



NEWSLETTER

2021/Q2

## Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization

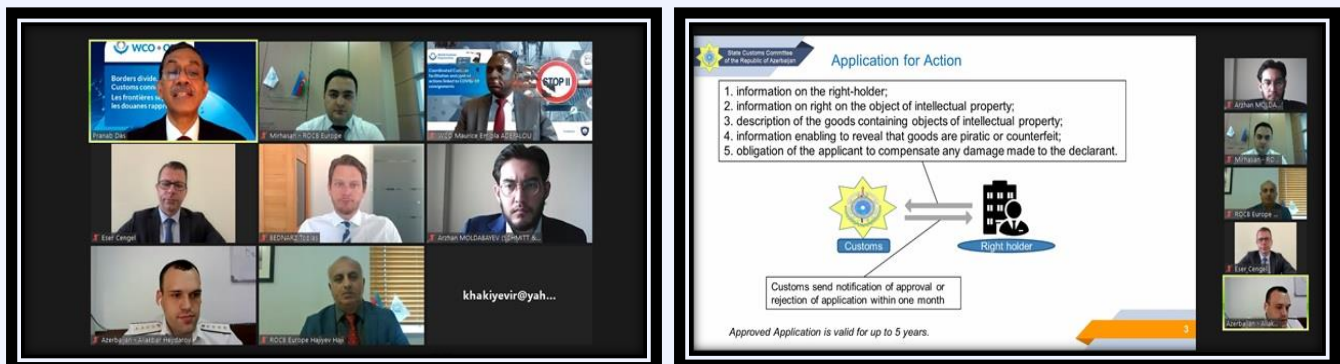
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## Webinar: "Intellectual Property Rights: Improving Knowledge and Sharing Experiences"

Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region organized a Webinar under the theme of "Intellectual Property Rights: Improving Knowledge and Sharing Experiences" on 17 June 2021.

The main purpose of the webinar, which is carried out with the participation of experts from World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Customs Organization (WCO), Schmitt & Orlov Intellectual Property Company, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and ROCB Europe was to emphasize the growing importance of intellectual property rights in the modern world, the objects of intellectual property, the protection of their rights, international cooperation in this area, as well as the latest achievements.



The webinar was attended by 20 countries with more than 100 customs officers from the Member Administrations of the World Customs Organization Europe Region.

Mr. Eser ÇENGEL, Head of the ROCB Europe, said that with taking into account the interests of WCO Europe Region Member Administrations, the event would contribute to increasing the effectiveness with reflecting the importance of the implementation and protection of intellectual property rights.

Then World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO's Work to Build Respect for IP and Its Relevance for Customs Authorities), the World Customs Organization (WCO perspectives in the fight against IP infringements during COVID-19 crisis), Schmitt & Orlov Intellectual Property company (Practical issues of identifying and distinguishing counterfeit products from the original) and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Enforcement of intellectual property rights in Azerbaijan) made presentations on abovementioned topics.

