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Opportunity for Enhancing Partnership with Donors/Partners !

Enhancing partnership with donors/partners is one of the important actions that customs administrations of all over the world have been pursuing. Asia Pacific region is not an exception on this move and a number of customs administrations in this region are continuing their efforts for pushing forward their reform and modernization efforts in partnership with donors/partners. ROCB A/P, as one of its important functions, has been assisting those interested customs administrations in the Asia Pacific Region to further enhancing their dialogue and cooperation with the prospective donors/partners.

Donor engagement is one of the priority action points of the ROCB A/P since its establishment and a number of multilateral/bilateral discussions as well as joint seminars/workshops took place. Recently, ROCB A/P has been further enhancing its bilateral dialogue with prospective donors and partners and a number of meetings were held with regional/global development partners, such as ADB, WB, UNEP and JICA. In addition, ROCB A/P also participated in the Donor Conference in the WCO America region held at Washington DC on 2-3 February 2012 where we promoted the great efforts

done by the customs administrations in the Asia Pacific Region toward reform and modernization and offered opportunity for partnership.

This year, ROCB A/P, in cooperation with the WCO Secretariat, will organize a “WCO Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on the Partnership for Customs Modernization” in May in Bangkok, Thailand, which aims at assisting our members to enhance partnership with donors/partners. This is an opportunity for both Customs administrations of the Asia Pacific Region as well as prospective donors/partners to improve mutual understanding on their needs, priorities and concerns with a view to enhancing partnership for the successful reform and modernization of Customs administrations for the regional development. This event will be specifically designed for the Customs executives directly responsible for the reform and modernization of their administrations. The first three days is expected to be allocated for Customs-only session where we talk about capacity building as well as the preparation for the dialogue session with donors/partners, which is scheduled for the last two days. It is strongly

recommended that customs directors responsible for reform and modernization will register themselves for this important event ASAP to ensure their participation.

**Outline for WCO AP Regional Workshop
on Partnership for Customs Modernization**

1. **Date:** May 28 (Mon)- June 1 (Fri)
2. **Place:** Bangkok, Thailand
3. **Expected Participants:**
 - ✚ **Customs:** Executives responsible for reform and modernization
 - ✚ **Donors/Partners:** e.g. WB, ADB, IMF, IDB, JICA, KOICA, UNEP, UNESCAP etc.
4. **Expected program outline:**
 - ✚ **Day 1-3:** Customs-only session
 - ✚ **Day 4-5:** Dialogue with donors/partners to improve mutual understanding and share information through plenary / smaller group dialogues etc

Let us work together for the betterment of the region!

Introduction of New ROCB A/P Staff

“I am very glad and really honored to join with ROCB A/P. Thank you Thai customs to give a very good chance for me to learn and share in another role of customs in the international part. I would definitely give my best efforts to share all my experience and knowledge during my term of service here.”



It is our pleasure to introduce to you our new staff, Ms. Ben CHAMKROM, Customs Technical Officer Practitioner Level from Thai Customs, who has joined ROCB A/P since January, 2012.

Ms. Ben is an officer with experience in application of Container X-ray Scanner Image Analysis. She was also a host speaker for X-ray scanner image in Thai Customs, Laem Chabang Sea Port.

ROCB A/P Constructively Participated in the 3rd WCO CBC Session

Brussels, Belgium

The 3rd WCO Capacity Building Committee (CBC) Session was held in Brussels on 27-29 Feb 2012. As an adjunct event, the 7th Informal Meeting of Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Heads of the RTCs and Vice Chairs Offices took place in Brussels on 23-24 Feb 2012. Mr. Yoshihiro Kosaka, Head of ROCB A/P, and Mr. ZHANG Shujie, Technical Attaché, on behalf of ROCB A/P, attended this most important global event in Customs capacity building area, which charts the direction for the coming year and beyond.

