



PERMANENT TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE

PC0726Ea

-
241st/242nd Sessions

-
24-26 October 2023

Brussels, 31 August 2023

REPORT ON THE JOINT WCO/UPU CONFERENCE, 6-8 JUNE 2023

(Item III on the Agenda)

SUMMARY

Purpose of document

From 6 to 8 June 2023, the WCO and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) held the first WCO–UPU Global Conference in Tokyo, Japan with the aim of identifying synergies to enhance coordination and cooperation between Customs and Designated Operators (DOs) at international and national levels in order to strengthen security and facilitation of Customs procedures for global postal chains.

The PTC is invited to take note of this report on the Joint WCO-UPU Global Conference.

Action required of the PTC

The PTC is invited to take note of the report on the Joint WCO-UPU Global Conference and the Joint Declaration between the two organizations.

*
* *
*

I. Introduction

1. The World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) held the first WCO–UPU Global Conference in Tokyo, Japan from 6 to 8 June 2023, which was hosted by the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japan Customs and Japan Post.
2. The conference brought together more than 600 high-level officials, policymakers and operational experts from Customs and postal communities, academic institutions and partner organizations from over 100 countries. It was organized as the first significant step under a Cooperation Agreement signed by the two organizations in May 2022 and offered a platform to exchange information, experiences, expertise and best practices, while increasing awareness of the Customs and postal regulatory frameworks, mandates and available instruments and tools.

II. Challenges and opportunities for cross-border e-commerce

3. Under the overall theme of “Challenges and opportunities for cross-border e-commerce through Customs and postal cooperation”, participants deliberated on various topics relating to common challenges and cooperation opportunities between Customs, Posts, government authorities and wider sector stakeholders. These topics included electronic advance data (EAD) and policy standardization and harmonization.
4. Implementing EAD with reliable quality, leveraging digitization and technology, and achieving greater synergy at all levels were identified as key factors in ensuring improved Customs procedures, increased compliance and the greater efficiency, safety and security of global postal chains.

III. Joint Declaration between the WCO the UPU on Facilitating Safe, Secure, and Efficient Global Trade

5. The two organizations have consolidated their commitment to facilitating global trade and transport through the signature of a Joint Declaration, which reiterates a clear commitment to enhanced cooperation and coordination between the WCO and the UPU, and their members, setting out the common objectives of facilitating trade and transport while interconnecting the world and protecting the public from the risks posed by illegal and dangerous goods. The declaration was signed by the WCO Secretary General and the UPU Director General, and is appended as Annex to this document.
6. At the closing ceremony, the Secretary General noted the significance of the conference and its policy-related and operational recommendations, stating that both Customs and Posts have a critical role in securing and facilitating legitimate global trade. He expressed the WCO’s willingness to work more closely with the UPU to meet the expectations of all stakeholders, so as to ensure smooth, safe and secure postal supply chains that operate in a harmonized and efficient manner.
7. The UPU Director General underlined the importance of maintaining the momentum created by the conference, so that participants can use this experience to benefit their customers and contribute to the improvement of public and private services around the world. Calling the Joint Declaration a symbol of the partners’ shared commitment, he expressed his hope that it would help them to maintain motivation in order to tackle many further challenges in the future.

IV. Action required of the PTC

8. The PTC is invited to take note of the report on the Joint WCO-UPU Global Conference and the Joint Declaration between the two organizations.

*
* *