## 5<sup>th</sup> WCO Global AEO Conference

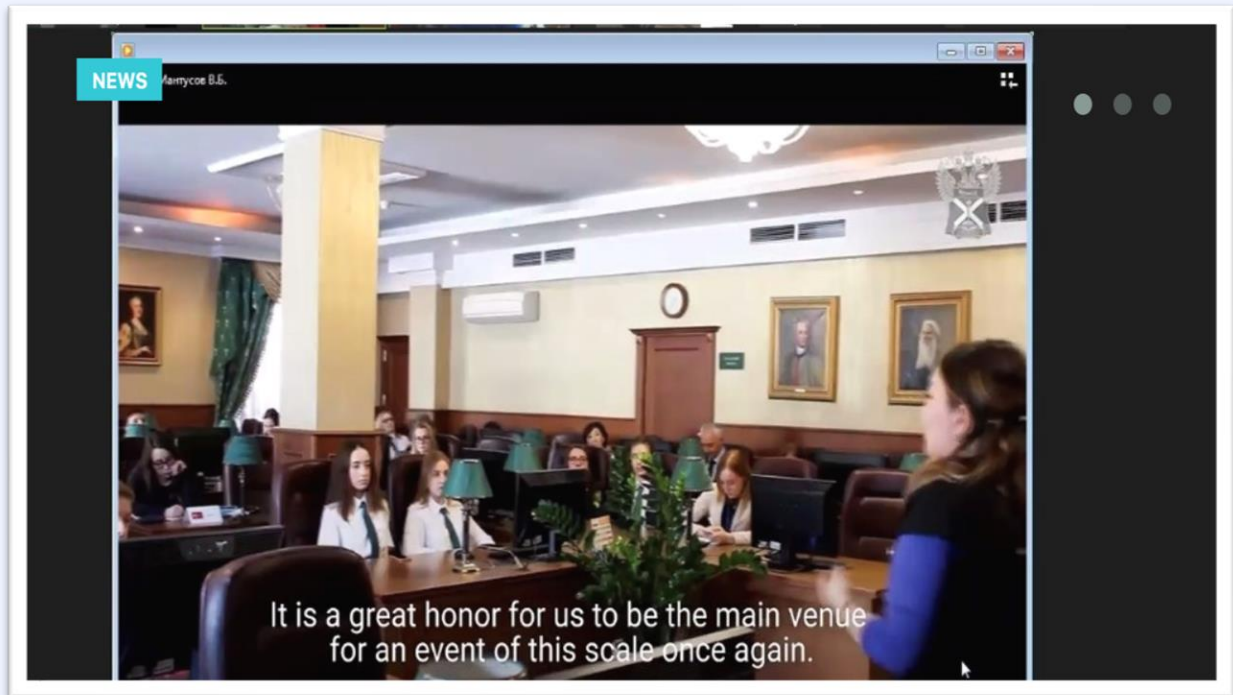
**The 5<sup>th</sup> WCO Global AEO Conference, held over three days from 25 to 27 May 2021, concluded successfully with over 3,917 registered participants from 158 World Customs Organization (WCO) Member administrations and stakeholders' representatives around the world. During the intensive discussions some 80 prominent experts shared their insights with the global Customs community.**

The event hosted virtually by Dubai Customs and the Federal Customs Authority (FCA) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), with support from the Korea Customs Service and various sponsors, achieved its objectives of re-establishing the importance of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programmes and helping to shape the vision of AEO 2.0.

The director of Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region, Mr. Eser ÇENGEL, moderated one of the sessions of the Conference 'Technical assistance and capacity building: the key to harmonized implementation of AEO programmes and MRAs'. In the session, role of technical assistance and capacity building in improving AEO programmes and enhancing intergovernmental support for AEO 2.0 as well as ways for programme effectiveness, among other matters for AEO and MRA development, were evaluated by the participants.



## IV. Session of Moscow International World Customs Organization Model



*On March 24, 2021, the Russian Customs Academy hosted the IV session of the Moscow International World Customs Organization Model that brought together more than 50 participants from various countries.*

*The main topics for discussion at the Model were the development of new ideas and technologies, the experience exchange to improve cooperation and partnerships between customs administrations, private sector, international organizations and academic community.*

*The results of the session were interesting discussions of the leading experts, scientists and practitioners in the field of customs administration, exchange of experience between delegates in the field of customs affairs in three working groups:*

- *Working group on assessment of the customs administration's activities;*
- *Working group on application of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System;*
- *Working group on Information management.*



## Consultative Meeting between the WCO Capacity Building Directorate and the ROCB Europe

On 27 April 2021, a virtual meeting was held between the WCO Capacity Building Directorate and the ROCB Europe on the work done and future prospects. The event was attended by Capacity Building Director Mr. Taeil Kang and Head of ROCB Europe, Mr. Eser Çengel.

At the consultative meeting, which focused on the goals and activities ahead, Mr. Taeil Kang praised the work of ROCB Europe, which is seen important for the Region. He noted that ROCB Europe is actively involved in providing capacity building. As a result, he underlined, today the ROCB plays an important role for the Member Administrations of the WCO Europe Region. Mr. Kang also gave overall information about the recent developments and upcoming projects within the frame of WCO and capacity building efforts.

