



**8<sup>th</sup> ASEM Customs DGs/Commissioners meeting**  
**15/16 October 2009, Heraklion, Greece**

**THE HERAKLION DECLARATION**

We, the Director Generals/Commissioners of the Customs Administrations of Asian and European ASEM Member States met in Heraklion, Crete on 15-16 October 2009, and:

FULLY DETERMINED to undertake every effort aimed at strengthening cooperation between our Customs Administrations as the key border agencies of our Member States;

BEARING IN MIND that successful customs cooperation among the ASEM Member States over the past decade has created an effective platform for sharing views and ideas on the role and function of Customs, as well as on how to better implement customs legislation;

RECOGNISING that it is now time to make concrete and visible progress and achieve tangible results in the priority areas of Trade Facilitation and Supply Chain Security, Standardisation and Simplification, Combating Counterfeiting, Protection of Society and the Environment and Fight against Fraud, Capacity Building and Visibility of ASEM, in particular by

- Noting that the role of Customs throughout the world has significantly changed, pursuing not only trade facilitation and revenue collection, but also protecting the environment as well as ensuring the safety and security of our societies;
- Strengthening customs enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) by cooperation and experience sharing
- Working towards coordinated approaches in the fight against smuggling of illicit drugs and

other anti-society goods;

- Being aware that only the use of modern customs techniques and procedures, such as risk management, post-clearance control/audit, and a paperless and computerized Customs environment can ensure efficient use of resources and effective controls;
- Pursuing a coordinated and close cooperation in and with international fora (i.e. WCO/WTO), aiming in particular at a speedy adoption and implementation of significant international tools and standards relevant for customs, (such as WCO SAFE Framework of Standards, the Revised Kyoto Convention or WTO requirements);
- Agreeing on the need to close cooperation with the business community;
- Ensuring that protection of the environment is placed high on the agenda and committing customs to engage in enforcement of relevant laws;
- Being aware that joint projects and operations based on an agreed work-programme of common interest are of key importance to effective cooperation;
- Fully supporting the ASEM visibility initiative launched at the ASEM7 summit in Beijing.

AGREED to focus on the following activities for the next two years (2010-2011):

1. Trade Facilitation & Supply Chain Security
  - Review the Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP) on customs matters to cover the period 2010-2012, recommend this to Ministers and implement it subsequently;
  - Identify in response to the proposal on promoting Asia-Europe Trade Security and Facilitation adopted at ASEM7 concrete steps to support ASEM Members in addressing gaps and needs in relation to their trade partnership programmes;
2. Combating Infringement on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
  - cooperate to the extent possible in implementing agreed joint activities (e.g. JCO Diabolo 2) analyse and evaluate results and lessons learned to prepare recommendations for improvement and follow-up;

- Prepare a paper with an overview of "good practices" of customs IPR enforcement, including co-operation with right holders, coordination with other agencies responsible for IPR enforcement, mutual assistance against counterfeit fraud, best use of existing control mechanisms and technology, statistics and information exchange on seizures and trends;

3. Protection of Society and Environment

- Prepare a paper on "good practices" and the role of customs in enforcing environmental law;
- Further explore the role of ASEM customs in enforcement of legislation governing the protection of the environment, evaluate results and lessons learned and prepare recommendations; contribute to ASEM studies, e.g. the relevant EU study;

4. Involving business

- Engage with the business community in the ASEM process, in particular in the context of trade facilitation by organising an "ASEM Customs-Trade-Day" to give the opportunity to the ASEM business community to discuss priorities and input;
- Prepare a paper on "good practices" for setting up a dialogue with traders for consultation and information sharing, bearing in mind initiatives already undertaken within ASEM in this respect.

Appropriate coordination will be ensured in Asia and the European Union.

We, the DGs/Commissioners of the Customs Administrations of the ASEM Member States will make every effort possible to implement the above agreed activities and to promote their visibility, convinced that they will lead to fruitful initiatives and outcomes and agree to evaluate results achieved at our next meeting.

We also engage in using opportunities as the Asia-Europe-Business-Forum (AEBF) to inform about actions and progress of work in the ASEM customs fora.