

HALF YEAR REPORT

2023/2024



ROCB

East and Southern Africa

World Customs Organization

*Photo: Rwanda
The Land of a Thousand Hills*

WCO ESA ROCB HALF YEAR REPORT 2023/2024



WCO ESA ROCB Staff Establishment

Presented to

38th Regional Steering Group

8th - 10th November 2023

Kigali, Rwanda.

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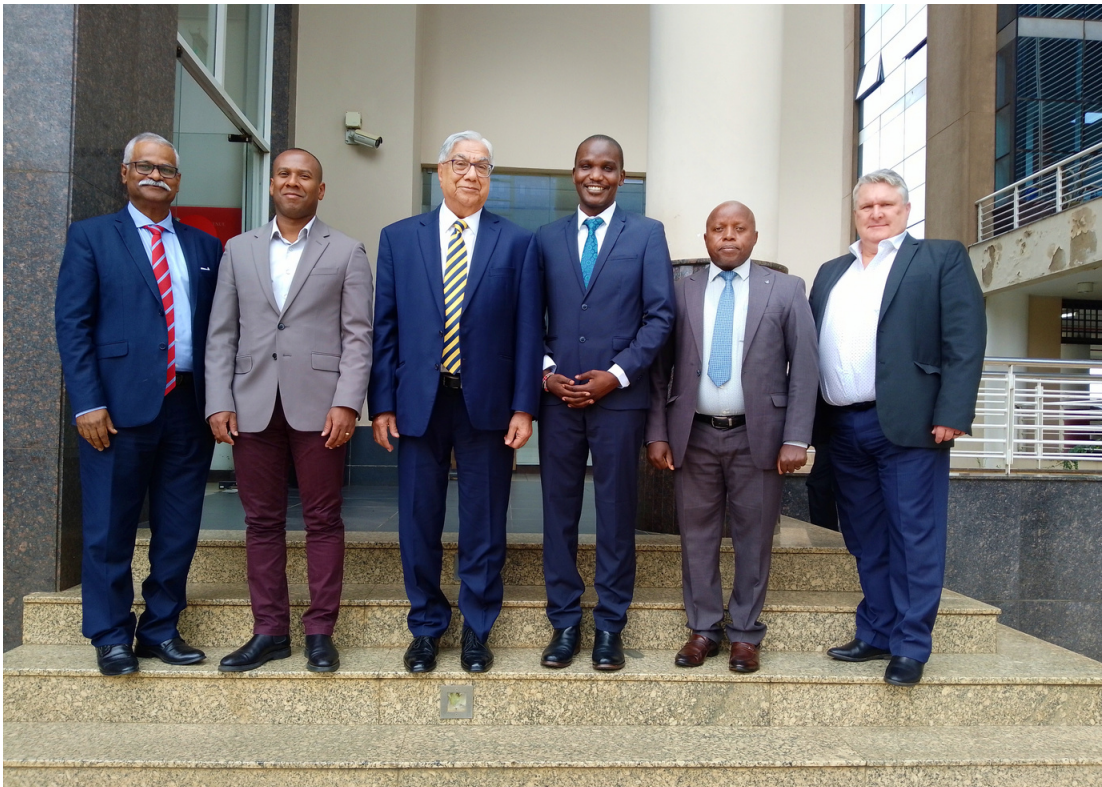
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Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AEO | Authorised Economic Operator |
| AfCFTA | African Continental Free Trade Area |
| AFEC | African Financial & Economic Crimes Forum |
| AUC | Africa Union Commission |
| CBM | Coordinated Border Management |
| CCF – China | Customs Cooperation Fund - China |
| CCF – Japan | Customs Cooperation Fund - Japan |
| CCF – Korea | Customs Cooperation Fund – Korea |
| COMESA | Common Market for East and Southern Africa |
| CFTA | Continental Free Trade Area (African CFTA) |
| 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 |
| PSCG | Private Sector Consultative Group |
| 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 |
| SACU | South African Customs Union |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| ToT | Training of Trainers |
| WCO | World Customs Organization |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEASON

The ESA Region Management Committee Meeting.



1

High Level Engagement on Promotion of Safe and Inclusive Working Environment.

2



The 20th Administrative Meeting for National Contact Points for Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for The East and Southern Africa (RILO-ESA).

3

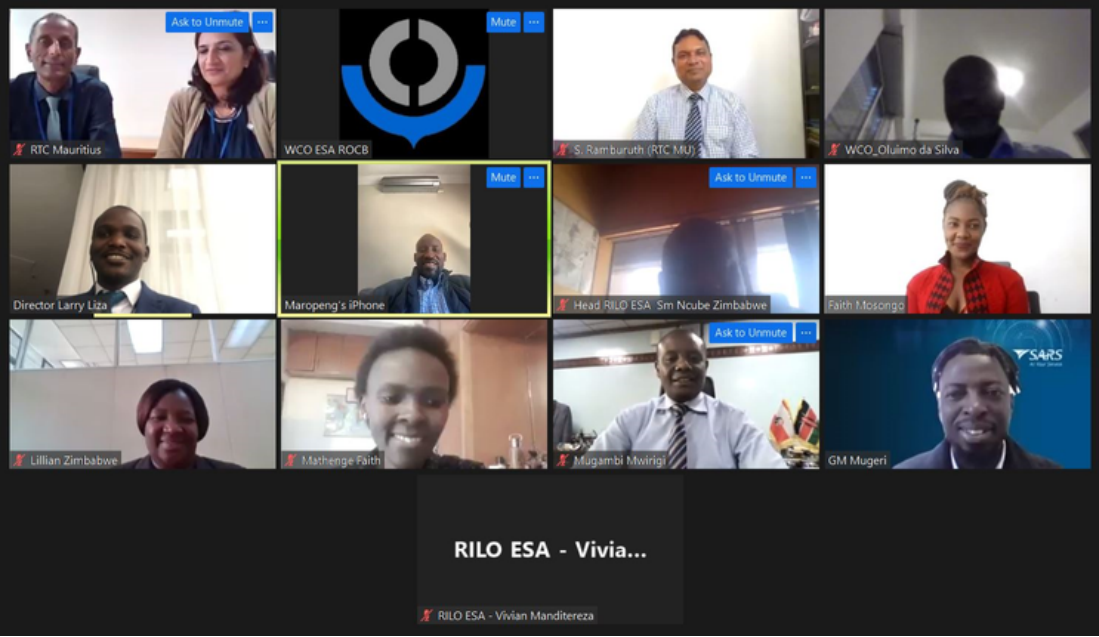


Virtual Reality Assisted Training Program in the ESA Region.



4

The Regional Training Centres (RTC) Heads Meeting.