Noting that he was pleased with the views expressed, Mr. Eser Çengel also gave detailed information about the activities of the Office over the recent period. He informed the director about several initiatives implemented by the ROCB Europe, stressing that the work has been performed in accordance with the current conditions due to the COVID 19. Touching upon the area of future cooperation and highlighted efforts of the ROCB Europe in customs capacity building, he thanked Mr. Kang for the ongoing and extensive support from the Capacity Building Directorate by expressing the importance of mentioned support from the WCO in order to reach new achievements.



## UNCTAD Examines Why Container Freight Rates Surged During Covid-19

UNCTAD examines the complex factors behind the unprecedented shortage of containers hampering trade's recovery, and how to avoid a similar situation in the future.



Maritime trade flows further increased as some governments eased lockdowns and approved national stimulus packages, and businesses stocked up in anticipation of new waves of the pandemic.

The impact on freight rates has been greatest on trade routes to developing regions, where consumers and businesses can least afford it. To help reduce the likelihood of a similar situation in the future, the UNCTAD policy brief highlights three issues that need attention: advancing trade facilitation reforms, improving maritime trade tracking and forecasting, and strengthening national competition authorities.

## Turkey and Sweden Agree to Boost Bilateral Trade and Investment

Turkey and Sweden on May 5 agreed to boost bilateral trade and investment. During the first Turkish-Swedish Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) meeting, held online, top officials from both countries spoke on bilateral commercial ties and relations with the EU, in particular updating the Turkey-EU Customs Union as well as the EU's Green Deal.

Also discussed at the meeting were the effects of the pandemic, mutual investments and contracting services, and cooperation in third countries and joint projects. The two countries set a goal to boost the bilateral trade volume to \$5 billion in a balanced way.



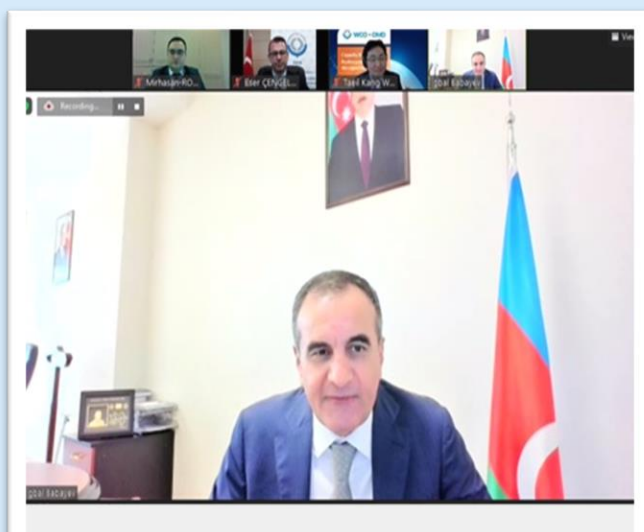
## ***“ROCB Europe Analytics” Online Launch Event***

**An Online Launch Event for one of the latest projects of the ROCB Europe “ROCB Europe Analytics” was carried out on 21 May 2021.**

[ROCB Europe Analytics](#), which is officially kicked off, is a database which includes substantial information about customs, trade and economy as well as indices encompassing Logistics Performance Index, Trading Across Borders and Enabling Trade.

The event was attended by Deputy Chairman of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Igbal BABAYEV, World Customs Organization Capacity Building Director, Mr. Taeil KANG, and Head of Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region, Mr. Eser Çengel and more than 50 representatives from the WCO Europe Region Member Administrations. The panelists praised ROCB Europe's support for capacity building in the region.

The platform includes data compiled from publicly available resources from the WCO, the World Bank and World Economic Forum. The new tool will allow all stakeholders to analyze the markets in all Member Administrations in the WCO Europe region as well as obtain statistics in a single digital place.



## *WCO Europe Region Heads of Customs Conference*

At the invitation of Mr. Safar Mehdiyev, Chairman of Azerbaijan's State Customs Committee, acting in his capacity as Vice-Chair for the WCO Europe region, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, WCO Secretary General, attended the Europe Region Heads of Customs Meeting held online on 8 June 2021.

The Meeting participants listened to a number of presentations on topics to be taken up at the forthcoming Council Session as well as on the activities of the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) and Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices (RILOs). The participants also supported Uzbekistan Customs' proposal to establish a Regional Customs Laboratory.