Focusing on the 3Ps approach (People, Partnership, Political will) on the capacity building identified at the first CBC, the 3rd CBC session discussed a wide range of prevalent and critical topics addressing past and future capacity building activities: the current status, outcomes, opportunities and challenges of the WCO capacity building; the WCO Orientation Package for Decision Makers, Performance Measurement as an organizational tool, Professionalism in Customs, Organizational Development

towards interaction with stakeholders; Project Map Database, Regional Approach to Capacity Building; future of the PICARD Programme, update of the WCO instruments and tools.

In the plenary session, Mr. Kosaka was invited to inform what major efforts ROCB A/P has undertaken in helping members apply the principles of Customs in 21st Century. In the breakout session of donor engagement and partnership, he outlined that ROCB A/P will organize a Regional Workshop on enhancing partnership with donor and partner institutions. Such intervention was well taken by the meeting, and it was decided that the Workshop would be selected as a pilot project and ROCB A/P is expected to report the outcomes and lessons learned from the workshop to the virtual WG as well as next CBC meeting.

For the ROCB/RTC meeting, our office was invited to present experience on how to develop a framework of better using regional expertise and how to enhance the quality of regional training projects. Meanwhile, Thai Customs as the Regional Vice Chair and ROCB A/P also jointly presented on how to establish and maintain an effective coordination and reporting mechanism within regional structures. All these contributions and experience-sharing have been well acclaimed by the participants.

Opening of RILO AP in Seoul, Korea

It is my great pleasure to introduce the opening ceremony of RILO AP in Seoul, Korea. Some of you may have already heard the news that the RILO AP had been relocated to Seoul, Korea from Beijing, China from 2012. But for those who may not know about us, please let me start from the brief introduction of RILO AP.



History and Membership

RILO AP started the operation in Hong Kong since 1987 as the first RILO in the world. Since it moved to Tokyo, Japan in 1999, RILO AP has been operated by the Member customs administrations in turn. In 2004, RILO AP moved to Beijing, China and after 8 years running in Beijing, Korea Customs started hosting RILO AP from 2012As one of the Global RILO network of the WCO, aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of information and intelligence exchange and strengthening cooperation between Customs administrations tasked with combating cross-border crimes, RILO AP is covering Asia and the Pacific region with 29 affiliated Members. The Office consists of 9 staff seconded by 4 Members – 6 officials from Korea, 1 each from China, Hong Kong and Japan.

The Opening Ceremony of RILO AP Seoul

On 2nd February 2012, RILO AP held the opening ceremony to celebrate the relocation of the Office. More than 100 distinguished guests from home and abroad participated in the event including Gaozhang Zhu, director of the WCO Compliance

and Facilitation Directorate, delegations from other RILOs(WE, CIS, ME), ROCB AP, UNEP ROAP, and Member countries, and foreign customs attachés.

In the ceremony, Mr. Joo, Yong Sup, commissioner of Korea Customs Service promised unsparing support from Korea Customs Service for the successful operation of RILO AP and called for active participation and cooperation from the Members as well as other international agencies and foreign customs administrations. At his congratulatory speech, Mr. Gaozhang Zhu praised RILO AP's commitment for the information sharing and the intelligence exchange and asked for continued great work from RILO AP and its Members.

RILO AP also organized its first seminar on the previous day with the theme of

Activities and Future Plans

Under the new motto “Bridge across borders”, RILO AP will continue to accomplish its role as the focal point of information and intelligence exchange in Asia-Pacific and add additional values to its activities.

✚ *RILO AP's major future plans include the followings: improving the quality of intelligence products; promoting the CEN (Customs Enforcement Network) and improving of data quality; strengthening technical assistance for the Members; and facilitating information and intelligence exchange.*

✚ *In addition, RILO AP is endeavoring to extend technical assistance and capacity building programs to Member countries including seminars, Attachment Trainings (3-week intensive training program for invited member officials), and Expert Missions (a peripatetic training program to Member administrations).*

“Customs Enforcement and the Roles of RILO AP”. This was from RILO AP’s effort to go back to the basics and begin with a renewed spirit in order to fulfill its duty and responsibility with perfection. 39 Customs officials from 26 Member administrations participated in the seminar, which provided a good opportunity for the participants to share information and experiences on customs enforcement area fighting drug trafficking, IPR infringement, tax evasions, etc. and to explore the challenges faced by customs administrations in the Asia-Pacific region.

