

CYPRUS DECLARATION

(June 2000)

DECLARATION
OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL^(*)
ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION AND
MUTUAL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE

(The Cyprus Declaration)

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL,

Considering the WCO's Strategic Plan and Vision Statement,

Considering the Declaration on combating transnational organized crime made at the Council Session in Budapest in 1997,

Considering the WCO's 1953 and subsequent Recommendations on Mutual Administrative Assistance and Co-operation between Customs Administrations,

Considering that transnational organized crime is able to take advantage of advances in information technology and the ever increasing use of legitimate international trade and travel to cover illicit activities,

Recognizing that Customs is the principal border agency having the prime responsibility to control the cross border movement of goods, conveyances and people,

Recognizing that the co-ordination between Customs administrations is essential in the fight against transnational illegal activities and that the exchange of information and intelligence between them can lead to a more targeted and cost effective action,

Aware of the importance of using international mutual administrative assistance and intelligence exchange to effectively combat Customs fraud and transnational organized crime without harming legitimate business interests,

Concerned with the need to promote standardized legal instruments adapted to the developing needs of international co-operation and yet variable enough to accommodate the geographical, historical, political and legislative realities of all WCO Members,

Taking account of existing legal instruments such as the International Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance for the Prevention, Investigation and Repression of Customs Offences (Nairobi, 9 June 1977),

^(*) "Customs Co-operation Council (CCC)" is the official name of the World Customs Organization (WCO).

DECLARES that :

- Action against Customs offences can be rendered more effective by increased co-operation between Customs administrations and that such co-operation is one of the aims of the 1950 Convention establishing a Customs Co-operation Council.
- Increased effectiveness of Customs administrations in the areas of enforcement, compliance and facilitation should be realized through risk analysis, profiling and targeting mechanisms and should be supported by co-operation at national level with other law enforcement agencies.
- The WCO Members should take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that adequate operative powers are contained within their national legislation.
- A rapid and smooth exchange of information amongst Members should be secured through the use of bilateral, regional and international instruments and with the assistance of the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office network and the Customs Enforcement Network.
- The WCO Secretariat shall continue its assistance and advisory work for the Member States in their search for the legal instruments best suited to their needs.
- The WCO Secretariat shall continue to encourage Member States to accede to the Nairobi Convention.
- The WCO Secretariat shall endeavour to improve the existing co-ordination and co-operation with other international organizations.
- The WCO should continue to encourage Members, having regard to the special features of their geographical position and their national legislation to examine the possibility of entering into bilateral, regional or international agreements, with a view to the further development of mutual administrative assistance in Customs matters.

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