



World Customs Organization  
East and Southern Africa Region

# WCO ESA ROCB ANNUAL REPORT



2015 - 2016

# WCO ESA ROCB ANNUAL REPORT 2015 / 2016

Presented to

24th Regional Steering Group (RSG)  
23rd – 25th May, 2016

&

21st Governing Council (GC) Meetings  
26th & 27th May 2016



Venue: Avani, Lesotho Hotel

City: MASERU, LESOTHO

Host: Lesotho Revenue Administration



**World Customs Organization**  
**East and Southern Africa Region**

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### **East and Southern Africa**

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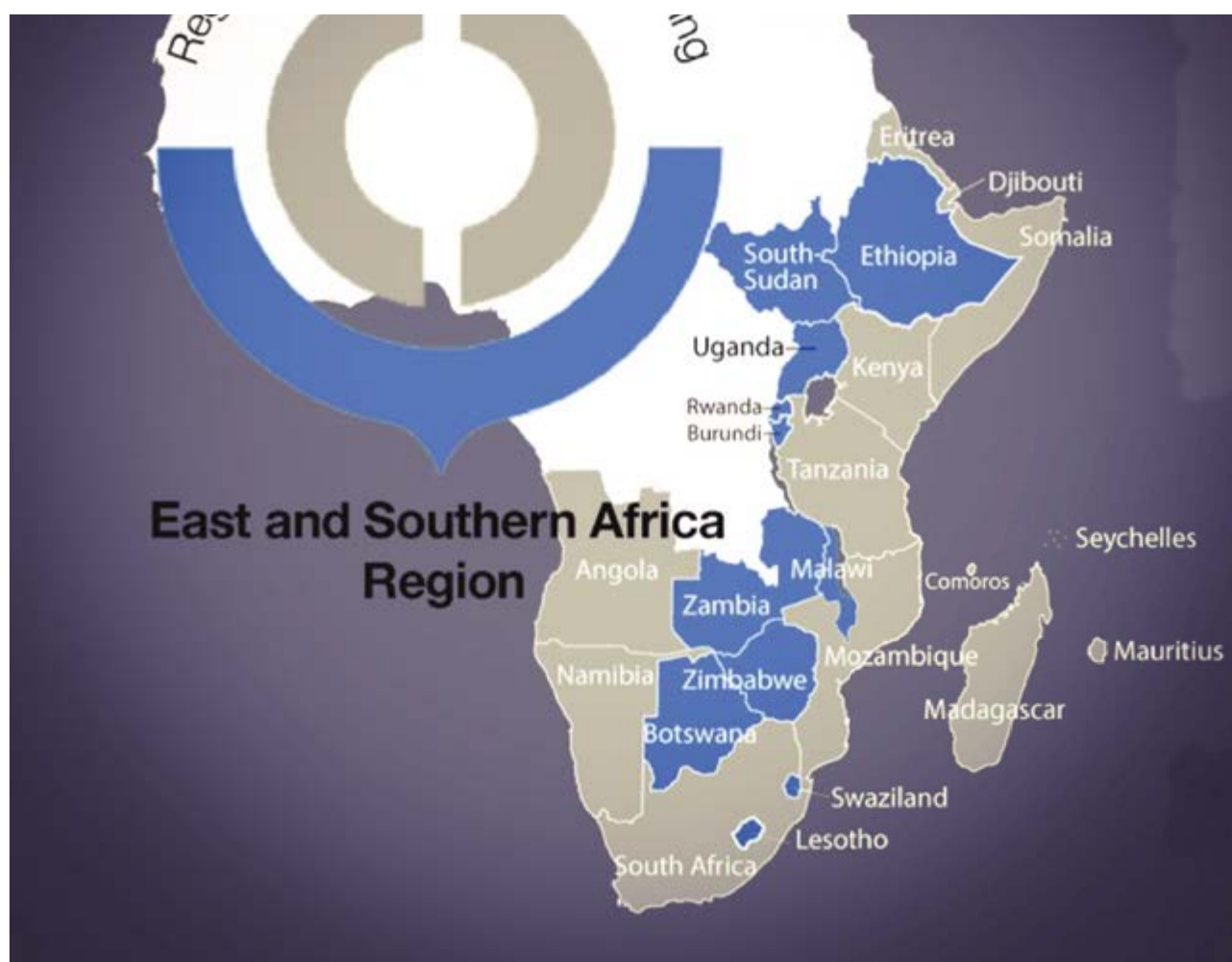
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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Membership

The WCO East and Southern Africa Region consist of 24 Member Countries;

Angola	Ethiopia	Mozambique	South Sudan
Botswana	Kenya	Namibia	Swaziland
Burundi	Lesotho	Rwanda	Tanzania
Comoros	Madagascar	Seychelles	Uganda
Djibouti	Malawi	Somalia	Zambia
Eritrea	Mauritius	South Africa	Zimbabwe



Land-linked - 11

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## VISION

“To be globally recognized for providing Capacity Building leadership as well as developing and managing innovations in the WCO East and Southern Africa Region”

## MISSION

“To provide leadership in the WCO East and Southern Africa Region in the areas of sustainable customs capacity building and change management”

## PHILOSOPHY AND CORE VALUES

ROCB provides customized services to members through delivery mechanisms that sustain improvement in their operations and adaptability to the changing environment in a timely, sustainable and cost effective manner. These services are founded on the principles of leadership, relevance, responsiveness, effectiveness and resilience.

## ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

AEO	Authorised Economic Operator
CBM	Coordinated Border Management
CCF – Japan	Customs Cooperation Fund - Japan
CCF – Korea	Customs Cooperation Fund - Korea
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
DfID	Department for International Development, UK
CG	Governing Council
EAC	East African Community
ESA	East and Southern Africa
HS	Harmonized System
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MC	Management Committee (of the ESA region)
PICARD	Partnerships in Customs Academic Research and Development.
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RILO	Regional Intelligence Liaison Office
RJCC	Regional Joint Coordinating Committee
RKC	Revised Kyoto Convention
ROCB	Regional Office for Capacity Building
RSG	Regional Steering Group
RTC	Regional Training Centre
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNECA	United Nations Commission for Africa
WCO	World Customs Organization

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report (2015/2016) of the World Customs Organization, East and Southern Africa, Regional Office for Capacity Building. This is my first report to the region as the Director of the ROCB, following my appointment which took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2015. A lot of honour goes to my predecessor, Ms. Christine Msemburi for her service to the region and for mentoring me over 3 years during which I worked under her. Ms. Msemburi still served as the Director during the first half of the reporting period. I am thankful for the support I have received from the ESA Vice Chair, Mr. Tom Moyane (South Africa) and his excellent team, and Mr. John Njiraini, the Commissioner General of my home and host administration, Kenya. Much appreciation goes to the Members, partners and stakeholders over the last 6 months, which have been my first in service. I previously served as your Programme Coordinator, for 5 years.

This report is presented for discussions by the 24<sup>th</sup> Regional Steering Group (RSG) and 21<sup>st</sup> Governing Council (GC) and reports on among other matters; the activities of the ROCB during the period under consideration (April 2015 to May 2016) of the year 2015/2016, the status of the decisions of the 20<sup>th</sup> Governing Council alongside other regional meetings held in Luanda, Angola in April 2015. We are thankful to the government and people of Angola for successfully hosting the regional meetings. I am also thankful to the South Africa Revenue Services (SARS) for hosting the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regional Steering Group meeting in South Africa last November.

The report also presents the capacity building activities carried out and planned in the region. The overall report also shares the Financial Statements of the ROCB (shared with Members, partners and stakeholders). The Financial Statements have been reviewed by the Finance and Governance Committee (FGC) which met in Nairobi, Kenya, on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> May, 2016.

I would like to express our gratitude to the Kingdom of Lesotho, through the Lesotho Revenue Administration (LRA) for accepting to host the 24<sup>th</sup> RSG meeting and 21<sup>st</sup> Governing Council. LRA is also hosting the RTC Heads meeting.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Governing Council was attended by the WCO Secretary General Mr. Kunio Mikuriya and other dignitaries, Members, development partners and stakeholders. The meeting had panel discussions on key topics, namely, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (FTA) and the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO). The meeting reviewed reports from key organs, including the WCO Finance and Audit Committees reports, the Regional Steering Group meeting, the report of the Heads of the Regional Training Centres (RTCs), the Regional Economic Committees (RECs), stakeholders and development partners.

Of significance too is that the GC filled vacant positions in the region.

The meeting took note that the first term of the Director of the ROCB, Ms. Christine Msemburi would come to an end in September 2015. Ms. Msemburi informed the region that she would not be seeking a second term. As such, the GC tasked the Management Committee to commence the recruitment of a new Director for the ROCB.





The WCO Secretary General, Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, attended the 20<sup>th</sup> ESA Governing Council, hosted by Angola Revenue Administration in April, 2015.

From the left are; Mrs. Roza Mbilizi (ESA Regional Vice-Chair, Malawi); Mr. Kunio Mikuriya (WCO Secretary General); Ms. Valentina Filipe (Secretary of State for Finance, Angola), Dr. Valentim Joaquim Manuel (President of the Board, Angola Revenue Administration) and an official of the Government of Angola.



RSG meeting held in South Africa November, 2015

### 3.0 ROCB STAFF ESTABLISHMENT

The term of Ms. Christine Msemburi as the Director of the ROCB came to an end on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2015. Ms. Msemburi did not offer herself for reappointment for a second term and the Governing Council tasked the Management Committee to commence the recruitment of a new Director of the ROCB. The current ROCB staff comprises the Director (Kenya), two new Programme Officers from South Sudan and Kenya, Finance Officer, Administrator/PA to the Director, and a Clerk (Kenya).



**Larry Liza;**  
*Director*

LARRY was appointed Director of the ROCB with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2015 following a recruitment process managed by the ESA Management Committee on behalf of the Governing Council. Prior to this, he served at the ROCB as Programme Coordinator for the region for a period of 5 years. He is seconded to the World Customs Organization in the region from Kenya Revenue Authority where he served in various roles within the Customs and Border Control Department.