*Mr. Lee, Eon-jae
Head of RILO AP*

Workshop / Meeting

WCO National IPR Workshop for Lao PDR Vientiane, Lao PDR

The WCO National Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) was conducted under the sponsorship of the Japan Customs Cooperation Fund (CCF Japan) on 16-20 January, 2012 at Lao Customs Department. The workshop attended by 28 Customs officers from Anti-Smuggling Division, Regional Customs Office V and other relevant divisions. The workshop also followed the Diagnostic recommendations of the legislative, operational and structural aspects of IPR which was carried out in the Lao Customs Administration in 2010. The workshop led by three WCO delegations namely Mr. Massimiliano Caruso, Technical Attaché, Mr. Carlos Atilas, WCO IPR accredited expert and Ms. Junko Yamamoto, IPR expert of Japan Customs for this important activity.

The objective of the workshop was to upgrade and enhance the capacity and skills of Lao Customs officers who work for Anti-Smuggling Division and frontline sections which directly deal with importation of counterfeit and pirated goods. The workshop went through the Diagnostic report and other recommendations made in 2010.

The experts introduced the TRIPs, WCO IPM System, and other legislations relating to IPR as well as the experiences and IPR enforcement of Japan Customs and Tariff Bureau and Customs Service of Dominican Republic. The workshop also focused on the action plan of Lao Customs on IPR enforcement and other recommendations. Lao Customs decided to establish the IPR Unit under the supervision of Anti-Smuggling Division in order to minimize the flow of



counterfeit/infringing goods into Lao PDR. Moreover, the Instruction of Finance Minister of Lao PDR on Cross-Border IPR Protection of Finance Minister is issued in accordance with the provisions of TRIPs. This instruction would be used as a tool to combat any entry of counterfeit/infringing goods.

The action plan on IPR enforcement has been inserted into Lao Customs Strategic Plan (2011-2015).

Lao Customs

WCO National Workshop on Customs Valuation for Lao PDR Vientiane, Lao PDR



WCO National Workshop on Valuation was conducted in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 25-27 January 2012. Prior to the workshop, Mr. Ian Cremer, Technical Officer of WCO and Mr. Shigeaki Katsu, Deputy Head of ROCB A/P who acted as the workshop facilitators also paid a field visit to Lao Customs on 23-24 Jan 2012.

This 3-day workshop attracted 40 participants from all regional Customs in addition to the staff from headquarters. Through the intensive workshop activities, the participants deepened their understanding on the principle and general aspect of the WTO Valuation Agreement and improve their technical knowledge on practical application on how to determine Customs value under the WTO Valuation Agreement. To maximize the workshop outputs, the facilitators recommended the participants should report back to their respective Customs offices and disseminate their knowledge and training materials to their colleagues. The participants were also