Mr. Eser ÇENGEL, Director of the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe) delivered a presentation on the annual progress for 2020/2021 on the basis of the written report that was submitted to the Region beforehand. He said that the Office is functioning on a robust strategic and practical framework and noted that the ROCB Europe continued to financially support capacity building delivery in the Region by organizing, co-organizing or co-hosting events. In addition, the Office was also organizing informative and experience sharing events for the Region.





## WCO Europe Regional Workshop on Disruptive Technologies

*The second WCO regional experience-sharing workshop on disruptive technologies for WCO Europe Region was held from 17 to 19 May 2021. The webinar was co-hosted by the Customs Administration of the Netherlands, supported by the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) Europe and held on a different online platform each day for a more dynamic and technology-focused experience.*

The Workshop was opened by the WCO Secretary General, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, the Vice-Chairperson for the WCO Europe Region, Mr. Safar Mehdiyev, the Director General of the Customs Administration of the Netherlands Customs, Ms. Nanette van Schelven, and the Director of the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) Europe, Mr. Eser Çengel.

The WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya stated that global technological innovations were widely used in the customs system, and he spoke about the importance of disruptive technologies in the facilitated implementation of customs activity.

Chairman of the Committee underlined that one of the main goals of the economic policy, initiated by the national leader Heydar Aliyev and successfully continued by President Ilham Aliyev in Azerbaijan, was to attach special importance to the application and use of modern technologies with the view of increasing efficiency and transparency in public administration.

The head of the ROCB Europe, Eser Çengel said technological development and subsequent digitalization created a new era in the social and economic sphere, artificial intelligence, robots, internet of things, nanotechnology and biotechnology affected all spheres of life.



## WCO Cargo Targeting System Deployed in Azerbaijan



On 20 April 2020, an online event has been held to acknowledge the completion of the deployment of the WCO Cargo Targeting System (CTS) to the State Customs Committee (SCC), Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is the latest of a growing number of countries to implement the WCO CTS to enhance their cargo risk assessment and targeting capability. The ceremony marked the culmination of a deployment process which included close cooperation between the WCO and the SCC to complete the technical deployment of the WCO CTS software, cargo manifest data assistance and training. WCO Secretary General Dr. Kunio Mikuriya congratulated the SCC on its implementation of the WCO CTS, saying: "The WCO welcomes the steps taken by Azerbaijan Customs to implement information technology solutions such as the WCO CTS, and I am confident that this will be an excellent example for other Customs administrations to follow".

Mr. Safar Mehdiyev, Chairman of the State Customs Committee, emphasized that applying the risk management-based WCO CTS in Azerbaijan's Customs Service was of great importance to the State Customs Committee; the WCO CTS would support risk assessment in the Customs system and enable the collection, storage and exchange of data on cargo, paving the way for enhanced trade facilitation and security by differentiating high-risk cargo from other cargo and accelerating the delivery of low-risk cargo.

## Revised Kyoto Convention Reaches 128 Contracting Parties

On 7 May 2021, the Embassy of Jamaica in Brussels and Mission to the European Union deposited with the World Customs Organization (WCO) the country's Instrument of Accession to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention - RKC), making Jamaica the 128<sup>th</sup> Contracting Party to this Convention.

The RKC, which entered into force on 3 February 2006, is regarded as the blueprint for effective and modern Customs procedures. It is the international standard for making Customs regulatory procedures as efficient and effective as possible. The Convention contains several important principles, including transparency and predictability of Customs actions; standardization and simplification of the goods declaration and supporting documents; simplified procedures for authorized persons; maximum use of information technology; appropriate Customs control to ensure compliance with regulations; use of risk management and audit-based controls; coordinated interventions with other border agencies; and partnership with trade.

