



**Report to the Permanent Technical  
Committee  
on “Ensuring business continuity in the  
face of trade disruptions”**

April 2023

WCO Private Sector Consultative Group

# Agenda

- Challenges and opportunities
- Private Sector Views
  - Identifying risks to business continuity
  - Managing risks effectively
- Moving Forward

# Challenges and opportunities

- Disruptions are always possible and can take various forms
- Contingencies enable firms to ensure business continuity
- Every stakeholder can and should contribute to increased resilience

# 1. Identifying risks to business continuity

- COVID-19 pandemic exposed a general lack of preparedness by businesses to predict and react to supply chain risks
- Important to map and identify risks to business continuity – for business and Customs
- External threats that could drastically limit operations include:  
Cyber attacks, natural disasters, new pandemics, infrastructure challenges, strikes, conflict/war
- All stakeholders need to prepare for future threats to ensure their operations can run during a crisis and support post-crisis recovery

## 2. Managing risks effectively - I

- Leveraging existing tools and instruments to facilitate trade – effective implementation is key
- Impact of disruptions across supply chains can be lessened through (further) streamlining of Customs and security procedures
- Essential elements of private-public sector activity:
  - Plan for disruption
  - Practice those responses
  - Engage Partner Government Agencies

## 2. Managing risks effectively – II

- Best practices for strengthening resilience could incorporate:
  - Scenario planning to identify the extent of disruptions
  - Tabletop exercises held by government and private sector organizations to test and assess protocols
- Build on the [WCO Guidelines on disaster management and supply chain continuity](#) (June 2021) for capacity-building explore the inclusion of disruptions to business in the Guidelines – as well as a thoughtful review and update mechanism.

# Moving Forward

- Necessity to build and maintain operational resiliency through continuous process improvements
- Every stakeholder should be prepared for different scenarios through a crisis management and preparedness framework
- Effective implementation of the tools and instruments available
- Improving the partnership and building of trust between the public and private stakeholders

Thank you!