Larry holds a Masters degree in Environmental Planning and Management degree from the University of Nairobi where he also obtained his undergraduate honours degree in Bachelor of Science. He has various other qualifications in Customs, Information Technology, among others. Larry is also a renowned poet who has performed globally since the age of 4. He serves as a Global Goodwill Ambassador for the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood where he champions maternal and newborn health across the globe.



**Andrew Odhiambo**  
*Finance Officer*

ANDREW is an employee of the Kenya Revenue Authority, Customs and Border Control Department. He is a holder of Masters of Business Administration (Finance) and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Honours degree both from Kenyatta University.

He is also a Certified Public Accountant (CPA-K), and a member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK).



**David Ladu**  
*Programme Officer*

DAVID joined ROCB on 1<sup>st</sup>, August 2015 as a Program Officer. He graduated with a Master's of Science at University of Bellevue, Bellevue, Nebraska Human Services, Mental Health Professional, June 2006. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science, Government and Politics, at University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, Texas in 2002.

Previously, he worked for the Ministry of Interior Government of South Sudan, South Sudan Customs Service, as a Chief Customs Officer (C.C.O), Station Head, Western Equatoria State Yambio, 2013. He also served at the South Sudan Customs Service Juba HQs Accountant (2012 -2013) and as the Team Leader Financial Controller for Nadapal Station Eastern Equatoria State 2007 -2012.



**Faith Mosongo**  
Programme Officer

FAITH joined ROCB on 7<sup>th</sup>, December 2015 as a programme Officer. She has a Masters degree in Business Administration (Strategic Management) from Kenyatta University and a Bachelor of Science First Class honours degree from the University of Nairobi.

She is a trained Customs Officer with Kenya Revenue Authority who served at the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) section of KRA and has worked alongside with the WCO in this regard in the region, particularly in the East African Community. She was the Alternate National Project Manager and contact of the WCO AEO in Kenya before joining the ROCB after an extensive and thorough recruitment process.

She also previously worked at Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI).



**Judy Mwaura**  
Administrator & PA to Director

JUDY is a holder of Bachelor of Business Administration (Marketing) degree from St. Paul's University, Limuru (SPUL). She is an employee of the Kenya Revenue Authority and worked as the Executive Assistant/ PA for the Commissioner of Investigation and Enforcement Department for nine years. She is a prospective Master's degree student at United States International University (USIU) in September 2014 to study International Relations and Diplomacy.



**Stephen Omalla**  
Administrative Assistant

STEPHEN is an employee of the Kenya Revenue Authority. He holder of a Business Administration diploma and currently pursuing a Bachelor of Business Leadership degree at the Pan Africa Christian University. He also serves as a Youth Pastor at Fem Family Church in Karen, Kenya.





**Christine Msemburi**  
*Former Director*

CHRISTINE served as the Director of the ROCB during the reporting period. She is the holder of a Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Sociology from the University of Zimbabwe and an MBA from the Midlands State University, Zimbabwe. During her tenure as the Director ROCB, she managed to drive the Capacity Building Agenda for the Region to a greater level, especially in the area of Research. She was a member of the Scientific Board of the 2015 WCO PICARD Conference.

She is holder of a Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Sociology from the University of Zimbabwe. She was the Director of Human Resource and Administration at the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority. Prior to joining the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, she was with the Zimbabwe Public Service Commission where she rose through the ranks to the position of Deputy Director in the Strategy & Change Management Unit focusing on commercialization and outsourcing of government services. Her passion is to contribute in the success her region by bringing people and skills together to create innovative solutions.

Christine Msemburi has returned to the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority and is the Director Human Resources & Administration Division.



**Riitta Passi**  
*Project Manager, WCO ESA Project*

RIITTA is a Senior Advisor with the Finnish Customs who worked for the WCO ESA Project as the Project Manager during the reporting period. Priorly, her duties included: PICARD Programme Manager at the WCO, Customs Attaché at the Permanent Representation to the European Union during the two Finnish EU presidencies, National Expert at the European Commission DG TAXUD and various Customs posts in Finland since 1983.

## 4.0 REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRES (RTC)

The region has four WCO Regional Training Centres in Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The report of the RTC Heads, ROCB and WCO meeting, held on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May in Lesotho will be presented to the RSG. The agenda of the meeting includes;

1. Review of the RTC Heads meeting report & review of progress made from the last RTC Heads meeting
2. RTC Reports; Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, Zimbabwe
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> ESA Regional Research Conference (ESARR Conference)
4. Upcoming trainings / workshops
5. Training of Trainers programme and way forward
6. Updates on WCO Regional Training Evaluation Package
7. Latest developments on Customs Professionalism
8. Outcomes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Global Meeting of the Heads of Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Regional Training Centres and Vice-Chairs' Office.
9. Utilizing the WCO website in accessing WCO tools
10. New WCO ESA PROJECT (Finnish Funded)
11. RTC support to Digital Customs: Progressive Engagement initiative
12. Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan 2012 – 2017 and the need for a new strategy
13. Communication of Regional Issues including Meetings.

### RTC CONTACTS



#### EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

Regional Training Centre  
Kenya

Kenya School of Revenue Administration,  
Kenya Revenue Authority,  
P. O. Box 95707 – 08106,  
MOMBASA, KENYA  
Website: <http://www.kra.go.ke/krati/>



#### EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

Regional Training Centre  
Mauritius

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Mauritius Revenue Authority  
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Website: <http://www.mra.mu>



#### EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

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#### EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

Regional Training Centre  
Zimbabwe

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Tel: +263 4 797 674  
Website: [www.zimra.co.zw](http://www.zimra.co.zw)

## 5.0 ONGOING PROGRAMMES/PROJECTS IN ESA

The following programmes/projects have been running in the region during the period under review;

- WCO - EAC Trade Facilitation Program supported by SIDA
- The SACU-WCO Customs Development Programme supported by SIDA
- WCO ESA Project supported by the Finnish Government
- Training Programmes supported by JICA and CCF/Japan

## 6.0 STATUS OF THE DECISIONS OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> GOVERNING COUNCIL

Below is the status of the decisions made by the 20<sup>th</sup> Governing Council meeting in Luanda, Angola in April 2015.

Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
1.	WCO – ESA Regional Vice-Chair's Report	<p>The Governing Council;</p> <p>i. Acknowledged with appreciation the Vice Chair's report and leadership of Malawi during their term as Chair.</p> <p>ii. Acknowledged the support offered by the WCO and partners in the implementation of capacity building activities in the region.</p> <p>iii. Took note that non-payment of subscriptions fees is affecting delivery of capacity building activities and the other functions of the ROCB. It called on members in arrears to pay up their subscription fees.</p>	Vice Chair to present a report to the Governing Council.
2.	WCO Secretary General's Report	<p>The 20<sup>th</sup> Governing Council:</p> <p>i. Expressed its appreciation for the WCO Secretary General's report.</p> <p>ii. Expressed concerns at the threats to the society especially in violent extremism, on wildlife, and other fauna and flora crime. It called for cooperation with other regions in establishing tighter controls to security in all areas, including passenger controls, and other border security controls.</p>	Noted.

Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
3.	ROCB Annual Report	<p>The Governing Council directed that;</p> <p>i. NCPs respond to all communication from the ROCB.</p> <p>ii. ROCB uses the USD. 2,200 balance from the DfID/TMSA fund to publish an e-Book of the collected research papers.</p>	<p>i. ROCB has updated the list of the NCPs though communication still poor among some Members.</p> <p>ii. The ROCB contracted The Kenya Literature Bureau to work on the Ebook publication. The ROCB made final preparations and write ups on the Ebook whose articles were previously consolidated with the support of the WCO Research Unit. The office finalized the book which was shared with the Region.</p>
4.	Governance & Finance Committee (FGC) Report	<p>The Governing Council;</p> <p>Agreed that all the subscriptions due be included in the budgeting process from all the members.</p> <p>GC considered the proposals of the FGC, subject to following the staff rules;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approved the operational budget of USD 103, 384.</li> <li>2. Approved exceptional expenditure for the year of USD 49, 800.</li> <li>3. Approved deferring the engagement of one programme officer due to budget constraints.</li> <li>4. Maintained the keeping of subscription arrears from all members who have accumulated debts.</li> <li>5. Approved an incremental, upward adjustment of subscription fees and an increment of 10% of the subscription. It decided that increment be reviewed every 3 years.</li> <li>6. Upon registration of the ROCB office, the Director be encouraged to invest funds to generate income as per the approved financial investment procedures.</li> <li>7. Approved utilisation of the available DFID funds on proposed activities</li> <li>8. Adopted the ROCB rules of procedure and manuals</li> </ol>	<p>Governance Committee has since met twice, in November 2015 in Swaziland and shared its report with the 23<sup>rd</sup> RSG (South Africa). The 10<sup>th</sup> FGC meeting took place in Nairobi in May 2015 and the report circulated to the Members. The FGC will apprise the GC.</p>

Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
5.	Performance Measurement	<p>The Governing Council;</p> <p>Thanked the SG for the PM tool and expressed need for consistency of measurement. It supported the WCO's development and use of the PM tool.</p>	WCO to present a progress report to the GC. A Member has been invited to give a key note address on the PM during the GC.
6.	Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)	<p>The Governing Council;</p> <p>i. Expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by the WCO in supporting Members in the implementation of the TFA.</p> <p>ii. Directed the RSG to ensure integration of all FTA activities in the regional Strategy and Implementation Plan.</p> <p>iii. Urged the 10 members in the region yet to accede to the RKC to consider accession to the convention.</p>	TFA remains a standing item on the regional agenda. The 23 <sup>rd</sup> RSG discussed the Outcomes of the Regional Workshop on Strategic Initiatives for Trade Facilitation & the WCO Mercator Programme. It will also had a Panel Discussion on the Experiences and Challenges in setting up National Committees on Trade Facilitation
7.	RILO	<p>The Governing Council;</p> <p>i. welcomed and approved Burundi's request to join the RILO. It urged the other 5 non-members to join the RILO.</p> <p>ii. directed that NCPs utilise the CEN/nCEN platform and members to update their list of NCPs with the RILO.</p> <p>iii. directed that NCPs meet to deliberate on critical issues and welcomed the WCO ESA Project offer to seek funds in support of the meeting.</p>	RILO to present a report to the GC.
8.	Regional Training Centres (RTCs) as centres of Excellence	<p>GC approved the request to recognise RTCs as centres of excellence as follows;</p> <p><b>RTC Kenya:</b> Economic Competitiveness Package</p> <p><b>RTC Mauritius:</b> Compliance and Enforcement Package</p> <p><b>RTC South Africa:</b> Organizational Development</p> <p><b>RTC Zimbabwe:</b> Revenue Package</p>	RTCs to present the RTC Heads meeting a report to the GC and avail individual RTC reports.



Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
9.	Reviewed Regional Strategy Implementation Plan;	The Governing Council;  Approved the Regional Strategy & Implementation Plan reviewed by the RSG.	ROCB has presented the completed and pending tasks in the Strategy and will present a proposal to the GC on the development of the next Strategy.
10.	Customs Response to Violent Extremism	The Governing Council;  i. recommended increased cooperation, coordination and exchange of information between Customs and relevant security & intelligence agencies.  ii. tasked the Management Committee to establish a virtual working group to develop a position for the upcoming Policy Commission in June 2015.	Noted.
11.	Term of Office of the ROCB Director	The GC was informed that the term of office of the ROCB Director is coming to an end in September 2015. The Director indicated that she would not seek renewal of her contract for a second term.  The Governing Council directed that;  i. The MC manages the recruitment process.  ii. MC sensitizes the Members making offers for the Director's position on the cost implications of the secondment of their official to the ROCB.	The Vice Chair to report.
12.	WCO ESA Project (Finnish Funded Project)	The Governing Council expressed its appreciation for the support of the WCO ESA Project.	The project came to an end on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2016. The WCO will apprise the region and present on the proposed 2 <sup>nd</sup> project supported by Finland.
13.	Presentation by Angola on Coordinated Border Management	Angola's presented on its Coordinated Border Management (Enforcement) which upholds coordination among all the border agencies. The GC expressed its appreciation for the support of the presentation and acknowledged the efforts of Angola Revenue Administration on CBM.	Noted.

Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
14.	WCO Finance Committee Report	Uganda presented the report which highlighted auditing of the WCO accounts, subscriptions and subscriptions rate at the WCO and the WCO Financial Investments and Income. The GC noted with appreciation the report	Members of the WCO FC to present to the GC.
15.	WCO Audit Committee Report	The GC noted with appreciation the report of the WCO Audit Committee. The report highlighted different issues note or approved by the Committee.	Members of the WCO AC to present to the GC.
16.	Procedures for election of the 3 WCO Directors in June 2015	The GC noted with appreciation the procedures of elections of the WCO Directors.	Noted.
17.	Vacant positions in ESA	<p>The GC filled the vacant positions in the region as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Vice Chair – SOUTH AFRICA</li> <li>ii. Deputy Vice Chair – UGANDA</li> <li>iii. Member of the Policy Commission – ANGOLA</li> <li>iv. Finance Committee Representative – BURUNDI</li> <li>v. Audit Committee Representative – ZIMBABWE (1 more year)&amp; TANZANIA (2 more years)</li> <li>vi. Regional Governance &amp; Finance Committee Representatives – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ZAMBIA</li> <li>• SOUTH SUDAN</li> <li>• MADAGASCAR</li> <li>• SWAZILAND</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Noted.
18.	Hosts and dates of next regional meetings	<p>South Africa scheduled to host the 23<sup>rd</sup> RSG meeting, 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (and the RTC Heads meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2015)</p> <p>Lesotho expected to host the 24<sup>th</sup> RSG and 21<sup>st</sup> GC meetings, 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> &amp; 13<sup>th</sup>, May 2016 (and the RTC Heads meeting 5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2016).</p>	<p>Dates of the 24<sup>th</sup> RSG were changed to 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016.</p> <p>21<sup>st</sup> GC will be held On 26<sup>th</sup> &amp; 27<sup>th</sup> May 2016.</p>

Item		Highlights of Decisions	Status
19.	Panel Discussion 1: Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC)	<p>The panel was chaired by Lesotho and had participants from Swaziland, the African Union Commission (AUC), EAC, SADC and the IMF Afritak. Panelists shared their positions and experiences regarding the TFA and concurred that RKC not only remained/s a priority alongside the TFA but was/is also a key instrument of the WCO to support the implementation of the TFA</p> <p>The GC;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. directed the RSG to look at each member's need and incorporate them into the Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan to specifically address TFA.</li> <li>2. urged the exchange of information among members</li> <li>3. urged the RECs continue improving coordination to avoid duplication</li> <li>4. urged non-contracting parties to the RKC to accede to the RKC</li> <li>5. urged a regional approach towards the implementation of TFA.</li> </ol>	Noted.
20.	Panel Discussion 2: Authorised Economic Operators – The East African Community Story	<p>The panel was chaired by Uganda, and had participation from Kenya, EAC, and the Private Sector, represented by the Bakhesa Group (Tanzania). Panelists shared national experiences, perspectives from the private sector and comments from the East African Community Secretariat.</p> <p>The meeting concluded that AEO is key to the success of the SAFE Framework of Standards and trade facilitation. It agreed that the region should focus on implementing the programme in order to lower the cost of doing business in the region. It also agreed on the need to ensure that all members and different government agencies have the will and action to fully support the AEO programme.</p> <p>Follow up be made through the Regional Vice Chair, the ROCB, and WCO Regional Development Manager in order to obtain a rough estimate of the region's performance.</p>	Noted.

## 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND DELIBERATIONS OF THE RSG

Below are the deliberations and recommendations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> RSG, held in South Africa in November 2015. The report on the status of these discussions is presented in various sections of this report.

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
1.	Opening Remarks (Annexed)	<p>The meeting was opened by WCO ESA Regional Vice Chair and SARS Commissioner, Mr. Tom Moyane with opening remarks delivered by the the RSG Chair Mr. Siphithi Sibeko, WCO Representative and ESA Regional Development Manager, Mr. Patrick Gyan, and ROCB Director Mr. Larry Liza.</p> <p>Mr. Moyane welcomed the participants to South Africa and to the meeting. He expressed the region's gratitude to various governments and officials for their service to the region, particularly the former Director of the ROCB Ms. Christine Msemburi (Zimbabwe) and former WCO ESA RDM Ms. Zizela Mawete (Angola). He congratulated the new Deputy Director WCO Capacity Building the new Mrs. Brenda Mundia (Zambia) and the new ESA RDM Mr. Patrick Gyan for their appointment.</p> <p>The Commissioner highlighted the emerging challenges in Customs and urged the need to put in measures to mitigate the challenges. He underscored the importance of accession to the RKC, Regional Integration, curbing Illicit Financial Flows, among others, and urged the region to adopt the tools developed to support further developments in Customs in order to spur economic growth.</p> <p>Mr. Sibeko expressed his appreciation to Members and urged fruitful deliberations.</p> <p>Mr. Gyan conveyed the WCO's gratitude to Members for their welcome and cooperation and to South Africa for hosting regional meetings. He commended the region for applying the WCO tools and instruments, progress in the WTO TFA, and its recognition of the RTCs as Centres of Excellence for WCO packages.</p> <p>Mr. Liza thanked the region for his appointment as the ROCB Director and expressed his commitment to assisting the region deliver its agenda. He joined the Vice Chair in acknowledging the support of the former and new officials serving the region and the WCO and ROCB.</p>	The RSG thanked the Vice Chair and SARS Commissioner for his presence and support to the RSG.

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
2.	Adoption of Agenda	<p>The agenda was adopted as follows;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opening Remarks</li> <li>2. Adoption of Agenda</li> <li>3. REPORTS               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Vice - Chair's Report</li> <li>ii. WCO Report</li> <li>iii. ROCB Annual Report</li> <li>iv. Decisions of 20<sup>th</sup> GC</li> <li>v. FGC Report and proposed budget</li> <li>vi. RILO Report</li> <li>vii. RTC Heads meeting report</li> <li>viii. Country Reports</li> <li>ix. WCO ESA Project report</li> <li>x. Outcomes of Regional Workshop on Strategic Initiatives for Trade Facilitation &amp; the WCO Mercator Programme</li> <li>xi. Presentations by invited stakeholders – AUC</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Overview of Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan</li> <li>5. Panel Discussions:               <p>Panel 1: "Trade Facilitation Agreement – Experiences and Challenges in setting up National Committees on Trade Facilitation"</p> <p>Panel 2: "The appropriation of the WCO Strategic Plan and the performance of Regional Training Centres and RILO"</p> </li> <li>6. A.O.B</li> <li>7. Adoption of the report</li> </ol>	The RSG adopted the agenda following proposal by Namibia, seconded by Angola & Lesotho.