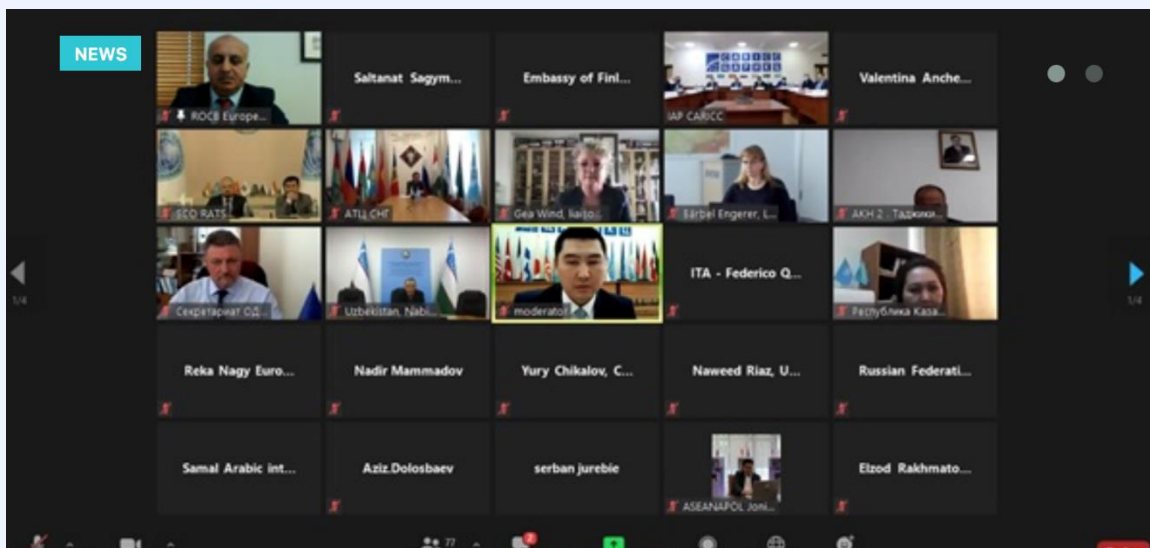
## Tverečius Checkpoint on Lithuanian-Belarusian Border Reopens

With the opening of the Tverečius checkpoint, the queues at the Lithuanian-Belarusian border will decrease. After the resumption of the activities of the Tverečius border checkpoints closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic on the Lithuanian-Belarusian border, it is expected to reduce the transport queues at the Medininkai checkpoint, which is currently being reconstructed. Persons, cars and empty lorries can pass through the Tverečius-Vidzy border post.



## ROCB Europe Represented at the Event during 64th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

On 14 April, CARICC jointly with the UNODC Programme Office in Almaty organized and conducted a side event entitled “CARICC: a leading platform for regional and international cooperation in countering drug trafficking and cross-border drug crime” during the 64th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). Main session of the side event featured a video summarizing CARICC's work and a presentation outlining the Centre's potential to support efforts to counter transnational drug-related crime. Authorized representatives of national coordinating bodies of CARICC Member States and liaison officers from Observer States participated in the meeting. Also, high-ranking officials from law enforcement agencies and international organizations - UNODC, OSCE, ROCB Europe, CSTO, SCO RATS, CIS ATC and other Centre's partners - took part online in the event. More than 90 participant joined the side event.



## Virtual National Workshop on Post-Clearance Audit for Kazakhstan

In close cooperation between the WCO Secretariat and the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe), a National Workshop on Post Clearance Audit was held virtually from 26 to 30 April 2021 for the Republic of Kazakhstan as a part of the WCO capacity building delivery plan.

During five-day Workshop which was made possible through technical support by the ROCB Europe, nearly 60 Kazakhstan Customs officials gained an understanding of the importance of Post Clearance Audit (PCA) as part of the Customs Risk Management strategy and process, as well as identifying PCA as a means to measure and improve compliance in the WCO concept.



## WCO Regional Workshop on Data Analytics

In close cooperation between the WCO Secretariat and the Regional Office for Capacity Building for the World Customs Organization Europe Region (ROCB Europe), the WCO Regional Workshop on Data Analytics was held virtually from 21 to 22 June 2021 for the WCO Europe Region with the support of the Customs Cooperation Fund of Korea (CCF-K).

The main purpose of the two-day Workshop in which nearly 50 Customs officials from 19 Member Administrations attended, was to provide valuable opportunity for Customs managers to discuss strategies aimed at promoting Customs data analytics as well as exploring the Capacity Building Framework for Data Analytics and sharing good practices from the Members.



This newsletter is a product of the ROCB Europe. It is intended for the Member Administrations of the World Customs Organization Europe Region as well as the related audience.

The newsletter is also available on the ROCB Europe web site. For additional information and recent updates, please visit [rocb-europe.org](http://rocb-europe.org).

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