5

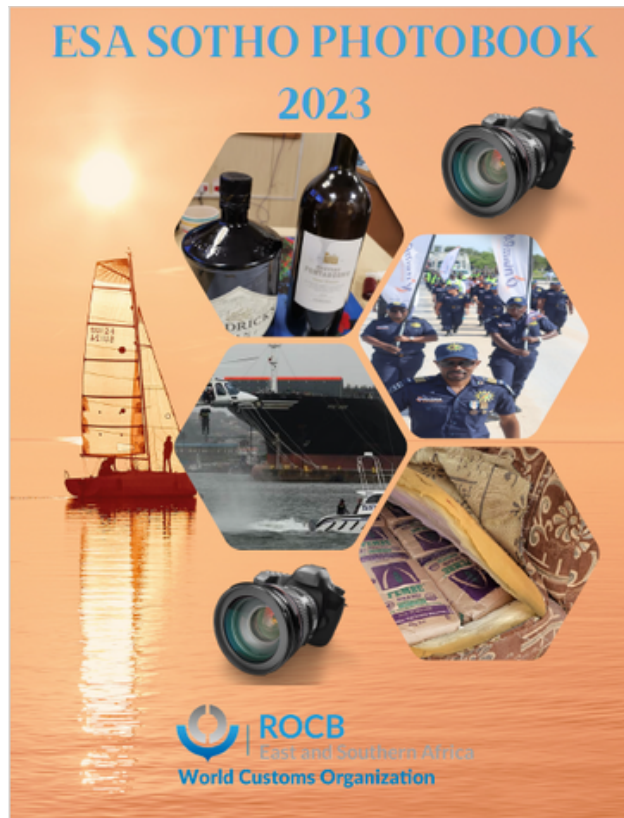
The Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-WCO programmes for Harmonized System (HS) and Rules of Origin (ROO).

6



Annual ESA Sotho Photobook – 2023.

7



ESA Certificates of Membership & Recognition of Regional Training Centers.

8



ZIMRA International Relations Visits the ROCB.



9

Virtual ESA Regional Workshop on Customs Valuation.

10

ESA Workshop on Customs Valuation

12th September 2023



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37th Regional Steering Group Meeting.



11

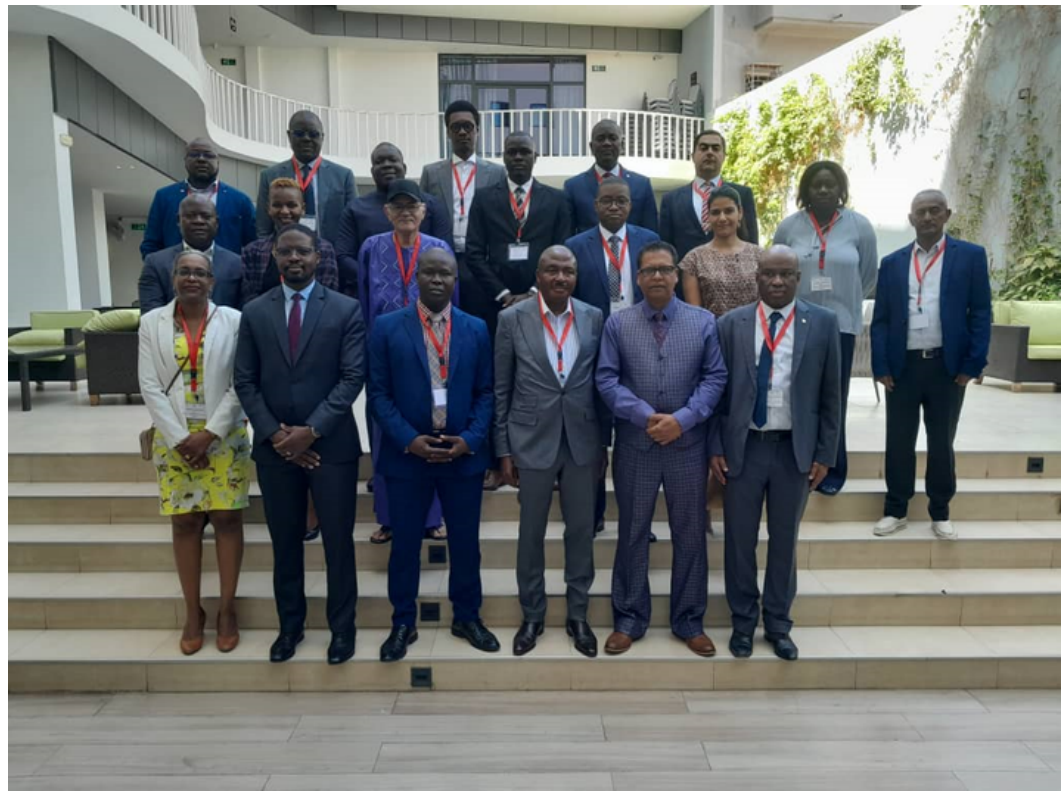
Rules of Origin: Consultation with COMESA & EAC and ESA Regional Training Workshop.



12

Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement(TFA) in Africa.

13



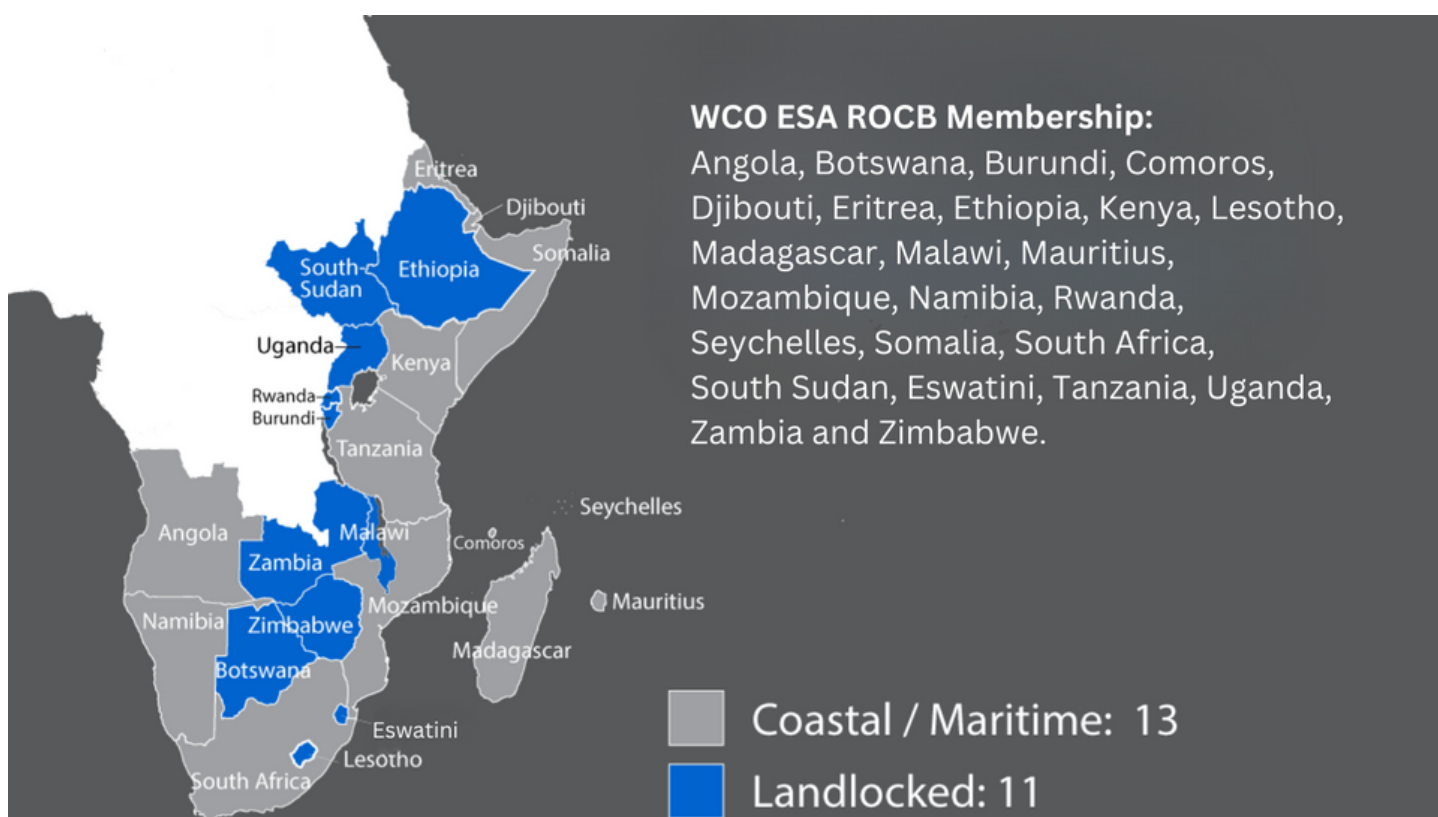
Financial Intelligence Compendium ESA Sub-Regional Workshop.