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
3.	WCO – ESA Region Vice - Chair's Report (Annexed)	<p>The report highlighted the following;</p> <p><b>Outcomes of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Policy Commission:</b> The progress of implementing the WCO packages that established the WCO Strategic Plan:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Competitiveness Package – welcomed the accessions to the RKC, acknowledged the developments on the uptake of the TFA and the Mercator Programme</li> <li>• Revenue Package – new tools and plans for Phase III implementation</li> <li>• Compliance and Enforcement Package – features of WCO Border Security Initiatives including the Programme Global Shield and the Small Arms and Light Weapons</li> <li>• Organizational Development Package – performance measurement and the impact of e-commerce on revenue collection.</li> </ul> <p>Other matters of discussion included the impact of e-commerce on revenue collection and Customs-Private Sector Engagement.</p> <p>The VC reported on the requests for regional representation at WCO Committees and input from the region for the agenda.</p> <p><b>Appointment of the new ROCB Director</b> The Management Committee appointed Mr. Larry Liza (Kenya) as the new ROCB Director following an interview process. The former Director, Ms. Christine Msemburi, had not availed herself for reappointment after completion of her first term.</p>	<p>The RSG; acknowledged with appreciation the report and leadership of South Africa</p> <p>congratulated Mr. Larry Liza for his appointment as ROCB Director</p> <p>urged the region to be proactive in participating in various working groups.</p> <p>acknowledged the importance of the WTO TFA and the tools availed by WCO in support of its implementation</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
4.	WCO-Report (Annexed)	<p>The WCO provided the Capacity Building progress report for the ESA region which highlighted;</p> <p><i>Capacity Building for 2015 – 2016</i>; consolidation of Members' needs supported by ROCB, and urged Members to submit them.</p> <p><i>Customs Environment Scan 2015</i>; employed following emerging challenges and opportunities Including, slowing down trend in international trade, WTO TFA, increasing trans-border criminality and terrorism, intra-regional trade, AU initiative for a Continental Free Trade Area and Illicit trading in endangered species of Flora and Fauna.</p> <p><i>Recommendations of the 7th meeting of the sub-committee of Directors General of Customs of the African Union – Democratic Republic of Congo</i></p> <p>International organizations urged to assist countries to undertake feasibility studies and develop roadmaps, and identify technical solutions on the implementation of Single Windows.</p> <p><i>Columbus Programme &amp; RKC</i></p> <p>Updates on various phases by Members on the programme, and planned WCO missions to support RKC accession and implementation by Tanzania, Ethiopia and Namibia.</p> <p><i>Accreditation of Regional Experts</i></p> <p>Planned regional accreditation workshops to be conducted in February 2016 to provide the opportunity to increase the number of Accredited Customs Experts (ACE) from the region.</p>	<p>The RSG;</p> <p>Noted with appreciation the WCO report and the support of the WCO.</p> <p>Underscored the importance of the Customs Environment Scan</p> <p>Urged Members to utilize the WCO website in accessing WCO tools</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
5.	ROCB Report (incorporating Decisions of the 20 <sup>th</sup> GC) (Annexed)	<p>The ROCB report highlighted the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Staff Establishment</i>: Two programme officers joined the ROCB from South Sudan and Kenya</li> <li>ii. <i>Member Subscriptions</i>: Effected increase of Member subscription fees from USD 5,000 to USD 5,500.</li> <li>iii. <i>Activities</i>: Of the five planned activities, only one was undertaken during the period under review following delayed confirmation of funding.</li> <li>iv. <i>Regional Strategy</i>: Status of implementation of the current Regional Strategy (2012 – 2017) and the need for a new Strategy.</li> <li>v. <i>Tripartite Regional Train the Trainer (ToT) Programme</i>; materials developed by RECs and RTCs, supported by WCO and ROCB. Roll out to employ the requirements of the WCO Learning Package in the selection of candidates</li> <li>vi. <i>Website &amp; E-learning Platform</i>; project ongoing after securing funds from CCF-Korea. Members requested to offer virtual ICT support with positive response obtained from South Africa</li> <li>vii. <i>Regional Research</i>; exploration of cheaper quotes and means of publishing e-book from the 1<sup>st</sup> ESA Regional Research Conference; and plans for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference in 2016.</li> <li>viii. <i>Cooperation</i>; continued engagement with the RECs, stakeholders and development partners.</li> <li>ix. <i>Role of RTCs</i>; as centres of excellence and need for RTC hosts, WCO and ROCB to fully engage the RTCs in Capacity Building Activities</li> <li>x. <i>Appreciation</i>, to Kenya for continued hosting, and supporting the new Director of the ROCB, Vice Chair for leadership, and Members for support.</li> </ul>	<p>The RSG, expressed appreciation to the ROCB Director for his commitment to serving the region and urged him to steer the region in delivering its agenda</p> <p>urged Members to share information on donor engagement with the ROCB</p> <p>asked ROCB to revive the Country Reports and formed a working group comprising Angola (Chair), Namibia, Swaziland and Uganda to review the Country Reporting template</p> <p>urged the WCO and ROCB to offer increased support to the RTCs in their delivery</p> <p>requested Swaziland to volunteer an e-learning resource virtually</p>



No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
6.	Finance and Governance Committee (FGC) report (Annex)	<p>The FGC informed the RSG of the following;</p> <p><i>The 9<sup>th</sup> FGC meeting:</i> took place in Swaziland, did not form a quorum and the report was adopted through round robin.</p> <p><i>Member Subscriptions:</i> The ROCB income increased marginally due to revised subscription rates and payment of arrears by Members. FGC pointed out that the GC had urged the Vice Chair to engage the four administrations with the highest arrears and encouraged them to make their payments.</p> <p><i>Former Director's relocation costs:</i> A variance of 29% of the budget expenditure was attributed to savings made from the relocation cost of the outgoing Director.</p> <p><i>Accounting Software:</i> Asked the ROCB to explore the sharing of the accounting platform with the host administration.</p> <p><i>Registration of the ROCB:</i> The ROCB reserves stood at USD 429,579 which cannot be invested to yield better returns and extra funds for the office</p> <p><i>External Auditors:</i> The FGC approved the appointment of External auditors; Alekim &amp; Associates for the year 2015/2016 after the firm underwent a successful vetting process.</p> <p><i>Amendment of Rules:</i> Pointed out that proposed amendment of rules had not been approved by the GC due to time constraints during their meeting. It proposed further amendments to the rules to enhance delivery and cut costs, in particular, the requirement of a GC nominee to be present at the Procurement Committee.</p>	<p>The RSG;</p> <p>Noted with appreciation the report of the FGC</p> <p>A d o p t e d recommendations of the FGC on rules amendment</p> <p>Acknowledged Kenya's update on the progress of the registration of the office</p> <p>Urged the FGC to explore different funding models beyond Member subscriptions.</p> <p>Requested the VC to engage the host administration</p> <p>Requested the VC to follow up on outstanding debt arrears that were more than a year.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
7.	RILO Report (Annexed)	<p>The RILO report was shared with the participants as RILO (Mozambique) sent apologies for missing the meeting. The report:</p> <p>outlined the activities undertaken during the reporting period, including the number of alerts, seizures, and operations in different areas including drugs, CITES, IPR, Illicit Trade, Tobacco and other prohibitions.</p> <p>indicated that the use of nCEN and CEN platform by the NCPs remained low in spite of the GC encouraging members to make use of the platform. In addition, there were increased number of locked accounts while some members were yet to subscribe to CEN.</p> <p>carried out 3 operations in the reporting period; Westerlies3, to combat trafficking of methamphetamine and other drugs by air; Channel gate operation which seized dietary supplements and sexual stimulants which lacked documentation from the Ministry of Health of Maputo; and Catalyst Operation (July to October 2015) to address the increase of New Psychoactive Substances.</p> <p>Operation Cobra 3 was held in Bangkok to help in protecting the environment and wildlife species.</p> <p>RILO held a total of 10 meetings and workshops in the reporting period.</p> <p>The report noted that there was lack of information submission to CEN platform to support RILO's production of newsletters, bulletin and other related information.</p> <p>The office still lacks the legal structures to support the secondment of staff to the RILO as well as their financial support.</p>	<p>The RSG could not discuss the report due to the absence of RILO (Mozambique)</p> <p>RSG urged those members that are not participating in RILO activities to do so as a matter of urgency</p> <p>RSG strongly urged RILO ESA to actively participate and attend the regional meetings</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
8.	RTC Heads report (Annexed)	<p>The RTC Heads meeting was attended by the RTC heads (or their representatives), the ROCB and the WCO. Highlights of the report were as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RTC heads had successfully completed a workshop on the finalization of the preparation of ToT materials</li> <li>The RTCs serve as Centres of Excellence for the WCO packages as follows:  <b>RTC Kenya</b> - Economic Competitiveness Package  <b>RTC Mauritius</b> - Compliance and Enforcement Package  <b>RTC South Africa</b> - Organizational Development  <b>RTC Zimbabwe</b> - Revenue Package</li> </ul> <p>RTC presented to the RSG the need for nomination of ToT nominees to be RTC trainers in order to promote sustainability of the process and the need to cascade the knowledge back to the respective national administration.</p> <p>It was reaffirmed that the ROCB and the RTCs need to work together to assist in TFA implementation and to utilize the abundant resources and support of both the WCO and the ROCB to remain relevant within the region.</p>	<p>The RSG noted the progress report.</p> <p>The ROCB was urged to be effective in its role of capacity building and enhancing the relevance of RTCs in the member states administration.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
9.	WCO ESA Project report (Annexed)	<p>The WCO – ESA Project ‘Building Trade Capacity through Customs Modernization in the East and Southern Africa Region’ reported activities towards the completion of the project, and informed the RSG of a possible second phase of the project:</p> <p>The Leadership and Management Development monitoring tool which has been developed by WCO would soon be tested on a pilot basis for countries that benefited from the programme and will be available for downloading in CLiKC by end of November, 2015</p> <p>The Project Manager informed that WCO ESA Project intends to host a side event during the WTO ministerial conference.</p> <p>On the planned project, the Project Manager informed the RSG that the WCO is in the process of negotiating with Finland to fund the second phase of the project titled “To progress the Trade Facilitation agenda within the framework of the WCO Mercator Programme in ESA Region 2016 – 2018”. The project is scheduled to take 3 years and is intended to begin by May 2016. Approximately 3,000,000 will be availed for the project.</p> <p>The project has 4 components:  Component 1: Trade Facilitation &amp; WCO Mercator Programme  Component 2: Organizational/Institutional capability  Component 3: Human Resource Management &amp; Development  Component 4: Sustainable Regional Expertise &amp; Autonomy  Component 4 is specially tailored to enable RTCs to conduct activities based on their centers of excellence. The WCO was encouraged to utilize ESA accredited experts to aid in the development and implementation of the fourth component.</p> <p>The administrations encouraged to come up with proposals within the framework of this new project, in the hope it is approved, to utilize the fourth component as a platform to demonstrate the relevance of RTCs.</p> <p>The project would require four recruits; the PM would be from Finland, open posts are two experts in Trade Facilitation and in Human Resource Management and one administrative assistant</p>	<p>The RSG noted with appreciation the presentation of the report.</p> <p>Members agreed to optimally use the opportunity presented by the second phase of the project by proactively submitting proposals to the project office</p> <p>The RSG urged members to respond timeously to communication from the WCO ESA project.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
10.	Outcomes of Regional Workshop on Strategic Initiatives for Trade Facilitation & the WCO Mercator Programme	<p>The RSG Chair appraised the RSG on the outcomes of the regional workshop and the way forward as follows;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National Committees on Trade Facilitation; it was discussed that member states should establish and maintain active NCTF to facilitate the implementation of TFA. In this view, ROCB has been charged with the role of collating and updating members on the progress achieved thus far.</li> <li>2. RKC; to date, only 14 out of the 24 members have acceded to the RKC, hence the need for non-contracting parties to the RKC to maximize on the links between accession to the RKC and the ratification of the TFA.</li> <li>3. The RSG was informed on the need to work in coordination with the RECs and the Private Sector in order to spearhead the agenda of TFA implementation and by extension accession to the RKC.</li> </ol>	<p>RSG agreed that ROCB should play a role in updating members on the progress of the countries that had implemented the TFA and advocate cooperation between the RECs and the Private Sector</p> <p>The RSG acknowledged members who had made progress in the formation of the NCTFs. Burundi made a commitment to have this committees formed by November 2015.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
11.	Overview of Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan 2012 – 2017 and the need for a new strategy	<p>The ROCB Director reported that previous reviews of the RSGs have agreed on maintaining the five strategic objectives; Promote Trade facilitation, Promote fair and efficient revenue mobilization, Protect the Society, Strengthen Professionalism in Human Capital and enhance capacity to support regional integration.</p> <p>He went on to give an overview of the implementation progress of the objectives. He pointed out that a significant progress has been made in the implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>On the second strategic objective, the new initiatives added include; the need to establish the National Advance Ruling Service (NARS) and Revenue Impact on Trade facilitation by 2017.</p> <p>On the third objective, there was no funding for customs security intelligence.</p> <p>The fourth objective saw a number of successes notably on the finalization of the ToT materials.</p> <p>It is hoped that for the fifth objective, there will be training guides and a framework to facilitate the process and include M &amp; E tools in the upcoming strategy.</p>	<p>The RSG noted that since activities in the strategy were almost done, there should be more activities developed to cover for 2016 – 2017 period.</p> <p>The RSG urged the ROCB to work closely with the RECs in the area of NARS due to the fact that WCO ESA members belonged to different EPA configurations and this remains a priority as the EPA agreement will enter into force in 2016.</p> <p>It was deliberated that in reporting, a status column should be introduced in the report in order to highlight the status of the activity in terms of its impact on the beneficiaries. This will be used to benchmark the success of the activities.</p> <p>In addition, it was agreed that in future a work plan should be created in order to track progress by ROCB.</p> <p>The RSG agreed that the ROCB should give an appraisal of the strategy by February 2016 in the broader view to reconcile what has been achieved and what has not been done in terms of the strategy and activities.</p> <p>The WCO clarified that in conducting an impact assessment for the region, there is a need to consider the scope.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
12.	Communication Guidelines between the ROCB, VC, WCO, Donors and Members (Annexed)	<p>The RSG was briefed on the proposed communication guidelines focussing on the mode of communication and to ensure that information is disseminated to all relevant parties. The proposal suggests that:</p> <p>Capacity Building matters from members and other stakeholders will be communicated through the ROCB copied to the VC</p> <p>Communication to MS should be through official contact points to ensure that information is received by relevant people</p> <p>All communication on capacity building between ROCB &amp; WCO that require decision making should be copied to the VC's contact point</p> <p>Communication from MS to WCO involving ESA should be copied to ROCB</p> <p>Communication between the VC, ESA donors and RECs should be copied to ROCB</p> <p>All communications that require actions by any party should have clear deadlines.</p> <p>Further amendments were suggested to improve the document.</p>	RSG noted the guidelines for further engagement and consolidation.