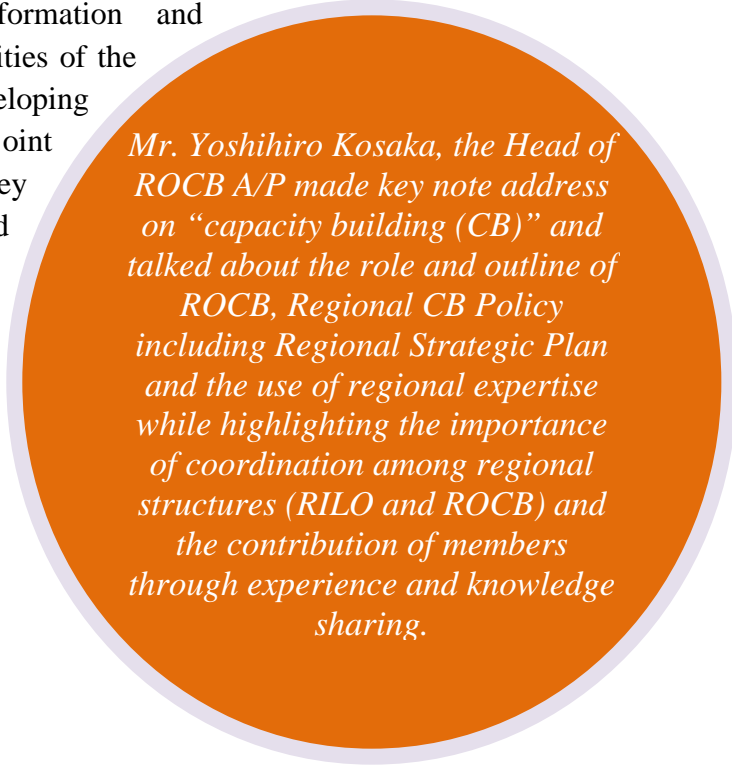
encouraged to make good use of the WCO e-learning and Revenue Package materials, which were suggested being translated into the local language, where necessary, for the staff's easy reference.

During the 2-day visit, the facilitators observed the Customs operations at the Thanaleng No. 5 Customs Check Point. They also met the Acting Director General and senior management staff of Lao Customs and discussed various issues on the implementation of WTO Valuation Agreement. Lao Customs appreciated very much the continuous support from WCO and ROCB A/P for building up its capacity in customs valuation.

Lao Customs

The Global Forum Combating Drug Trafficking and Related Threats Brussels, Belgium

The Global Forum Combating Drug Trafficking and Related Threats was held at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels Belgium on 25-27 January 2012. Customs administrations all over the world as well as international or regional institutions combating drug trafficking participated in the forum. The forum covered 5 topics, namely “current trends in drug trafficking and related threats”; “heightened regional/international cooperation in fighting against drug trafficking - the importance of sharing information and intelligence”; “building capacities of the relevant services”; “developing tailored programmes/projects/joint operations”; and “money laundering – identifying and confiscating criminal assets”. More than 20 Customs administrations and international/regional institutions delivered presentations in the forum.



Mr. Yoshihiro Kosaka, the Head of ROCB A/P made key note address on “capacity building (CB)” and talked about the role and outline of ROCB, Regional CB Policy including Regional Strategic Plan and the use of regional expertise while highlighting the importance of coordination among regional structures (RILO and ROCB) and the contribution of members through experience and knowledge sharing.

Customs and Trade Facilitation Regional Donor Meeting **Washington DC, USA**

Customs and Trade Facilitation Regional Donor Meeting of America and Caribbean Region was held at Inter-American Development Bank in Washington DC on 2-3 February, 2012. About 30 participants including a number of donor institutions, such as IDB, IMF, USCBP, CBSA, US Department of Commerce, US Department of Agriculture, Argentine Embassy, UN-ECE as well as Vice-Chair of the America Region, ROCB AME, RTC Brazil and RTC Dominican Republic attended the meeting. Mr. Yoshihiro Kosaka, Head of the ROCB A/P, was invited to act as speaker and moderator for the session on “Asia Pacific Experience and Trans Pacific Partnership”.

At the session on A/P experience, Mr. Kosaka shared about the “outline and CB activities in AP region”: “ROCB A/P’s experience on donor engagement” and “opportunity for partnership”. The presentation was very well received by participants and several donors expressed their interests to work with ROCB A/P in future.