14

15

Regional Trainer of Trainers Workshop on Harmonized System for the East and Southern Africa Region.



BACKGROUND

Membership

The WCO East and Southern Africa Region comprises 24 Member Countries;

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

Vision:

Ensuring economic growth and intra-regional trade by facilitating trade securely, efficiently and professionally.

Purpose statement:

To develop gender inclusive, professional and modernized Customs administrations that are fair, efficient and effective in revenue collection and border management service.

Goal:

To contribute to the economic growth of the Region in trade, security, societal protection and human capital development.

Values:

Transparency
 Probity
 Commitment
 Responsibility
 Respect
 Cooperation

INTRODUCTION

This is the Half Year Report for the financial year 2023/2024 of the World Customs Organization, East and Southern Africa, Regional Office for Capacity Building. The reporting format takes up the flow of the Regional Strategy in line with its objectives: Trade Facilitation & Integration; Efficient Revenue Mobilization & Customs Modernization; Security, Enforcement & Compliance; and Professionalism & Partnerships. All of these areas integrate digitization and big data analytics, while bearing in mind the important role played by all emerging technologies; Block Chain, Machine Learning, Robotics, Drones among others. This half year report goes further to integrate the reports and activities of the other regional entities and stakeholders in one, including those of RTCs, RILO, and the Regional Private Sector Consultation group, among others.

The report also integrates the Half Year reports of the Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) and the Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG), highlighting capacity building activities and initiatives, projects, programs and other statuses in regional matters and decisions over the said period.

This report is presented for discussions by the 38th Regional Steering Group Meeting.



The 29th WCO ESA Governing Council held in Madagascar, May 2023. Attendees included Heads of 17 out of the 24 ESA administrations, WCO Secretary General, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, African Union Commission, RECs (COMESA & SADC), Regional Private Sector group, among others.

