

## **International Customs Day: Joint Communiqué by Members of the Trade Contact Group advising DG TAXUD**

We unite with Customs Officials globally under the leadership of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) to commemorate the inaugural meeting of the Customs Co-operation Council in Brussels in 1953, marking International Customs Day (ICD).

International Customs Day is observed annually on January 26. We express our appreciation to Secretary-General Saunders of the WCO for adopting the theme "Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose."

The associations mentioned below, represented in the Trade Contact Group (TCG) established by the European Commission, commend, and support this theme, which could not have come at a better time. For more than two decades, we have played a crucial role in providing valuable expertise to the European Commission, Member States' customs authorities, and other institutional stakeholders.

Our members endorse forward-thinking solutions by offering a high level of regulatory, logistical, subject matter and IT knowledge to their institutional counterparts. This active contribution aligns with important goals such as trade facilitation, border security, and the resilience of global supply chains.

In 2024, at the European regional level, another pivotal year for customs lies ahead. The European Commission has presented a package of proposals to reform the Union Customs Union, the first quarterly CBAM report is due by January 31<sup>st</sup> and obligations under the deforestation legislation are imminent, while additional EU legislation with significant impact on Customs and trade is in the pipeline. Simultaneously, essential eCustoms systems within Member States are set to go live in the next twelve months.

The success of all the above mentioned initiatives is highly dependent on the amount and the quality of trade involvement prior to adoption and implementation. As such, trade consultation proves to be more critical than ever so that legislation can be implemented successfully and meet its objectives.

Collaboration with the trade community is the common denominator to ensure effective customs legislation, well-functioning IT systems, and the achievement of customs' goals for a safe, prosperous, and inclusive future.

Members stand ready, as always, to engage in the closest collaborative partnership with the European Commission, Member States, and other institutional stakeholders. We are eager to ensure that the

results align with the expectations and needs of a modern, global customs environment for trade and European Customs Authorities.

Let us raise a toast to Customs Worldwide.