The WCO National Workshop on Revised Kyoto Convention **Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

The WCO National Workshop on Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 13-16 February 2012. The goal of the workshop was to help Cambodia Customs develop the roadmap for accession to the RKC by the General Department of Customs and Excise (GDCE) of Cambodia. This workshop was facilitated by Ms. Kameswari Subramanian, Additional Director General of India Customs and Mr. Sanghyup Lee, Technical attaché of WCO ROCB, both of whom had credentials as WCO accredited RKC experts. 15 participants from GDCE attended the workshop.

During the workshop, participants attained clear understanding about the benefits of RKC, rights and obligation of Contracting Party and necessary work for the accession to RKC. As a result of close consultation between working team and experts, Cambodia Customs identified the gap between the national legislation and RKC provisions and the necessary steps for gaining accession to the RKC. In addition, they also developed the roadmap for the accession.

GDCE showed strong interest to become a RKC member in the near future and ROCB A/P will also provide support as required.

GTI international Capacity Building program for Trade Facilitation CBCTC, Korea

Greater Tumen Initiative's (GTI) International Capacity Building Program for Trade Facilitation in North East Asia was held at the Customs Border Control Training Center (CBCTC), Korea on 20-24 February 2012. It is the first Trade Facilitation workshop hosted by the GTI secretariat. 20 participants from China, Russia, Mongolia and Korea attended the workshop. Invited by Korea Customs Service, Mr. Lee, SangHyup from ROCB and Mr. Lim Sangwon from UNESCAP attended as a resource person.

During the workshop, Mr. Lee delivered several presentations on the WCO's trade facilitation policies while the participating organizations shared their policies in this regard. Besides, the Korea Customs also took this opportunity to introduce its Single Window. Participants engaged in active discussion on these issues. On the last two days of the event, the participants were also arranged to visit the Incheon Airport and Seaport Customs.

WCO National Workshop on Post Clearance Audit Port Vila, Vanuatu

WCO National Workshop on Post Clearance Audit (PCA) was conducted at Vanuatu National Provident Fund Head Office Building in Port Villa, Vanuatu on 20-24 February 2012. This workshop was a very first WCO National Workshop in Vanuatu since its accession to the WCO Membership in 2009. Mr. Shigeaki Katsu, Deputy Head of ROCB A/P, Mr. Atsushi Fukui, Japan Customs and Mr. Jerry Toran, Vanuatu Customs attended the workshop as facilitators.

The workshop was divided into two main sessions: one for the Trade Community and the other for the Customs and Inland Revenue Officers in Vanuatu. 20 and 25 participants attended the former and latter sessions respectively.

During the workshop, the participants were introduced about the International Commercial Terms (INCOTERMS); key elements, flow and risk management for PCA; overview activities and challenges on PCA in AP region; and the PCA Project for Pacific Island Customs Administrations. Through case study and group discussion, they have also enhanced their knowledge and understanding on INCOTERMS; importance, benefit and objectives of PCA from the international and national perspectives as well as the principles and rules of the transaction value method and alternate methods in the WTO Valuation Agreement.

The Vanuatu Customs showed great appreciation for ROCB A/P contribution and continuous support for the PCA capacity building. The participants from the Trade Community also gave the very positive feedbacks and welcomed to the opportunity for attending similar workshops in future.

National Seminar on Harmonize System 2012 and Trade in Chemicals Phuentsholing, Bhutan

The National Seminar on the Amendments to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) 2012 and Trade in Chemicals was held in Bhutan from 27 February to 2 March 2012. The Seminar was jointly organized by the World Customs Organization (WCO), under the Customs Cooperation Fund/Japan, and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in association with the Department of Revenue and Customs, Ministry of Finance, Thimphu, Bhutan.



A total of 34 participants from Customs and Excise, the Department of Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs and the National Ozone office, National Environment Commission Secretariat, attended the seminar. It was conducted with resource speakers from the WCO, Japan Customs, UNEP, the Indian Chemical Council (ICC), and the National Environment Commission (NEC) of Bhutan.