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
13.	Report of Finance Committee (WCO)	<p>The FC report was presented by Burundi covered the following discussions:</p> <p>The Strategic Plan – it emphasized that all activities conducted, were based on WCO's mission and vision. It was agreed that WCO would assess its financial impact on the projects carried out. This, they said would affect the contributions paid out by member states at the beginning of every exercise.</p> <p>The proposal to increase WCO staff salaries was accepted but would require extensive study. It was deliberated that this debate would be ongoing in future meetings.</p> <p>During the meeting, it was agreed that the WCO publications should be made available free of charge.</p> <p>On resource utilization, it was agreed during the meeting that prudence should be observed in using the WCO reserves. Proposals on how to use these reserves were discussed</p> <p>A suggestion to create a fund to build an academy for Capacity Building for Customs cooperation was proposed.</p> <p>It was also agreed that there would be an assessment of the investments done using the reserves. These project proposals were submitted to the WCO for further analysis. The next session for the FC would be held from the 4th to 7th of April 2016.</p>	The RSG noted the report



No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
14.	PANEL DISCUSSION I “Trade Facilitation Agreement – Experiences and Challenges in setting up National Committees on Trade Facilitation”	<p>The panel discussion was chaired by Swaziland. The presentations were made by various panellists comprising Ethiopia, Lesotho and South Africa.</p> <p>Lesotho shared its experiences towards the implementation of the TFA. The proposed membership would include representatives from the Ministries of Trade, Development Planning Transport, Agriculture, Home Affairs and Police; Customs; National Security Service; Trading Community and the Health Authorities. They are currently working on formulation the NCTF ToRs. The challenges encountered include: the numerous players in international trade, lack of resources to fund the preparation work and setting up of the Secretariat.</p> <p>South Africa is working on the preparatory work to implement the TFA. Part of this includes the setting up of the NCTF encapsulating all the role players. South Africa has also prioritised regional coordination especially with the AU in its implementation process. It has also formed an interdepartmental Working Group to expedite the.</p> <p>Ethiopia reported that it is in the process of moving from Agricultural based economy to Industrialization in order to attract FDI. As such, Customs is directly involved and is the Vice Chair of the committee charged with the process of implementing the Agreement.</p>	<p>RSG noted the progress achieved and developed a matrix to follow up on implementation.</p> <p>RSG commended to the GC for the adoption of the matrix. Member states were encouraged to submit the WCO questionnaire to the WCO secretariat meeting together with the Matrix for monitoring purposes.</p>

No	Agenda item	Action Points and Discussions	Outcomes / Recommendations
15.	PANEL DISCUSSION II The appropriation of the WCO Strategic Plan & Performance of RTCs & RILO	<p>The panel comprised representatives from WCO, RTC, the Vice Chair and the ROCB and chaired by Angola.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the objectives and mandates of the key organs of the WCO which facilitate implementation of the strategic plan.</p> <p>WCO – presented an objective-based document outlining the seven strategic goals, activities which have been aligned to the 21st Century building blocks.</p> <p>The WCO's strategic plan has been based on a 3 year cycle model and divided in two parts: strategic and tactical part.</p> <p>ROCB presented on the status and role of the ROCB. It provided a background on the six WCO ROCBs and their strategic objectives, including their relationship with RTCs, RECs and other stakeholders.</p> <p>RTC – there are 26 RTCs worldwide and are assigned with the role of facilitating capacity building in regions. They are used to drive the implementation of the regional strategic plan and they do this by collaborating with the ROCB to ensure success.</p> <p>They support the identification and response to members' needs where training needs are concerned.</p> <p>They facilitate follow up of WCO programmes where capacity building is concerned.</p>	<p>RSG deliberated that;</p> <p>The RSG requested the WCO to assist the region to access the tools through the ROCB Web site to enable efficacy in capacity building</p> <p>It was important to understand the relationship in all the regional structures</p> <p>Communication between and amongst the regional structures and the WCO should be strengthened.</p>
16.	Adoption of the RSG report	Swaziland proposed adoption, seconded by Uganda, Namibia and Mauritius. The RSG adopted its report.	
17.	Closure of the meeting	<p>The Chair thanked all members for their active participation.</p> <p>the next meeting will be held in the kingdom of Lesotho from the 23rd to 27th of May 2016.</p>	

## 8.0 REGIONAL STRATEGY & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The 20<sup>th</sup> Governing Council (in Angola), approved the preceding RSG's recommendation to retain the objectives of the Regional Strategy. The RSG also reviewed its expected outcomes, tasks, and activities. The GC directed the RSG to ensure integration of all FTA activities in the Regional Strategy and Implementation Plan. The 23<sup>rd</sup> RSG (South Africa) began deliberations on the next Strategy as the current one runs 2012 – 2017 and will further these discussions during the 24<sup>th</sup> RSG in Lesotho.

### 8.1 Highlights of Discussions and New Developments

#### i. Promotion of Trade Facilitation

The 20<sup>th</sup> GC agreed that the **Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC)** remains a key tool of the WCO and anchors the implementation of the TFA. It further urged the 10 members in the region yet to accede to the RKC to consider accession to the convention.

On the **Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)**, ESA held a panel discussion on National Experiences, Regional Perspective of the TFA, Advantages and Challenges to the TFA and the Way Forward for the region.

Recurring issues were on the need for political will, participation of other border agencies, capacity building and the benefits of the regional approach. It was pointed out that it was important that the region makes use of working groups in order to advance the process of implementation as well as mobilize stakeholder support. It was concluded that an all-inclusive National Trade Facilitation Committee is instrumental in the implementation of the TFA. Additionally, the region needs to adopt a regional approach to the implementation whilst at the same time integrating and prioritizing the same in its strategic plan.

