collecting best practices of their implementation.

#### **Progress to date**

2. The new series of regional workshops on transit was launched with a Workshop for the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region of the WCO. It was organised in cooperation with the World Bank's Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme (SSATP) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and was held from 22 to 24 November 2017 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Workshop was attended by more than 70 participants from over 50 entities – Member Customs Administrations, Regional Economic Communities, Corridor Management Institutions, Industry associations, private sector entities, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Development Bank (AfDB).
3. During the Workshop, the WCO presented the guiding principles for the establishment of efficient and effective transit regimes as outlined in the various sections of the WCO Transit Guidelines and the participants shared and discussed good practices, challenges and measures for further improvement of the various aspects of transit in the

region. Presentations were delivered by the Secretariats of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), as well as the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority, the Maputo Corridor Logistics Initiative (MCLI) and other stakeholders.

4. The second regional transit workshop aimed at promoting the implementation of the Transit Guidelines is being organised for the WCO Members from the West and Central Africa region. At the time of drafting of the meeting document, the Secretariat is still in the process of organizing the Workshop in partnership with the SSATP and IRU. The event will be held in the period 11-13 April 2018 in Cotonou, Benin and more than 100 representatives of Member Customs Administrations, Regional Economic Communities, Corridor Management Institutions, Industry associations, private sector entities, development partners and other international organizations are expected to attend.
5. The Americas and the Caribbean (AMS) region of the WCO will benefit from the third Workshop in the series of Transit Guidelines promotional events. The Customs Administration of Paraguay accepted to host the Workshop, which will be held from 21 to 23 May 2018 in Asunción. The workshops for the remaining WCO regions will be organized in the financial year 2018/2019.
6. In addition to the regional transit workshops, the Secretariat has been promoting the WCO tools in the area of transit on various occasions, such as the 4<sup>th</sup> WCO Global AEO Conference, events organized by railway organizations, meetings organized by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNOHRLLS), meetings of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) working bodies, a Knowledge Sharing session at the International Road Transport Union (IRU), a national transit workshop in Belarus and other events.

#### **Action required**

7. The PTC is invited to take note of the update on the WCO activities in the area of transit.
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