| 29 TH ESA GC DIRECTIVES TO BE ACTED UPON BY ROCB + REGIONAL ENTITIES | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| Agenda item | Decision | Directive | Responsibility | Expected outcomes | Tentative Timelines | Status | Comments |
| II. Adoption of the Agenda | Decision I | No action required | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| III.ROCB Annual Report | Decision II | The Governing Council underpinned the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation of the status of modernization among Members by the ROCB and the prioritization and tracking of capacity building initiatives and their impact | ROCB Programmes | 1. Reforms and Modernisation survey | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | Emphasised the importance of regional integration, approved the positional paper on realignment of the regional Membership and granted an Observer status to the Democratic Republic of Congo in the region. | ROCB Programmes | 1. Letter to DRC informing them of their observer status. | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | | | 2. Received acknowledgement from DRC on observer status. | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | Thanked the WCO for the donation of the Virtual Reality equipment to the region through the ROCB and RTCs and encouraged their utilization by Members. | ROCB + RTC Programmes | 1. Successful trainings | Medium (0-5 months) | Ongoing | The ROCB has conducted 1 VRT training and is planning for another. This is a collaboration with RTC Kenya. |
| | | Commended the ongoing collaboration with the Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG), the African Union Commission and the RECs and tasked the ROCB to develop a working framework with UNECA. | ROCB Programmes | 1. Development of a working framework with UNECA | Long (0-6 months or more) | Underway | 1. Consultation with UNECA is ongoing |
| IV. Report from the 37th RSG meeting (May 2023) | Decision III (a) The Case for a Regional Customs Laboratory | Directed the RILO and the ROCB with the support of the WCO and South Africa, to develop a regional policy document on the establishment of a | RILO+ROCB Programmes | 1. Regional policy document on the establishment of a Regional Customs | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | 1. Working Group formed during the RILO NCP Meeting & Consultation with the WCO Ongoing 2.ROCB has requested RILO for more information on this |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------|--|--|-------------------------|---|
| | | Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL) and a Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTTC) that will detail the strategy/process of implementation and the hosting requirements. | | Laboratory (RCL) and a Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTTC) | | | as well as ROCB and WCO inclusion in the meetings. |
| | | Tasked the RILO and the ROCB to ensure the legal frameworks are entrenched in the establishment of the new RCL, including Article 5.3 of the WTO TFA related to Test Procedures, to promote acceptability of the results of the laboratory. | RILO+ROCB Programmes | 1. Guidance on Development of National Legal framework to support the implementation of Regional Customs Laboratory policy | | | |
| | | Called for statistics from the RILO on the cases requiring laboratory services in the region and reporting on the status updates. | RILO | 1. Report from RILO on regional laboratory cases | To be Confirmed | Ongoing | ROCB has submitted a request from RILO and the laboratory statistics. |
| | | Called for sustained capacity building for the existing national laboratories and the RCL upon its development as well as promotion of the activities of the laboratories through the regional Newsletter. | ROCB Programmes | 1. Articles in the ESA newsletter | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | | | | | | |
| | Decision III (b) – RILO Report | Kenya to host the 20th Administrative NCP meeting slated for August 2023 | ROCB may follow up | 1. 20th Administrative NCP meeting in August 2023 | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | 20th Administrative NCP meeting held in Nairobi , Kenya in August 2023 |
| | Decision III (c) RTC Heads Meeting Report | Requested the WCO to define the process and duration between pre-accreditation and full accreditation of experts to mitigate lengthy durations of waiting experienced during the two periods Directed the RTCs to enhance collaboration amongst themselves and other regional entities while tapping into the support of Members seeking to optimize implementation of the Regional Strategy | RTCs RTCs | 1. Well defined duration between pre-accreditation and full accreditation by WCO 1. Enhanced RTC-RTC collaboration | To be Confirmed To be Confirmed | Underway Ongoing | WCO to provide further guidance 1. RTC Heads meeting with Regional Entities & WCO 2. RTC Mauritius - RTC Zimbabwe Collaboration on Compliance and Enforcement in October 2023 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| | | Directed the RTCs to hold one mandatory conference in their respective areas of | RTCs | 1.One mandatory conference by RTC | To be Confirmed | Ongoing | RTC SA and RTC Kenya planning a conference |
| | | excellence and ensure participation of other RTCs, regional entities and Members | | | | | |
| | | Directed the RTCs to submit their calendar of capacity building activities and training to the ROCB for promotion within the region and among stakeholders. This is to ensure that Members are well aware and take advantage of CB initiatives being offered by the RTCs | RTCs +ROCB | 1. ROCB to request for the calendar of activities from RTCs | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | | | 2.ROCB to promote the RTC calendar of activities | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | Requested RTC's to consider Members' capacity building needs shared at WCO level to support the region | ROCB to action and share the capacity needs with the RTCs for capacity building consideration | 1. ROCB to share the ESA needs assessment with the RTCs | Short (0-3 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | | | | | | |
| | Decision III (d) Capacity Building Reports (WCO, AUC, ITC, COMESA and EAC) | Urged the RECs sustain cooperation with the region through the ROCB and share reports of their capacity building activities and their outcomes with the region through the ROCB | RECs + ROCB | RECs to share their reports with ROCB region | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | ROCB has requested for the reports |
| | Decision III e) Disaster Management and Importation of Medicines and Medical Equipment. | None | No action required but to note | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | | | | | | |
| | Decision III(f) Implementation of the Regional Strategy (2022-2025) | Adopted the Regional Risk Management Model Plan (RRMMP) as a model document and call for its implementation by Members as part of their Risk Management tools | ROCB Programmes | 1.Reforms and Modernisation Survey | Medium (0-4 months) | Completed | Completed |
| | | Tasked the ROCB to monitor/track the implementation of the of RRMMP | ROCB Programmes | 1.Monitoring of RRMMP implementation in the region | Medium (0-4 months) | Ongoing | ROCB has just concluded the Reforms & Modernisation Survey 2023 and RRMMP was one of the aspects that were tested |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------|-----------|---|
| | | Tasked the ROCB to coordinate the development of a regional leadership model with the support of South Africa and any other Members | ROCB Programmes | 1.ESA Regional Leadership Model | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | The ROCB has submitted a request to S.A to lead this process in preparation for the RSG meeting in November 2023 |
| V. Panel Discussion: People Management – Wellness and Mental Health of Customs Officials | Decision IV | Directed the ROCB, with the support of collaborating partners, to organize a high-level conference on Wellness and Mental Health of Customs Officials | ROCB Programmes | 1.ESA conference on Wellness and Mental Health in Customs | Long (0-6 months or more) | Pending | Funding is yet to be secured for the ESA conference on Wellness and Mental Health in Customs |
| | | Recommended that administrations develop and run courses related to mental health, wellbeing and drug abuse. Emphasized the need for leaders and all officials to espouse empathy, kindness and understanding for one another within and outside of the work environment. | Not to ROCB but ROCB drafted a letter to WCO on the mental health and wellness of Customs officers | 1. WCO ESA Members | Short (0-3 months) | | |
| VI. Finance and Governance Committee (FGC) Report | Decision V | Took note with appreciation Zimbabwe's contribution to the RILO and directed that this contribution be recognized in the Region's Annual Financial Statements | ROCB Finance | 1.Zimbabwe's report on contribution to RILO 2.ROCB report on point 1 above | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | ROCB has engaged RILO and Zimbabwe and they pledged to furnish the ROCB with details of Zimbabwe's contribution to RILO at the end of the Financial year |
| | | Approved the auditor recommendation for the provision of doubtful debts and tasked the FGC to develop a Policy document on handling doubtful and bad debts | ROCB Finance | 1.Policy document on handling doubtful and bad debts | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | ROCB working on the ROCB Finance policy with Lesotho as the representative of the FGC. The provision for handling doubtful and bad debts will be provided in the finance policy. |
| | | Directed that the ROCB explores the use of electronic payment methods as alternatives to cheques | ROCB Finance | 1. ROCB to use internet banking | Long (0-6 months or more) | Completed | Completed |
| | | Approved that the Director pays a courtesy visit to South Sudan and Somalia with an aim of encouraging them to settle their outstanding debts. | ROCB Programmes | 1. Director to visit Somalia | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | The ROCB has engaged DG Somalia virtually. Somalia is dedicated to maintaining an active presence in the region and pledged to extend an invitation to the Director to visit Somalia when the timing is favourable. |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|--|
| | | | | 2. Director to visit South Sudan | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | The ROCB engaged South Sudan informally. The South Sudan leadership is on transition, with its new commissioner is appointed by the Head of State. ROCB will follow up on this progress. |
| | | Approved the proposal to purchase a motor vehicle for the ROCB as included in the 2023/2024 budget and the recommendation that the ROCB develops a Motor Vehicle Usage Policy | ROCB Finance | 1. Purchase a motor vehicle | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | The ROCB has purchased a vehicle from Japan and is in the process of importing the vehicle to Kenya under its diplomatic privileges. |
| | | | | 2. ROCB Motor Vehicle Usage Policy | Long (0-6 months or more) | Ongoing | The ROCB is working on a draft motor vehicle usage policy to be submitted to the FGC in November for consideration. |
| | | | | | | | |
| VII. WCO Reports | Decision VI | No action required | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| | | | | | | | |
| VIII. Report of the ESA Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG) | Decision VII | Noted the progress report from the Regional Private Sector Group (WCO ESA RPSG) and urged enhanced collaboration between the private sector and ROCB. | No action required but to note | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |



ESA STRATEGY

The ESA Regional Strategy (2022-2025) was operationalized upon approval by the 28th Governing Council meeting in Port Louis, Mauritius, May 2022.

This Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022-2025, is the result of extensive collaboration with development partners and is further based on the environmental scans and their respective trends. It has largely focused on contributions from Members, based on their needs at both national and regional levels, and a collation of inputs from the WCO regional entities (Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) and the Regional Training Centres (RTCs). Other stakeholders key to its development and implementation include the Regional Economic Communities, African Union, and the Private Sector.

The Plan aligns the four strategic objectives with twelve operating lines; the strategic objectives present the Region's key areas of focus: Trade Facilitation & Integration; Efficient Revenue Mobilization & Customs Modernization; Security, Enforcement & Compliance; Professionalism & Partnerships. All of these areas integrate digitization and big data analytics, while bearing in mind the important role played by all emerging technologies; Block Chain, Machine Learning, Robotics, Drones among others.

1. Trade Facilitation & Integration

This objective seeks to enhance and foster the opportunities for increased intra-regional trade amongst ESA member countries. This shall be achieved by creating an enabling environment to facilitate the efficient movement of goods, people and conveyances as envisioned in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, the WCO Safe Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade and the Revised Kyoto Convention.

Trade facilitation, in the WCO context, means the avoidance of unnecessary trade restrictiveness. This can be achieved by applying modern techniques and technologies, while improving the quality of controls in an internationally harmonized manner. Regional economic integration is an effective means of boosting intra-regional trade and improving regional economic competitiveness.

Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)

Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC): The Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) now has 133 Contracting Parties globally, 16 out of 24 ESA Members have acceded to the Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC). Burundi, Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan and Tanzania are yet to accede to the RKC.