On the **Authorised Economic Operator (AEO)**, a panel discussion shared national experiences, perspectives from the private sector and comments from the East African Community Secretariat. The region agreed that AEO is key to the success of the SAFE Framework of Standards and trade facilitation and on the need to focus on implementing the programme in order to lower the cost of doing business in the region. The need to ensure that all members and different government agencies have the will and actions fully support the AEO programme was also agreed on. A follow up be made through the Regional Vice Chair, the ROCB, and WCO Regional Development Manager in order to obtain a rough estimate of the region's performance.

#### ii. Revenue Mobilization

Previously, Members concurred on that members establish National Advance Rulings Service and on the need for a regional workshop on Advance Rulings. It was also agreed that technical assistance for drafting legislation for binding advance rulings was needed. Subsequent review of the current Implementation Plan approved the need for Members to Establish National Advance Rulings Service and to conduct an assessment of Revenue impact on the Trade Facilitation Agreement.

#### iii. Protection of the Society

The WCO explained to the region its Security Programme aimed at strengthening Customs capacity to deal with security issues through great advocacy, representation and coordination. It pointed out that various policies, tools, networks, partnerships, operations and research exist to support its Border Security Initiative through enhanced passenger controls and Strategic Trade, shield against IEDs, Small Arms & Light Weapons, and terrorist financing.

The Governing Council expressed concerns at the threats to the society especially in violent extremism, on wildlife, and other fauna and flora crime. It called for cooperation with other regions in establishing tighter controls to security in all areas, including passenger controls, and other border security controls.



#### iv. Development of Human Capital

**Accreditation of Experts:** WCO concluded a comprehensive review of the overall management and mobilization of its experts. This report was presented to the 7th Capacity Building Committee meeting in April, 2016, in Brussels. Its outcome is presented elsewhere on this report.

**Training of Trainers (ToT):** The RTCs, RECs, WCO and ROCB collaborated to develop ToT materials. This process was finalized and the first ToT workshop held.

#### v. Capacity to Support Regional Integration

ROCB has held informal discussions with RECs aimed at further enhancing cooperation between the ROCB and the RECs, particularly the EAC, COMESA, SACU and SADC. A meeting will be planned with the parties to identify areas that need to consolidate ties, especially on the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. Previously, it was agreed that continued collaboration with RECs and sharing and adoption of best practices be on following areas;

1. SADC and COMESA on AEOs
2. Developments in the area of the RKC
3. Customs to Business Partnership
4. Exchange of information (SACU Piloting GNC)
5. Transit related issues
6. AU on CFTA

This report focuses on the activities, under the various objectives, planned or carried out during the period under review.

### 8.2 Strategic objective I: Promotion of Trade Facilitation

This objective aims to achieve harmonized policies among members, legislation and procedures in a view to implement Coordinated Border Management (CBM), Enhanced Customs to Customs cooperation, and Enhanced Customs to Business partnership and Harmonised ICT strategy implementation.

#### Activity

- TFA regional workshop held in South Africa from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.



A section of the participants who participated at the workshop.

- 'WCO East Southern Africa Regional Workshop on Strategic Initiatives for Trade Facilitation and the Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement through the WCO Mercator Programme' was hosted by South Africa from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.
- The Workshop shared on general information on the TFA, the role of the WCO related to TFA implementation; contents of TFA regulations and respective examples of implementation approaches; experiences of Trade Ministries and other institutions active in the region; and held discussions on further approaches to Capacity Building and TFA implementation.
- The report of the workshop, as well as a report on the Way Forward for the region, is provided.
- DfID provided funding for the workshop. Upcoming workshops include Regional workshops on TFA needs assessment guidelines and on Customs Modernization advisors accreditation.

### 8.3 Strategic objective 2: Promotion of Fair and Efficient Revenue Mobilization

This objective aims to achieve effective Mobilization of Revenue Collection to enhance revenue collection techniques thereby increasing the tax base and maximizing the revenue yield.

#### Activities

- ROCB however held discussions with the WCO to support Members who have pending activities in this area. Nevertheless, no particular regional activity took place in this line during the period under review. The activities planned in the overall Strategy were workshops on Revenue Package (Valuation), Post Clearance Audit and Rules of Origin workshop which were held during the previous period. 10 out of 24 members benefited from the Transfer Pricing / Valuation workshop. Funding is yet to be obtained for the other 14 members.

### 8.4 Strategic objective 3: Protection of the Society

This objective aims to assist members to develop effective Risk Management policies, strategies and procedures.

#### Activities

- No particular regional activity took place in this line during the period under review. Activities previously conducted were Non-Intrusive Inspection (NII) workshop (funded by CCF/Japan), and nCEN implementation projects (supported by the WCO ESA Project) and Regional Workshop on Transit (funded by CCF/Japan).
- It was previously reported that DfID will provide funding for a Risk Mapping workshop. The ROCB has made progress in discussing with the WCO modalities of ensuring that this workshop is supported and held.

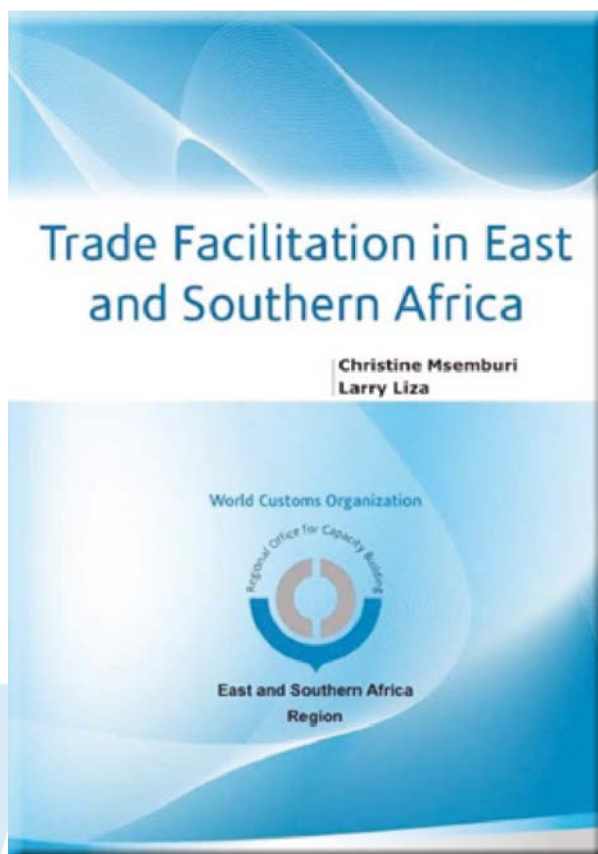
### 8.5 Strategic Objective 4: Strengthening Professionalism in Human Capital

- This objective aims to enhance regional research and analysis capacity in Customs, develop competent trainers for national and regional training, develop a regional E-learning platform, develop and integrated Human Resource Development (HRD) strategy to support the repositioning of customs as well as integrated Human Resource Management (HRM) strategy.
- Activities planned included a Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop, building and implementing the regional E-learning platform and Regional Research Programme. Regional LMDP Accreditation Trainings have been taking place, supported by the Finnish Government under the WCO ESA Project.



## A. Plans for 2nd ESA Regional Research Conference (ESARR Conference)

- The region aims to further regional development through research and host biennial research conferences.
- The ROCB is happy to announce that it has obtained funding for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ESA Regional Research Conference, now christened the ESARR Conference. The proposal was made to the 9<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee of the Project titled “Building Trade Capacity through Customs Modernization in the East and Southern Africa Region”, supported by the Government of Finland
- The RTCs deliberated on the details of the conference during their meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2015, and provided feedback to the region.
- The ROCB published its first eBook on Trade Facilitation in East and Southern Africa. The 20<sup>th</sup> GC had directed that the ROCB uses the USD. 2,200 balance from the DfID/TMSA fund to publish an e-Book of the collected research papers. The ROCB contracted The Kenya Literature Bureau to work on the Ebook publication. The ROCB made final preparations and write ups on the Ebook whose articles were previously consolidated with the support of the WCO Research Unit. The office finalized the book and it was shared with the region in the month of April, 2016.



- DfID funded the 1<sup>st</sup> Research Conference hosted by the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 in Harare, Zimbabwe. The theme of the conference was “Customs and Trade Facilitation: Building Institutional Capacity and the body of knowledge in Customs through research”.

## B. ESA Training of Trainers

### The Training of Trainers (ToT) WORKSHOP - 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

With the financial support from the Department for International Development (DfID) and in partnership with the South Africa Revenue Service (SARS), the ROCB and WCO held the **first ToT workshop from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.**

- The WCO ESA Training of Training (ToT) programme aims to develop a regional pool of experts in ToT for use in the region and well as by their respective national administrations in the dissemination of training. The Regional Training Centres (RTCs), in conjunction with the ROCB, the WCO and RECs (COMESA, EAC & SADC) developed the modules of the training.
- The programme's framework envisioned that each Member administration nominates candidates involved with training in their administrations. The initial Training of Trainer involved training on the standards, techniques and methodology in delivery of training, and later will focus on empowering the trainers with knowledge and training materials on technical subjects.
- The ESA Training of Trainers (ToT) Module finalization meeting was hosted by South African Revenue Service (SARS), from the 28th to 30th October, 2015 in South Africa. The development of these materials took place under the Tripartite/WCO ESA Collaboration Project, with the EAC, COMESA and SADC, alongside the ESA WCO RTCs (Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Zimbabwe), the ROCB and WCO.
- The WCO facilitated the development of the ToT materials and facilitated the review of the existing ToT material to imbed the WCO Blended Learning methodology, modern training techniques and standards, and to align them with the WCO training methodologies.
- The ToT programme was rolled out and aims to develop a regional pool of experts in ToT who would be used in the region and well as by their respective national administrations in the dissemination of training.