This seminar was conducted with the following objectives:

- ✚ To provide general understanding of UNEP and WCO and their strategic partnership on HS & its amendments and in the capacity building Customs and law enforcement agencies in the Multilateral Environment Agreements
- ✚ To know how the International Convention on the Harmonized System and its instruments operate at international and national level.
- ✚ To familiarize with the HS 2012 amendments and other HS instruments.
- ✚ To create awareness amongst the participants on trade in chemicals with focus on ozone depleting substances and related HS codes.

The HS is considered as the true “language of international trade” and is used for many purposes including collection of duties, trade policy, and administration of rules of origin and for monitoring controlled goods. Countries in Asia and the Pacific region, especially Bhutan, depend to a great extent on customs duties for the annual national revenues and therefore the proper application of the HS is extremely relevant and important to the work of Customs in the region. Bhutan Customs Administration has successfully implemented the HS 2012 amendments with the effect from 1 January 2012.

**The WCO Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on NII Image Analysis and
Technology and Innovation Forum
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

In conjunction with the WCO Technology and Innovation Forum held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, ROCB A/P organized the WCO Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on Non-intrusive Inspection (NII) Image Analysis on 5-9 March 2012 under the CCF/Japan. It attracted attendance of 33 participants from 27 Customs Administrations in the AP Region. Experts from WCO, Japan Customs, Hong Kong Customs as well as Mr. Yoshihiro Kosaka, Head of ROCB A/P and his colleague, Ms. Matchima Kiripet attended the event as facilitators.

During the workshop, the participants attained more knowledge and information about the WCO tools and instruments on NII, including the WCO Scanning Guidelines. Taking this opportunity, Mr. Kosaka also introduced its Customs Good Practice Report on NII which was published in cooperation with Australia and Hong Kong China in 2011. Besides, Hong Kong Customs delivered a presentation on the NII implementation in her Administration with the aid of case study while Japan

Customs shared their experience on Knowledge Management in particular relating to improving the staff capability in NII image analysis. Representatives from Timor-Leste, Vietnam, Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand also made brief presentations on their NII operations and practices.



The participants to this workshop also had a chance to observe the high-level discussion of the WCO Technology and Innovation Forum and visited the exhibition booths established by different vendors of NII equipment.

The workshop was an excellent opportunity to know more about how technology can contribute to improve customs operation and to share regional good practices of NII operation and practices. Participants also noted that human factor was of no less importance than advance technology in the context of NII implementation and recommended enhanced network of customs administrations to share experience and information.

UNNExT Advisory Group Meeting on Legal Issues Bangkok, Thailand

At the invitation of UNESCAP, Sang-Hyup Lee from ROCB A/P attended the UNNExT Advisory Group Meeting on Legal Issues held at UNESCAP Secretary Building, Bangkok Thailand on 22-23 March 2012. This meeting aimed to review the Legal Guide on the Implementation of Electronic Single Window (ESW) Facilities and the proposed UN Resolution on Data Sharing. 16 experts comprised of legal advisors, Customs officials and the representatives from Ministry of Commerce and other agencies attended the meeting.

Regarding the agenda item on the ESW, the participants exchanged their views in particular on the definition of the SW and scope of the legal guide. For the proposed UN Resolution on data sharing, there was also active discussion on the scale for ESW implementation (national vs international), data security, IPR issues, authenticity and E-signature, etc. It was also highlighted in the meeting that Customs Administrations, being the leading agencies for ESW implementation, should be fully consulted for these types of UN resolutions.

Future Activities of ROCB A/P

- ❖ *Regional Workshop on Natural Disaster Relief in Bangkok, Thailand (8-10 May 2012)*
- ❖ *Regional Workshop on IPR Train- the- trainer in RTC Japan (21-25 May 2012)*
- ❖ *Regional Workshop on Partnership for Customs Modernization in Bangkok, Thailand (28 May – 1 Jun 2012)*
- ❖ *Regional Workshop on Rules of Origin in RTC China (11-15 June 2012)*