List of contracting Members to the RKC

| No. | Country | Date of Ratification |
|-----|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Angola | 23.02.2017 |
| 2 | Botswana | 26.06.2006 |
| 3 | Burundi | In process of accession |
| 4 | Comoros | 09.03.2022 |
| 5 | Djibouti | In process of accession |
| 6 | Eritrea | In process of accession |
| 7 | Ethiopia | In process of accession |
| 8 | Eswatini | 31.10.2012 |
| 9 | Kenya | 25.06.2009 |
| 10 | Lesotho | 15.06.2000 |
| 11 | Madagascar | 27.06.2007 |
| 12 | Malawi | 06.09.2013 |
| 13 | Mauritius | 24.09.2008 |
| 14 | Mozambique | 11.07.2012 |
| 15 | Namibia | 03.02.2006 |
| 16 | Rwanda | 21.11.2011 |
| 17 | Seychelles | In process of accession |
| 18 | Somalia | In process of accession |
| 19 | South Africa | 18.05.2004 |
| 20 | South Sudan | In process of accession |
| 21 | Tanzania | In process of accession |
| 22 | Uganda | 27.06.2002 |
| 23 | Zambia | 01.07.2013 |
| 24 | Zimbabwe | 10.02.2003 |



Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)

As at 16th October 2023, 156/164 WTO Members ratified the TFA, marking 95%. 19 out of 24 Members have ratified the TFA.

Ratifiers: **Botswana, Djibouti, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Eswatini, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Burundi and Tanzania.**

Missing: **Comoros, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan**

| No. | Country | Date of Ratification |
|-----|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Angola | 09.04.2019 |
| 2 | Botswana | 18.06.2015 |
| 3 | Bourundi | 12.12.2019 |
| 4 | Comoros | In process of accession |
| 5 | Djibouti | 05.03.2018 |
| 6 | Eritrea | In process of accession |
| 7 | Ethiopia | In process of accession |
| 8 | Eswatini | 21.11.2016 |
| 9 | Kenya | 10.12.2015 |
| 10 | Lesotho | 04.01.2016 |
| 11 | Madagascar | 20.06.2016 |
| 12 | Malawi | 12.07.2017 |
| 13 | Mauritius | 05.03.2015 |
| 14 | Mozambique | 06.01.2017 |
| 15 | Namibia | 09.02.2018 |
| 16 | Rwanda | 22.02.2017 |
| 17 | Seychelles | 11.01.2016 |
| 18 | Somalia | In process of accession |
| 19 | South Africa | 30.11.2017 |
| 20 | South Sudan | In process of accession |
| 21 | Tanzania | 08.04.2020 |
| 22 | Uganda | 27.06.2018 |
| 23 | Zambia | 16.12.2015 |
| 24 | Zimbabwe | 17.10.2018 |

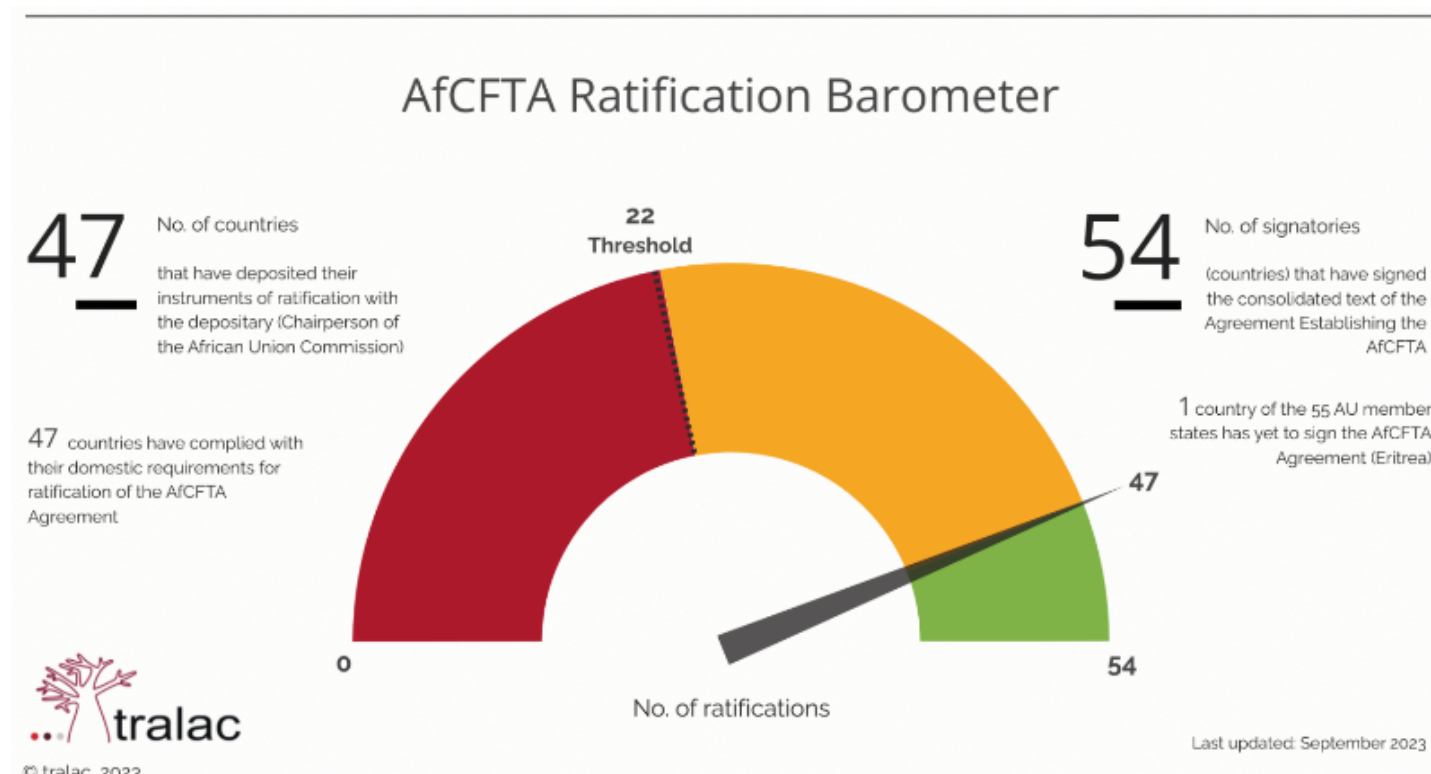
Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

As at October 2023, 47 countries have ratified their instruments of the AfCFTA agreement, 46 of the 54 signatories (85.2%) have ratified and deposited their instruments of ratification, seven countries have signed but yet to ratify and only one country is yet to sign.

The operational phase of the AfCFTA was launched during the 12th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on the AfCFTA in Niamey, Niger on 7th July 2019. On 7th October 2022, the AfCFTA Secretariat launched the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative in Accra, Ghana, marking the commencement of trade under the agreement.