The Training of Trainers (TOT) Workshop - 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

### C. Website Redesign and Development and Regional E-learning platform

- The ROCB has continued to maintain and regularly update its website. New features have been added to the current website, to make it more user-friendly and interactive. The region now has an online registration portal for meetings and well as a more interactive Members only portal.
- The ROCB made a successful proposal to CCF-Korea for the redesign and redevelopment of the ESA ROCB website. CCF-Korea identified IT-Mind, a company based in Korea, for the assignment. The ROCB signed a contract with IT Mind (Korea) for the development of the ESA website on 30th June, 2015.



- The ROCB requested members to nominate a staff with ICT background, by 30th October 2015 to work virtually and on part time and need basis at the ROCB. South Africa Revenue Services seconded virtual Information Technology staff to work together with IT BAND towards the timely development of the website. The ROCB could not further contact with the company as it stopped communication with the ROCB. The ROCB requested the WCO to intervene on the matter and agreed that the ROCB calls for quotations from developers based in Kenya. The balance in the fund will be used towards the redevelopment with the identified developer.

#### **D. Regional Integration Conference and WCO Knowledge Academy 2015 and 2016**

- The WCO Knowledge Academy 2016 will be held from 27th June, 2015 to 6th July 2016. The 2016 Knowledge Academy's programme includes two important learning tracks focused on the WCO's principal areas of work, namely Tariff and Trade Affairs (Harmonized System, Rules of Origin and Customs Valuation) as well as Compliance and Facilitation (Trade Facilitation Agreement, WCO Data Model, and SAFE/AEO).
- The WCO Knowledge Academy 2015 was held from 15th to 26th June, 2015. Prior to the academy, there was a Regional Integration Conference with the following sessions; Regional Integration: Stages, Priorities and Challenges, Regional integration - Global connectivity at regional level, Regional integration - Mercator Programme – technical assistance for trade facilitation, A regional approach to risk management, Use of IT - Information exchange, interoperability and regional Single Windows, Coordinated Border Management and Transit and other solutions to remove non-harmonised trade barriers.
- The topics of the Knowledge Academy were; Customs Valuation, Rules of Origin, WCO's role in TFA, WCO Enforcement Programme, Harmonised System, AEO SAFE, Excisable Products & Illicit Trade, WCO Research Topics.
- WCO PICARD Conference 2015 and 2016
- The 2016 Picard Conference will be hosted by the Philippine Bureau of Customs and will take place from 27-29 September 2016, in Manila, Philippines.
- The 10th annual PICARD Conference was from 8 to 10 September 2015, in Baku, Azerbaijan. Presentations were delivered on a variety of topics such as data measurement to counter fraud; informal trade; wildlife protection; smuggling of cultural property; incentivization of Customs officer practices; global value chains, revenue matters; Customs risk management; and e-commerce. The then ROCB Director, Ms. Christine Msemburi gave a presentation on Capacity Building in Africa.

### **8.6 Strategic Objective 5: Enhance Capacity to Support Regional Integration**

The outcomes of this objective are; Effective regional coordination procedures among the regional stakeholders, Effective Monitoring and Evaluation framework and Funding Mobilization.

#### **Missions**

The ROCB has continued to participate in various missions that promote the delivery of its objectives. These missions are as a result of its collaboration with the WCO, RECs, various stakeholders and development partners.

#### **The Regional Technical Committee Meetings for Preparation of a Regional One-Stop Border Post (OSBP) Operational Procedures Manual held in Jinja, Uganda and Mombasa, Kenya**

The office participated in this meeting whose primary objective of the Regional Technical Committee Meeting was to proceed with the development of an East Africa Community One Stop Border Post manual based on best practices in the region, as well as elsewhere in Africa and the rest of the world, by discussing the text of substantial part of the procedures manual, article by article.



Regional Technical Committee

### WCO ESA Project Steering Committee in Finland

The ROCB attend the 9th Steering Committee (SC) Meeting of the WCO Project “Building Trade Capacity through Customs Modernization in the East and Southern Africa Region” which is funded by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, was hosted by the Finnish Customs from 14th to 16th March 2016, in Kuusamo, Finland. The meeting was attended by various Director Generals (or their representatives) from the region, in particular, South Africa, Uganda, Angola, Malawi, Mauritius and Kenya, all who have recently or currently served at the ESA Management Committee. Namibia, which had a special component of the project also participated in the meeting. Other participants included the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland, the WCO and the ESA Regional Office for Capacity Building.

The meeting reviewed progress achieved regarding the implementation of the project. It also discussed a proposed new project by Finland, aiming to progress the trade facilitation (TF) agenda, within the framework of the WCO Mercator Programme in the East and Southern Africa Region.



Members of the Steering Committee, WCO ESA Project touring the Finnish – Russian Border Post.

## Side Meeting held during The World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference - Nairobi, Kenya

World Customs Organization (WCO) and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) held a side meeting during the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was officially opened by the KRA Commissioner General Mr. John Njiraini and the panel was chaired by the WCO Secretary General Mr. Kunio Mikuriya.



Panelists during the WTO MC side meeting in Nairobi.

## International Customs Day (ICD)

The Director and staff of WCO ESA ROCB joined the host administration, Kenya, in celebrating the day whose theme this year was Digital Customs: Progressive Engagement. The celebrations in Kenya were headed by Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for ICT, Mr. Joe Mucheru, whose remarks were delivered by the Principle Secretary, Sammy Itemere. Mr. Mucheru underscored the place of Innovation in ICT as a pathway to sustainable economic growth and urged cooperation, sharing of information and intelligence among all stakeholders.

Kenya Revenue Authority's Commissioner General, Mr. John Njiraini highlighted the focal place for ICT in their Corporate Plan in improving service delivery and enhancing revenue collection. The Commissioner for Customs, Mr. Julius Musyoki pointed to the Authority's focus on reforms, regional integration and progressive improvement of its ICT system.

## 11th Global Meeting of the Heads of Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Regional Training Centres and Vice-Chairs' Offices

The ROCB attended the 11th Global Meeting of the Heads of Regional Offices for Capacity Building, Regional Training Centres and Vice-Chairs' Offices held in Brussels Belgium on 7th & 8th April, 2016

- The meeting took note of the presentation of the Secretariat concerning policy review of mobilization of WCO experts, which highlighted three new types of WCO experts to supplement accredited experts, sub-category to assist TFA implementation and review of ACE database. While welcoming the policy which would support meeting increased demand of Capacity Building needs of Members, the need to outline the mechanism for certifying Recognized Experts, the importance of ensuring accuracy of the database by



communicating with home administrations and the advantage of fully utilising serving offers were discussed and taken note.

- The meeting also reaffirmed the central role played by Human Resource for Customs reform and modernization and valued the latest developments in Customs Professionalism in the Framework of Principles and Practices on Customs Professionalism and the People Development Diagnostic tool, the Virtual Customs Orientation Academy (VCOA) and CLiKC!. In anticipation of the CLiKC! evaluation later this year the meeting suggested to the Secretariat to better make e-learning modules available for portable devices. The meeting reaffirmed commitment of regional entities to contribute in expanding further the use of these to ensure strong people for strong organizations.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Capacity Building Committee held in Brussels Belgium from 11th-13th April 2016.**

- The Secretary General welcomed participants to the 7th session of the CBC, particularly at this difficult time in Brussels and re-affirmed that for the WCO it was “business as usual”. He stated that Customs administrations would continue to stand together in solidarity. The Secretary-General welcomed the new CBC Chair and the new management team within the Capacity Building Directorate. During this meeting, the ROCB, on behalf of the region, shared sympathies with the government and people of Belgium following the terror attacks.
- Under the 2016 CBC theme of “The Future of Customs – Capacity Building for Sustainability” and the WCO Theme for 2016 “Digital Customs – Progressive Engagement”, the Secretary General outlined several important topics that would be discussed at this year’s meeting under the broad headings of Strategies, Partnerships and People.
- The CBC also discussed the best method of reviewing and updating the WCO Capacity Building Strategy. The committee concluded that the matter should first be scoped by each region and the outcomes reported at next years’ CBC. ROCB’s agreed to work collaboratively with the WCO Secretariat on the matter.

#### **15<sup>th</sup> Session the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee -Brussels Belgium**

- The ROCB attended the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) held its 15th Session on 13-15th April 2016 at the WCO headquarters in Brussels. About 140 delegates representing WCO Member administrations and stakeholder organizations participated in discussions that ensued after a warm welcome by the Chairperson, Mrs. Sigfríður Gunnlaugsdóttir from Iceland Customs.
- The Director of Capacity Building, Mr. Ernani Checcucci reiterated the importance of strategic human resource management as a useful tool to enhance integrity. He briefly explained that the WCO had been working with other international organizations such as UNDP and the OECD. In this regard he indicated that the WCO had prepared a high level paper for the G20 Anti-corruption Working Group on its approach to tackling corruption in Customs and his vision for the future. In this context he informed the ISC that the WCO would be participating in the OECD Integrity Forum at a high level. He prompted Members to have frank discussions and to give us indications as to the way for the future in the different areas that would be discussed during this meeting

#### **WCO Council Sessions**

##### **127<sup>th</sup>/128<sup>th</sup> WCO Council Sessions**

To take place in Brussels, Belgium from the 14th to 16th July, 2016.

##### **125<sup>th</sup>/126<sup>th</sup> WCO Council Sessions**

11th to 13th June, 2015, WCO Headquarters, Brussels, Belgium

- The 125<sup>th</sup>/126<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the Customs Co-operation Council deliberated on among others, the following: Policy matters, Technical matters pertaining to Tariff and Trade Affairs, Compliance and Facilitation, Capacity Building, Budgetary and Financials and held Elections for Directors of the WCO.

