

Chairman's Summary of the 7th Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM)

Customs Directors Generals-Commissioners Meeting

Yokohama, 12-13 November 2007

Introduction

1. The 7th Meeting of the ASEM Customs DG-Commissioners Meeting was held in Yokohama, Japan on 12 and 13 November 2007. The Meeting was attended by the Directors-General and Commissioners of Customs and senior customs officials from 37 ASEM Members, as well as the Council of the European Union and the World Customs Organization as observers. This Meeting was chaired by Mr. Yukiyasu Aoyama, Director-General, Customs and Tariff Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan.
2. The Meeting was officially opened by Mr. Aoyama. Opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Aoyama, Mr. Kastrissianakis of the European Commission and Mr. Fournel, Director-General of French Customs.

Report on Inter-sessional developments in ASEM

3. Finland and Austria reported on the customs-related results of the 6th ASEM Summit in Helsinki, Finland on 10-11 September 2006, the 7th ASEM Finance Minister's Meeting in Wien, Austria on 8-9 April 2006 and 8th ASEM Foreign Minister's Meeting in Hamburg, Germany on 28-29 May 2007.

Customs' Approach to Secure and Facilitate Trade

4. Malaysia presented the outcome of 10th Customs Procedures Working Group Meeting (PWG) in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia on 27-29 March 2007. Germany reported the outcome of 10th Enforcement Working Group Meeting (EWG) in Berlin, Germany

on 9-10 May 2007.

The Meeting endorsed the two reports and the Trade Facilitation Action Plan for 2006-2008, and the EWG Enforcement Action Plan for 2007-2009.

5. The WCO briefed the update on the implementation of WCO Framework of Standards.
6. The Netherlands and Singapore presented the ASEM Contribution Paper on Supply Chain Security to the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards, which the Meeting adopted.
7. China and the UK reported recent progress of the EU-China AEO (Authorized Economic Operator) Pilot Project "Smart and secure trade lanes", which is entering in a testing phase. India also mentioned about the "Secure Lane Project" which it had entered into with Belgium for trade between Antwerp(Belgium) and Nhava Sheva(India).
8. Germany and Japan made presentations of updates on new developments/initiatives in the area of security, including the AEO systems. Germany made suggestions for future cooperation between ASEM countries, in particular as regards mutual recognition of AEO programs and the practical impact of implementation of new security rules, which was welcomed by the Meeting for introduction in its future work program.
9. Dr. Mitsuo Koshi, Professor, Department of Chemical System Engineering, University of Tokyo gave a presentation on "Application of high technologies to counter terrorism".
10. Korea informed the Meeting about the follow-up of the implementation of the Seoul Initiative Action Plan.

Dialogue with the Private Sector

11. Mr. Akihiro Ishiwatari, Corporate Vice President in charge of Supply Chain Management at NISSAN MOTOR Co., LTD gave NISSAN's view on global supply chain management emphasizing the need for international customs standards.

Customs' Approach to Protection of IPR

12. The UK introduced the topic by recalling the Statement from the 6th ASEM DG-Commissioners Meeting on Combating Counterfeiting. France and Hungary presented new risks arising from the consequences on globalization and spread of internet.
13. Japan, China and Korea gave presentations on Customs Approach to IPR Protection from the Asian side.
14. WCO briefed the Meeting about update on the implementation of SECURE (Standards Employed by Customs for Uniform Rights Enforcement).

Customs' Approach to Environmental Issues

15. Japan informed the Meeting about Customs' approach to environmental Issues. WCO also reported its approach to environmental Issues.

Customs Cooperation / Capacity Building

16. The EC presented the "Customs Blueprints" and distributed the document to all Asian countries. The Blueprints will be a main tool used by the EC to prepare and implement

technical assistance and capacity building programs in the customs and trade facilitation area.

17. The Philippines informed the Meeting about the recent development of the ASEAN Single Window (ASW).
18. Sweden and Singapore made a presentation on the Joint Model for Customs-to-Business cooperation and encouraged members to use the model for future cooperation with businesses. The Meeting was also informed that Sweden and Singapore were working with Vietnam to try out the model.
19. The WCO made a presentation on the WCO's initiative, "WCO Policy commission agenda".

**Orientation and priorities for the future work of
ASEM Customs Working Groups/Cooperation**

20. The EC submitted a working paper to the Meeting and made a presentation proposing orientations and priorities for future ASEM Customs work. The five suggested priority themes were: "Trade Facilitation and Security of the Supply Chain", "Standardisation and Simplification", "Combating Counterfeiting", "Fight against Fraud" and "Protecting the Society and the Environment". The work done so far in ASEM, as well as agreed activities of the Working Group Action Plans would be integrated and continued according to these priorities.

The EC also suggested to adapt the structure of working groups to the thematic approach and merge PWG and EWG into one working group in the future which should be called "ASEM working group on customs matters" (AWC). The working paper was endorsed by the Meeting.

Future Meetings and Wrap up

21. EC announced that it will host the 8th ASEM Customs DG-Commissioners Meeting in Europe in 2009. The exact venue will be announced at the 1st meeting of the ASEM Working Group on Customs Matters (AWC).

The Meeting noted that the 1st meeting of the AWC will be hosted by France in spring 2008. Thailand also informed that following AWC will take place in Thailand in the final quarter of 2008.

22. Mr. Aoyama summarized the Meeting. The Meeting adopted the “YOKOHAMA Declaration”, which is set out in the Annex.

13 November 2007