47 (19 from ESA) countries have deposited their instruments of ratification. Instrument depositors: Ghana, **Kenya, Rwanda**, Niger, Chad, **Eswatini**, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, **Namibia, South Africa**, Congo, Rep., **Djibouti**, Mauritania, **Uganda**, Senegal, Togo, Egypt, **Ethiopia**, Gambia, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Rep., Sierra Leone, **Zimbabwe**, Burkina Faso, São Tomé & Príncipe, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, **Mauritius**, Central African Rep., **Angola, Lesotho**, Tunisia, Cameroon, Nigeria, **Malawi, Zambia**, Algeria, **Burundi, Seychelles, Tanzania**, Cabo Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Morocco, Guinea-Bissau, **Botswana, Comoros and Mozambique**.

Countries that are yet to ratify both agreements indicate that their processes are at different stages of national approval, especially parliamentary processes and cabinet approval states.

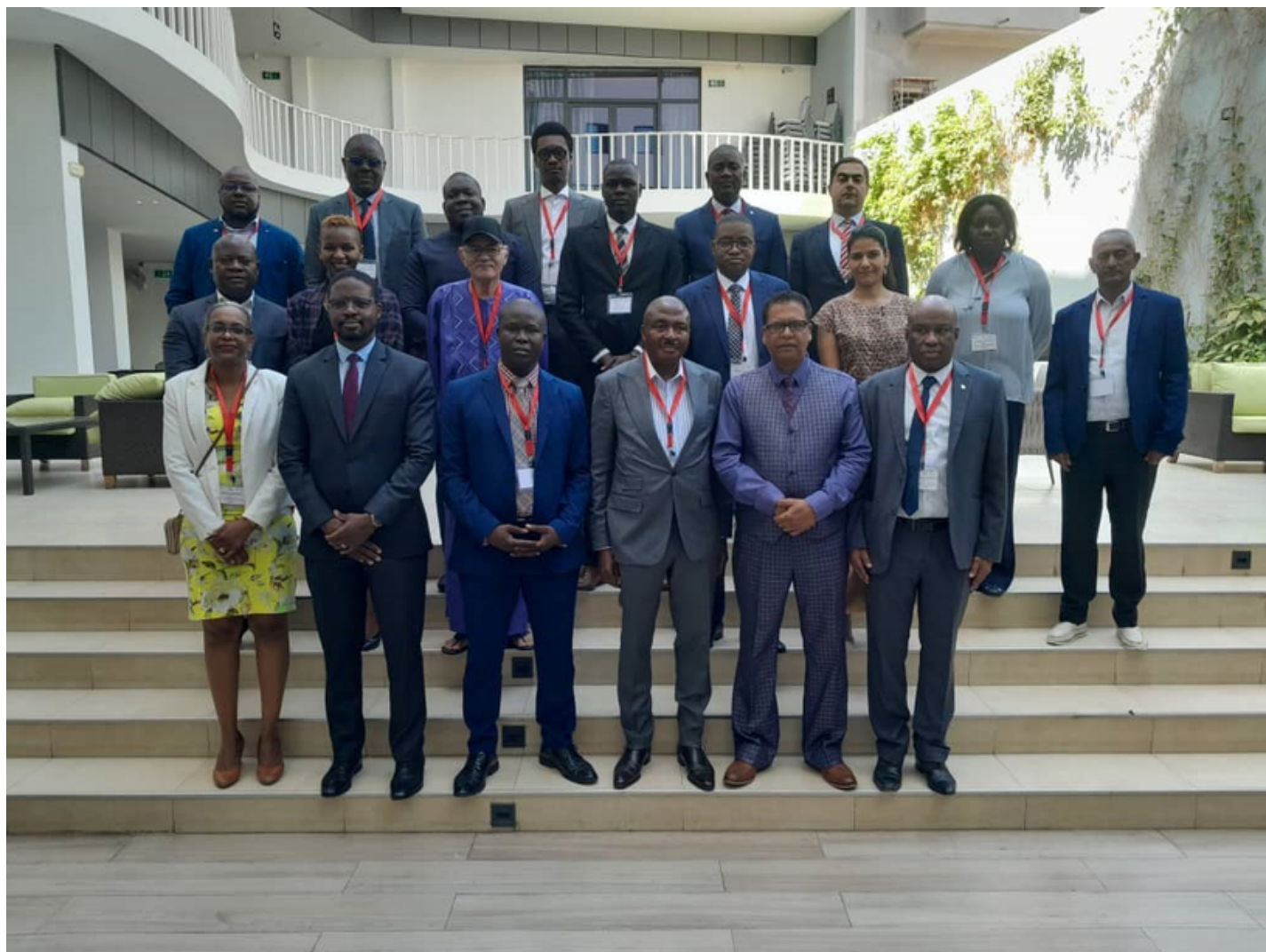


Technical Workshop on the Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in the West and Central African Region

The technical workshop on 'Implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in Africa' was held from the 6th to 8th June 2023 in Dakar, Senegal. The Commission of the African Union in partnership with GIZ, the World Customs Organization West and Central Africa Regional Office for Capacity Building (WCO WCA ROCB) and the Senegal Customs organized it.

It was attended by high-level delegations from WCA Members (Benin, Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal), GIZ, UNECA and the WCO among others.

The forum focused on assessing the status of implementation of the TFA in the West and Central African region, exploring best practices, new developments, technical assistance, opportunities, cooperation among key players among others.



Ports & Customs Week

Ports & Customs Week forum under with the theme ‘New age technology for Ports, Customs and Border Security’ was held on 6th and 7th June 2023 in Cape Town, South Africa. This regional event provided technological solutions to the challenges faced by ports and Customs authorities in Africa.

The forum aimed to promote cooperation and collaboration between ports and Customs through digitalization bringing together Ports and Customs Authorities, Revenue Authorities, and supply chain stakeholders relevant stakeholders from around the world. It also aimed at enhancing border security in Africa, using smart border control technologies. The forum addressed the latest challenges and issues affecting border security in Africa.

A number ESA our Commissioners from Burundi, Lesotho and Madagascar, and other Members were part of the Port and Customs Week discussing Reforms and Modernization in Customs, sharing their national stories and sharing their strategies and experiences in their collaboration with the private sector.

WCO ESA ROCB Director Mr. Larry Liza provided the key note address on ‘Leveraging on Technology for Empowerment and Economic Development’.



The Tralac Annual Conference

The Tralac Annual Conference was held from the 18th to 19th May 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda. The Annual Conference received participation from Government officials, trade experts, entrepreneurs, and Tralac alumni from across the continent came together to discuss matters associated with Africa's integration and trade agenda under the theme of 'A Practical and Realistic Agenda for the African Continental Free Trade Agreement'. The opening remarks were provided by Dr. Jean Chrysostome Ngabitsinze, Dr. George Lipimile, Chair of the Tralac Board and His Excellency Wamkele Mene, the Secretary General of the AfCFTA Secretariat and Minister of Trade and Industry of Rwanda.

The Director WCO ESA Mr. Larry Liza gave a keynote address titled 'The ABCD's of Successful AfCFTA Implementation'. The Director highlighted the pillars for the AfCFTA's success pointing to the need to support less developed states given that Africa's strength is reliant on the unity and progress of all its countries. He championed the acceleration of efforts to drive economic growth, notably the reduction of tariffs on intra-African trade; and the importance of fostering cooperation between Customs authorities, Customs and business entities, and Customs and partner government agencies.