#### **Cooperation with the Tripartite (RECs) and other stakeholders.**

- The ROCB is mandated to collaborate with the RECs (EAC, COMESA, SADC and SACU), the African Union, among others in driving the regional agenda especially in areas of collaboration. To this end, the ROCB was invited and participated in the following meetings;

#### **4th RJCC Meeting of JICA Trade Facilitation Project**

7<sup>th</sup> May 2015, in Kampala, Uganda

- ROCB was invited and participated at the 4th Regional Joint Coordinating Committee (RJCC) organized by JICA. The meeting brought together the Project Directors (Commissioners General) and the Project Managers (Commissioners Customs) and other related senior officials of the EAC partner states. The meeting was appraised on the accomplishment and planned activities of the Project since November 2014, review of Project Design Matrix, trainings for CCFAs, JBS/JWS activities and the Master Trainer Refresher course.

#### **Sub-Regional Workshop on Curbing Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) from Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.**

14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya.

- UNECA invited the ROCB to the workshop which was held under the distinguished auspices of the Chair of the High Level Panel and former President of the Republic of South Africa, H.E. Mr Thabo Mbeki. The workshop was intended to keep the promise of the Panel to revert with its findings and recommendations to the various constituencies that it met in the course of its work. At the same time, it would enable the Chair and other Members of the Panel to continue the advocacy work that they were tasked with by the AU Special Declaration. Finally, the workshop marked the beginning of practical actions to implement the recommendations in the Report.
- The then Director of the ROCB, Ms. Christine Msemburi made a presentation on 'Customs valuation, transfer pricing, duty liability and risk management'.
- The Workshop achieved the objectives of updating stakeholders from across Eastern and Southern Africa on the Report of the High Level Panel as well as an exchange of views on specific actions towards the implementation of the Panel's recommendations. In addition, it also produced the formation of a 'consortium' of key institutions that have agreed to work together under the high patronage of Mr. Mbeki to implement these HLP recommendations.

#### **Newsletter Publication**

The ROCB aims to publish eNewsletters quarterly and urges Members and stakeholders to submit their articles to the ROCB on a rolling basis. The first Newsletter of 2016 focuses on January to March 2016. The followed up and consolidated articles from Members, stakeholders and partners towards the publication of an eNewsletter. The ROCB sought virtual assistance from Kenya in the newsletter publication. The response was positive and therefore all consolidated articles were sent to their Marketing and Communication office which worked with us on the preparation, layout and the publishing process of this magazine.

#### **Needs Assessment**

The ROCB continues to support the WCO Needs Assessment exercise. Members are urged to cooperate with the ROCB in ensuring timely submission of these needs. While the needs identification process should be continuous, the WCO strives to gather all new needs in the first trimester of each year from all beneficiary Members. The reports submitted by members will allow the timely planning of the WCO Capacity Building Support Activities for the period 2016/2017. The ROCB assessed and consolidated all the needs of Members and submitted them to the WCO.

## Digital Customs

The WCO dedicated 2016 to promoting the digitalization of Customs processes under the slogan “Digital Customs: Progressive Engagement.” Digital Customs means using digital systems to collect and safeguard Customs duties, to control the flow of goods, people, conveyances and money, and to secure cross-border trade from non-compliance, crime and terrorism.

The Director, on behalf of the Vice Chair requested members to give a status report of their implementation of innovative Digital Customs solutions, as a brief but informative overview of these initiatives. The reports received from Members were consolidated and sent to the WCO.

## Annual ESA ‘Sotho’ photo Contest.

The ROCB launched the **Annual ESA ‘Sotho’ photo’ Contest**. This called for Members to submit their ‘best’ photos which will be displayed and voted for during the Governing Council annually. The WCO Secretary General, Regional Vice Chair and hosting Director General will present awards for the ‘Photo of the Year’, alongside the 1st and 2nd Runners’ up. Meanwhile, all the photos submitted will also form part of the **‘ESA Sotho photo Book, a collection of photos that tell Customs story’**.

This contest has been christened ‘Sotho’ in honour of the nation and people of Lesotho, which will host the next Governing Council preceded by the Regional Steering Group meeting.

## WCO ESA & Gainde 2000 collaboration project

Gainde 2000 requested to meet the ROCB team to consider a collaboration project in support of the regional agenda. ‘The core business of GAINDE 2000 is designing software applications aimed at facilitating trade towards stepping up the effectiveness of trade and transport operations. It has software products in the trade facilitation domain targeting Customs and Single Window (SW) Authorities ranging from Customs Management Information System, SW System and Paperless Platform including Research and Consulting Services in all the above areas.’

The ROCB presented different possible areas of cooperation that will be on benefit to the region, particularly based on the Regional Strategy and Implementation plan, with focus on areas that are yet to obtain funding. A draft MoU was discussed by both parties and a proposal drafted by Gainde with input with ROCB. The company also seems keen to enhance its profile in the region.

The Collaboration project will focus on the following:

- Building Capacity ROCB Staff, Regional Training Centres (RTCs), the Member(s) through Regional Workshops and Conferences;
- Sharing Trade Information among the Member(s);
- Consulting and Research for Member(s) on design and deployment of relevant trade facilitation software applications ;
- Design and Deployment of Systems through flexible financing models to Member(s);
- Fundraising jointly to support for Conferences or workshops targeting Member(s).
- Exchange Programmes for ROCB Staff and RTCs.

The Parties intend to establish Customs to Business Partnership to enable cooperation in the areas mentioned below:

1. GAINDE 2000 will build capacities of Member(s) through training on software or technologies systems supporting implementation of Trade Facilitation Agreements (TFA);
2. GAINDE 2000 partner will support the tenets of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, particularly on Article I on Publications (information sharing) through development of Trade Information Portal(s) for Member(s) including Portals targeting regional trading blocks in the region with agreed revenue models that will ensure self-sustaining initiatives.
3. GAINDE 2000 will provide consulting and research services to Member(s) on custom design and deployment of relevant software applications to address knowledge gaps on customs automation, SW and Paperless Platforms.

4. GAINDE 2000 will consider offering flexible financing models to Member(s) on customized design and deployment of its brand of product(s) namely: Customs Suite, ORBUS SUITE, and ZEN SUITE.
5. GAINDE 2000, through its association internationally will collaborate with WCO ROCB to jointly fundraise and lobby to support Consulting, Research, Pilot Initiatives, Exchange Programmes, Joint Conferences and Workshops in the region. The funding realized may also be utilized in acquisition of software applications for its Member(s) offered by Gainde 2000.
6. GAINDE 2000 will positively consider exchange Programmes for ROCB Staff and RTCs aimed at transferring or improving their knowledge on its products for trade facilitation. The programme may involve deployment of either of the Parties' or its affiliate's personnel to either of the Parties office locations/facilities.

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

The ROCB has had planned and participated in a number of regional activities during the reporting period, organised both at regional and national level. We take note that the activities are not at optimum levels, mainly due to constraints in funding, but are positive that it will offer and or partner in delivery of more capacity building programmes in the coming year.

The office has also made progress in seeking partnerships and support with various partners and has already secured funding for some of the planned activities as well as new ones. Most of the envisioned activities for the reporting were scheduled under the WCO-DfID cooperation to strengthen customs systems in the region which was firmed up later than planned. The work plan listed activities which were to take place at both regional and national levels till March 2016. The project has been extended by a number of months to ensure completion of the planned activities.

The regional workshop on Strategic Initiatives for Trade Facilitation and the Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement through the WCO Mercator Programme presented the region with an opportunity to decide on the way forward for the region. This included agreements on the need for the Establishment of National Committees on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) in the region; the critical role placed by the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) in the support of TFA; A matrix of development partner support, in terms of which areas are supported and where the gaps are; the role of Regional Economic Committees (RECs) and leveraging on their structures and ROCB coordination with them on TFA; and that the ROCB be used more effectively, going forward, as a central repository and delivery mechanism for the region. The Agreement remains of focus to the region and we encourage Members to uphold the tenets of the agreement. We urge Members to consider acceding to the RKC and implement its provisions, which through voluntary, are now made mandatory by the TFA.

We are thankful to the Members, the WCO, the RECs, other stakeholders and development partners for their support to the region. We thank the Government of Kenya for their continued hosting of the ROCB, and the support they give the office. We acknowledge the support of the Government of Zimbabwe, particularly for offering the services of Ms. Christine Msemburi, as Director of the ROCB. We wish her well in her future endeavours. We also acknowledge the support of the Government of South Sudan and the Government of Kenya for offering their officials to serve at the ROCB. We appreciate the Government of Finland, DfID, Customs Cooperation Fund – Japan, among others for their continued support. We are also grateful to the Customs Cooperation Fund – Korea, to assist in the revamping and redesigning of its website.

We remain committed to the implementation of the Regional Strategy and Implementation Plans, and supporting the Members meet their individual needs on trade facilitation, revenue mobilization, protection of the society, strengthening of human capital and cooperation and regional integration.

Finally, I am grateful to the region for the opportunity to serve as your Director. I assure you of my full commitment to putting the ROCB at your service. I look forward to the strategic positioning of our region in



the global Customs agenda. I pledge to support the implementation of our regional strategy, alongside that of the WCO which has continued to support the region and provide us with various tools and instruments to achieve our goals. I believe we shall realize the tenets of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, greater accession and implementation of the Revised Kyoto Convention by our Members, without forgetting the other Customs mandate such revenue mobilization, protection of the society and supporting regional integration. In my service as the Programme Coordinator at the ROCB over the last 5 years, particularly under the inspiring leadership of Ms. Christine Msemburi, I have partnered with various Vice Chairs, Director Generals, Commissioners and officials of your administrations, alongside those of the WCO Secretariat, Regional Training Centres, Regional Economic Committees, stakeholders and members of the wider global Customs family. I am requesting your continued support, together with those of our new partners, in order to deliver on the agenda of the region.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the WCO ESA Regional Vice Chair (South Africa) and the ESA Management Committee. I am also thankful to Kenya, and particularly the Kenya Revenue Authority, for submitting my candidature, supporting me through the process and committing to offering their continued support to me and the region. I look forward to your continued support and collaboration.

LARRY LIZA  
**Director,**  
*May 2016.*

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