



WCO WORKING GROUP ON
THE WTO TRADE
FACILITATION AGREEMENT

-
13th Meeting
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PT0106Eb

Brussels, 18 February 2021

**DRAFT AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE 13TH MEETING OF
THE WCO WORKING GROUP ON THE WTO TRADE FACILITATION
AGREEMENT (TFAWG)**

(Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 March 2021 from 12:00 to 15:00 Brussels time)

	Day 1 - Policy Matters	
I.	<p>Opening and adoption of the Agenda (For guidance and decision)</p> <p>a. Opening of the Meeting by Mr. Pranab Kumar Das, Director Compliance and Facilitation</p> <p>b. Adoption of the Draft Agenda</p> <p>The opening by Director Mr.Das will set the scene for the TFAWG two day meeting.</p> <p>This will be followed by the adoption of the Draft Agenda, giving delegates the opportunity to suggest changes or additional topics for discussion</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• take note of the Director’s introductory remarks,• adopt the draft Agenda.	PT0106E

<p>II.</p>	<p>Addresses by the Chairperson of the WTO Trade Facilitation Committee (TFC) Mr. Christopher O’Toole, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Canada to the WTO, and by WCO Secretary General Dr. Kunio Mikuriya (To take note)</p> <p>Mr. O’Toole will address developments taking place in the WTO TFC and how this relates to the WCO. The Secretary General Mr. Mikuriya will highlight the response of the WCO to the developments in the area of the TFA implementation specifically during the COVID-19 period.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the speeches.</p>	
<p>III.</p>	<p>WTO TFA Developments during the COVID-19 pandemic (To take note and exchange views)</p> <p>a. WTO Secretariat update on TFA implementation</p> <p>b. WCO Secretariat - oral report from the December 2020 Policy Commission and Council and other updates</p> <p>c. Members - opportunity for Members to share their national experiences regarding ratification, categorization, implementation</p> <p>This item will inform the TFAWG of all relevant developments regarding the TFA from WTO and WCO perspectives during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>It also provides an opportunity for Members to inform the TFAWG about national developments related to the TFA acceptance and implementation.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take note of the presentation from the WTO and WCO Secretariats about the state of play regarding the TFA implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic, • take note of Members’ national experiences regarding TFA implementation. 	<p>SP0731Eb SC0198Ea SC0198EAE1a</p>

<p>IV.</p>	<p>Mercator Programme</p> <p>a. WCO Secretariat written update on Mercator Programme achievements – overall and tailor made tracks and 2nd edition of the Mercator Programme Report (to take note)</p> <p>The WCO Mercator Programme aims at assisting governments worldwide to implement trade facilitation measures under the WTO TFA expeditiously and in a uniform manner using WCO instruments and tools and applying the WCO strategic approach to sustainable capacity building.</p> <p>One of the key deliverables of the TFAWG is to monitor the progress of the implementation of WCO instruments and tools that support members in applying the TFA including through comprehensive reporting of WCO Mercator Programmes Missions.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be informed, by the document PT0107 on the recent achievements about the overall and tailor made tracks as well as the second edition of the Mercator Programme Report.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the achievements of the Mercator Programme and also the second edition of the Mercator Programme Report.</p> <p>b. Redesigning the technical assistance and capacity building support during the COVID-19 (To take note and exchange views)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New WCO approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Presentation by donors ◦ Presentation by beneficiary countries • Opportunity for donors to share their experiences 	<p>PT0107Ea</p> <p>Mercator_Programme_Report_2020.pdf</p>
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	<p>The TFAWG will have an opportunity to hear on new WCO approach on capacity building and technical assistance support activities, from the donors and the beneficiary countries perspective.</p> <p>In addition, the donors and the beneficiary countries will have the opportunity to brief the TFAWG about their experiences on the technical assistance and capacity building activities during the COVID-19.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the presentations on the forms of technical assistance and capacity building support during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	
<p>V.</p>	<p>TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan (For discussion and guidance)</p> <p>The TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan are the instruments to drive the work of the TFAWG and determine its agenda.</p> <p>The TFAWG will have the opportunity to discuss the progress in the current financial year and set new goals for the new financial year.</p> <p>This item will offer the TFAWG the opportunity to review and endorse the TFAWG Work Programme and Annual Work Plan for the coming Financial Year 2021/2022.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take note of the progress made under the Annual Work Plan for Financial Year 2020/2021; and, • discuss and endorse the Work Programme and Annual Work Plan for Financial Year 2021/2022 (Annex I). 	<p>PT0108Ea</p>
<p>Day 2 - Technical Matters</p>		

<p>VI.</p>	<p>Customs Response to COVID-19 in terms of the TFA Implementation: Facilitating the Cross-Border Movement of Relief and Essential Supplies (For discussion and guidance)</p> <p>a. Presentation of national experience</p> <p>b. Presentation of regional experience</p> <p>Based on the Secretariat Note on What Customs can do to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the TFAWG will hear on the Customs measures aimed at facilitating the export, import, temporary admission and transit of relief and essential supplies. Following that, Members and a regional integration entity will present their respective experience from the COVID-19 pandemic response phase.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to provide further guidance, as appropriate.</p>	<p>PT0109Ea</p>
<p>VII.</p>	<p>Technology: helping Customs in supporting the economy and sustaining supply chain continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic and any similar crisis (For discussion and guidance)</p> <p>a. Presentation of national experience</p> <p>b. Presentation by private sector</p> <p>The pandemic has unleashed the power of technology, allowing stakeholders to stay connected and ensuring that Customs work continues in a safe and reliable manner. Social distancing requirements have prompted Customs and businesses to rely more on available and to introduce innovative technological solutions, providing new opportunities for facilitating trade. The 2020 WCO TECH-CON (11-13 November 2020) shared experiences in how the Members have accelerated the use of, for example, single window services, electronic payment solutions and non-intrusive inspection equipment, and explored the impact and lessons learnt in moving forward after the crisis.</p>	<p>PT0110Ea</p>

	<p>The TFAWG will hear about some of the experiences in using technologies during the pandemic which contributed to facilitating trade, thus supporting the economy and sustaining supply chain continuity.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the presentations from Members and the private sector and provide guidance, as appropriate.</p>	
VIII.	<p>Partnerships: a collaborative approach to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic - Coordinated Border Management and Customs-Business partnership (For discussion and guidance)</p> <p>a. Presentation of national experience</p> <p>b. Presentation by PSCG</p> <p>In the past year, collaboration amongst all relevant stakeholders has been critical for moving goods and people across borders in a swift and safe manner. The TFAWG will hear about some of the good national practices of Coordinated Border Management and of cooperation with the private sector.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the presentations from Members and the private sector and provide guidance, as appropriate.</p>	PT0111Ea
IX.	<p>Guatemala's TFA Challenges and COVID-19 by H.E. Ambassador José Briz (To take note)</p> <p>Through the Guatemala experience, H.E. Ambassador Briz will address the TFA and how different stakeholders, government and private sector can mitigate the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to international trade.</p> <p>The TFAWG will be invited to take note of the H.E. Ambassador's speech.</p>	

X.	Any Other Business (For discussion and guidance) This item gives an opportunity to discuss topics in addition to the ones listed in the agenda.	
XI.	Closing	