Namibia Revenue Authority Commissioner Sam Shivute's keynote address was centered on the critical role that Customs Administrations play in the AfCFTA's effective and accelerated implementation. He highlighted the importance of Customs modernization programs, notably those developed by the World Customs Organization, in achieving the objectives of the AfCFTA.



2. Efficient Revenue Mobilization & Customs Modernization

Revenue mobilization is a key priority for ESA Members which is strongly linked to national developmental goals, poverty alleviation and economic growth. Customs administrations of the ESA region continue to play a critical role in mobilizing revenue to the national budget of their respective countries. It is imperative to enhance revenue compliance and combat commercial fraud and corrupt practices to eliminate risks of revenue leakage. It is also important to enhance the efficiency of revenue collection by implementing WCO recommended best practices, methods, procedures and instruments towards the journey to provide world-class and modern Customs services.

ESA Workshop on Customs Valuation - 23rd & 24th May 2023

The WCO ESA workshop on Customs Valuation was a joint collaboration between the WCO Regional Training Centre (RTC) Zimbabwe and the World Customs Organization, East and Southern Africa, Regional Office for Capacity Building (WCO ESA ROCB). It received participation from over 70 participants from ESA Member countries.

The opening remarks were delivered by the Commissioner General of Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA), Ms. Regina Chinamasa; WCO ESA Director Mr. Larry Liza; The WCO Regional Training Centre (RTC) Zimbabwe, Head Alice Nyamugama. The Commissioner Customs and Excise Director ZIMRA Mr. Batsirai Chadzingwa also graced the opening ceremony alongside the WCO Expert on Valuation from Malawi Revenue Authority, Mr. Andrew Mtukuleni.

The speakers highlighted the significance of Customs Valuation to revenue mobilization, security and enforcement as well as trade facilitation. They emphasized the need for capacity building initiatives geared towards the development of subject matter experts of operational and training purposes and the significance of the WCO theme for 2023: 'Nurturing the next generation by promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs'.

This workshop is a capacity building initiative with the objective of dispensing customized training on Customs valuation as per the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Customs Valuation. The forum aims at building the skills and competencies of the Customs professionals in the region as well as further enhancing their work performance through specialized knowledge on Customs valuation.



Consultation with COMESA, EAC and ESA Regional Training Workshop

The World Customs Organization (WCO), under the framework of the EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme funded by the European Union, and in partnership with the ESA ROCB and the RTC Mombasa held regional consultations for the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and their Members. The consultations were held in Mombasa, Kenya, on 5 June 2023 and were followed by a training workshop on rules of origin on 6-9 June.

The objective of the consultations was to discuss the state of play for the implementation of applicable preferential rules of origin and trade agreements in the region, and address challenges in the implementation of rules of origin (RoO) in the region. The consultations were an opportunity to take stock of capacity building and technical assistance needs, and consider best avenues for regional and national initiatives focusing on RoO.

WCO RTC Kenya, WCO ESA ROCB and the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme, opened the consultation meeting, stressing the importance of streamlined, predictable, and transparent RoO processes and capacity building for all relevant stakeholders for efficient trade facilitation and regional integration.

The consultation was also an occasion for the exchange of experiences and lessons learned from different countries especially in the area of self-certification and electronic certification. The outcomes of this consultation will feed into the work plan of the EU-WCO RoO Africa Programme and steer the partnership and support for the EAC and COMESA and their Members.

During the technical workshop, participants worked on key concepts for proper origin determination, related operational and procedural issues, including origin certification and origin irregularities, as well as the establishment of efficient origin management. In addition, participants discussed specific areas of concern, including the low level of knowledge and use of the FTAs and challenges linked to verification of origin including through administrative cooperation. They also discussed recommendations for better management and implementation of rules of origin on a national and regional level.

The EU-WCO Rules of Origin Africa Programme will conduct further consultations with other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with the aim to provide meaningful and targeted capacity building and technical assistance in the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, EPAs, and other FTAs as well as exploring other opportunities for streamlining processes in Africa.



Follow up ESA Workshop on Customs Valuation Fraud

Following the initial training session held in May this year, the WCO ESA ROCB, in collaboration with the Regional Training Centre (RTC Zimbabwe) and the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, hosted the second Virtual Customs Valuation Fraud Workshop. The workshop garnered participation from over 80 attendees representing 21 countries in the ESA region and around the world.

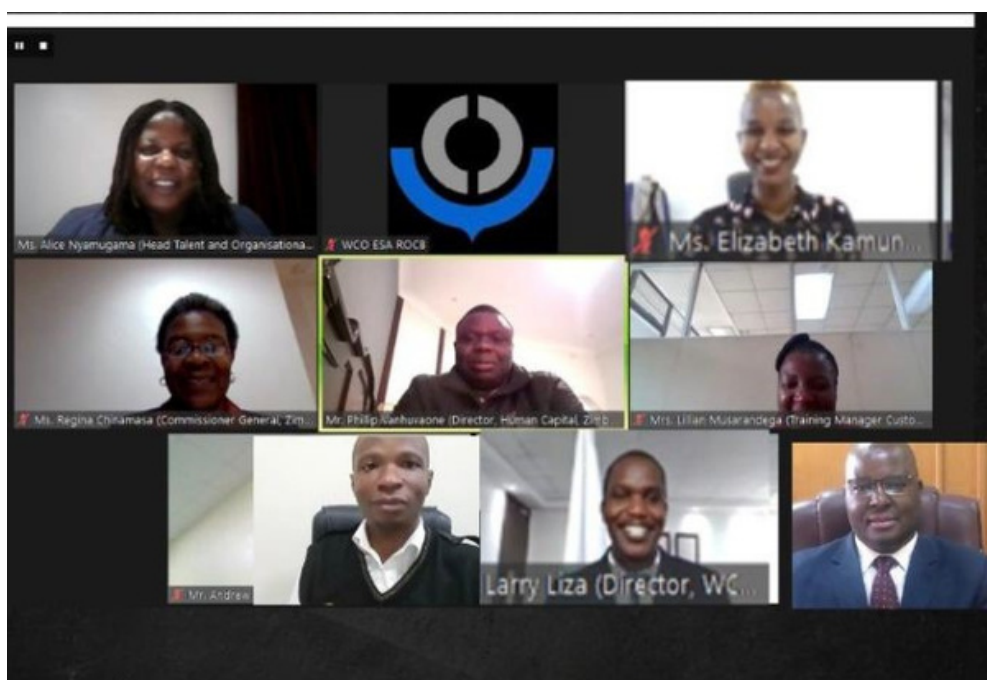
The opening session of the workshop was moderated by Mr. Phillip Vanhuvaone, Director of Human Capital at the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority. Opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Regina Chinamasa, Commissioner General of Zimbabwe, and Mr. Larry Liza, Director of WCO ESA ROCB. The speakers emphasized the pivotal role of Customs valuation in trade facilitation, revenue generation, and the promotion of fair competition in the business arena. Participants were encouraged to familiarize themselves with the latest trends in Customs Valuation, Transfer Pricing, and e-commerce to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their mandates.

