

DECLARATION OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL
ON THE FURTHER NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN CUSTOMS AND THE TRADING COMMUNITY
AIMED AT CO-OPERATION TO PREVENT DRUG SMUGGLING

(June 1992)

DECLARATION OF THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL
ON THE FURTHER NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN CUSTOMS AND THE TRADING COMMUNITY
AIMED AT CO-OPERATION TO PREVENT DRUG SMUGGLING

THE CUSTOMS CO-OPERATION COUNCIL,

NOTING the Brussels Declaration of June 1986 to strengthen the role of the Council in the field of enforcement by actively seeking the support and co-operation of organizations involved in international commerce, transport and travel for the fight against smuggling,

HAVING REGARD to the Recommendation of the Council on the development of co-ordinated enforcement and intelligence operations aimed at identifying and intercepting concealed illicit drugs (13 June 1985), and in particular to the need for securing the fullest co-operation of airline and shipping companies and others involved in the international transport and travel industries in this respect,

HAVING REGARD to the United Nations Convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances adopted in 1988 (Vienna Convention),

HAVING REGARD also to Article 15 of the aforesaid Convention, which states that Parties shall seek to ensure co-operation between appropriate authorities and commercial carriers, and shall require the latter to take reasonable precautions to prevent the use of their means of transport for the commission of offences,

RECOGNIZING the ever increasing threat that illicit drug smuggling, drug abuse and drug-related crime presents to the health, economic and social welfare of society,

RECOGNIZING the need to improve the capacity of law enforcement agencies to target and intercept illicit drug movements without unduly hindering the movement of innocent persons and legitimate international trade,

RECOGNIZING also the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) concluded between the Council and international trade and transport organizations on improving co-operation to combat Customs fraud, in particular drug smuggling,

BELIEVING that it is at the national level where the joint development and implementation of national co-operative agreements is most appropriate,

BELIEVING that it is at the local level where the implementation of the agreed measures will be most effective,

BELIEVING that Customs authorities need to take the initiative in the joint development of national co-operative agreements,

BELIEVING that the co-operation of traders, carriers, port and airport authorities, and others involved in the international supply chain can significantly assist Customs authorities in the gathering of information for risk assessment and targeting purposes, and can lead to the improvement of physical security and specialized training of Customs and trade personnel,

BELIEVING also that such co-operation can be used in the fight against all forms of illicit traffic, and to combat commercial fraud,

SUPPORTS the principle of achieving increased co-operation between Customs authorities and traders, carriers, port and airport authorities, and others involved in the international supply chain through MOUs,

DECLARES that :

1. the MOU programme is one of the effective methods for indicating compliance with and support for Article 15 of the 1988 Vienna Convention,
2. Members should give urgent consideration to concluding MOUs on a national level with companies and trade associations involved in international commerce, transport and travel, where they have not done so, or to introducing other voluntary co-operative programmes, to further support the joint efforts of Customs and the trade in the fight against drug smuggling,

DECLARES further that the Council and its Members will work closely with the trading community to :

3. promote the adoption of MOUs in many more countries, secure their effective local application by regular monitoring and up-dating, and extend their scope from transport and intermediary services into adjacent trade and industrial operations,
4. encourage ratification of the 1988 Vienna Convention by those countries which have not yet done so,
5. exploit new information technologies to help target suspect consignments, through early, high-quality routine transaction information, supplemented on request by additional tracking/tracing data, from commercial records,
6. promote specialized training of Customs and trade staff to improve facilitation, security and prevention of smuggling,
7. review and, as required, improve the detailed Guidelines which put the MOUs into operational practices, and
8. promote and where necessary formulate standards for physical security on commercial premises,

INSTRUCTS the Secretary General to take such steps as may be necessary to implement this Declaration. He shall report to the Council, as necessary, on the progress made.

o o o