This workshop was facilitated by Mr. Andrew Mtukuleni, a Regional Customs Valuation expert from the Malawi Revenue Authority, who shared

his expertise with participants and engaged them in a productive Q&A session. The workshop aligns with the WCO 2023 theme of 'Nurturing the next generation: promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs.' Participants received training on the WCO Revenue Package, the application of blockchain technology in Customs valuation and origin tracing, Customs valuation fraud cases, and best practices from the region.

During the closing session, Mr. Batsirai Chadzingwa, Commissioner of Customs and Excise at the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority, and Ms. Elizabeth Kamunyu from the ROCB delivered their closing remarks, challenging participants to continuously enhance their skills in Customs Valuation, data analysis, and other aspects of Customs work.

Also in attendance were Ms. Alice Nyamugama, Head of Talent and Organisational Development at RTC Zimbabwe, and Mrs. Lillian Musarandega, Training Manager Customs & Excise. On behalf of the Office of the WCO ESA Vice Chair (Mauritius), the region extended its gratitude to the Commissioner General of the Malawi Revenue Authority for offering support and contributing to regional capacity-building activities.



Steering Committee Meeting of the EU-WCO programmes for Harmonized System (HS) and Rules of Origin in Africa (ROO), Port Louis, Mauritius

The ROCB participated in the Steering Committee meeting of the HS-Africa Programme, combining the 5th SC meeting of the HS-Programme and the first of the ROO-Programme.

The meeting aims to share and discuss the progress and results of the Programme, the planning of the next phase, as well as the strategic orientation for sustainability. It will also exchange information on progress and the future implementation of the Programme.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Vivekanand Ramburun, the WCO ESA Vice Chair (Mauritius), who underscored the importance of proper coordination in project implementation in the region. He commended the project for its accomplishments and urged discussions on topics such as the circular economy and invoice declarations, among others.

He called for concerted efforts on security, compliance, and enforcement to address challenges arising from changes in global trends, such as the diversion of material usage, as seen in the development of synthetic drugs.

Mr. Larry Liza, the ROCB Director, praised the programme for its support to the region and highlighted the status of HS, Rules of Origin, and Advance Ruling in the Region. Regarding HS, while the rate of migration to HS 2022 is commendable, there is a greater need for capacity building and the provision of materials. He expressed concerns about the delays caused by the manual/paper versions of Rules of Origin and called for increased collaboration in the implementation of eCertificates of Origin, especially among the Regional Economic Communities, and emphasized the importance of capacity building.

Other remarks were provided by Mr. Badr Mouhcine, the Head of Programmes HS and RoO Africa from the WCO, and Ms. Macarena Ruiz San Jose, the representative of the European Union.



Regional Trainer of Trainers Workshop on Harmonized System for the East and Southern Africa Region.



The Regional Trainer of Trainers Workshop on Harmonized System for the East and Southern Africa Region was held in Port Louis, Mauritius from 3rd to 6th October 2023. The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Sudhamo Lal, the WCO ESA Vice Chair and Director-General of the Mauritius Revenue Authority. He emphasized the significance of HS in Customs management processes and commended the support of the WCO in ensuring a seamless transition to HS and its subsequent implementation. He also acknowledged the contributions of donors and other partners in supporting the HS implementation. Furthermore, he shared the commitment of the Mauritian government to the success of the AfCFTA.

Other remarks were made by representatives from AfCFTA, the World Customs Organization, and the European Union, as well as by the Director of Customs of the Mauritius Revenue Authority. The ROCB Director, Larry Liza, participated in the opening ceremony as part of the RECs Consultation meeting taking place at the same venue.

These meetings are sponsored by the EU-WCO Programme for Africa, which aims to support African Customs administrations and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in implementing

the Harmonized System. The objective of the workshop is to enhance the capacities of experts from ESA countries to become trainers in tariff classification, with a focus on HS 2022. In addition to the technical content, the workshop will address various aspects related to competency development and training delivery approaches.



3. Security, Enforcement & Compliance

The intention of this objective is to reinforce the efficiency and effectiveness in upholding compliance to Customs law, regulations and procedures in the region, and creating the enforcement mechanisms to strengthen regional security, protection of society to enable economic growth and development. This shall incorporate strategies to enhance regional trader compliance programmes and development of frameworks for Customs-to-Customs networking on information exchange, intelligence sharing and treatment of common and emerging risks.

Financial Intelligence Compendium ESA Sub-Regional Workshop

The Financial Intelligence Compendium (FIC) Sub-regional Workshop on Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Terrorism Financing (CTF) took place from the 30th May, to the 2nd June 2023 in Port Louis, Mauritius. This workshop was organized through a collaboration between the World Customs Organization (WCO) Project TENTACLE / Egmont Group (EG), ECOFEL (Egmont Centre of FIU Excellence and Leadership) and the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA). The workshop saw the launch of the Financial Intelligence Compendium Workshop 2023 and received participation from 16 member countries who were trained by the WCO and FIU experts.

The WCO Anti-Money Laundering (AML)-Counter-terrorism Financing (CTF) Programme under Project TENTACLE, a U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (DoS-INL)-funded law enforcement initiative, conducted this Workshop.

The WCO and the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units designed the Customs Financial Intelligence Compendium to combine Customs and FIU training in an effort to enhance the knowledge on money laundering and terrorism financing activities that touch upon international borders. It was also specifically designed to enhance the joint Customs-FIU analysis of suspicious financial activities, suspicious trade activities and the development of targeting intelligence to counter currency smuggling and trade-based money laundering.

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Outcomes of the workshop included: Creation of awareness on AML + CTF and increase the capacity to combat these vices Customs and the Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) in the South East Africa region; Creation of synergies and networks between the ESA region WCO Members and Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs); The launch of the Financial Intelligence Compendium Workshop 2023; and Creation of awareness of the WCO Project TENTACLE and Project OCTAGON.

The WCO Project Octagon is an initiative that identifies sub-regional hot-zones at higher risk of the exploitation by transnational criminal organizations and terrorist groups, as well as their money laundering activities.

The 20th Administrative Meeting for National

Contact Points for Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for the East and Southern Africa (RILO-ESA).

The 20th Administrative Meeting for National Contact Points for Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for the East and Southern Africa (RILO-ESA), took place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 8th to 10th August 2023. It was hosted by the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA). The meeting was officially opened by the Commissioner Customs and Border Control, Kenya, Ms. Pamela Ahago. She welcomed the delegates to Kenya and emphasized Kenya's commitment to sustainable development of the ESA Region. Additional opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Larry Liza, the WCO ESA ROCB Director, and Mr. Sitheni Ncube, the Head of the RILO, East and Southern Africa Region. The meeting was attended by NCPs from 12 Member countries, representatives from the WCO ESA ROCB, TRAFFIC East Africa as well as the RILO Western Europe, led by the Head, Ms. Olga Salmenko.

The meeting was themed "Stimulating timely intelligence sharing and increased participation against illicit trade among member states." The Customs environment is dynamic, bringing with it challenges that require ongoing intervention through compliance and enforcement initiatives. The pivotal role the RILO plays in tackling these challenges cannot be understated. Their mission is to protect society while boosting the efficiency and effectiveness of Customs. This involves offering operational support to administrations, crafting intelligence analysis projects, spearheading regional intelligence operations, ensuring mutual administrative assistance, and fostering regional cooperation with other enforcement agencies.

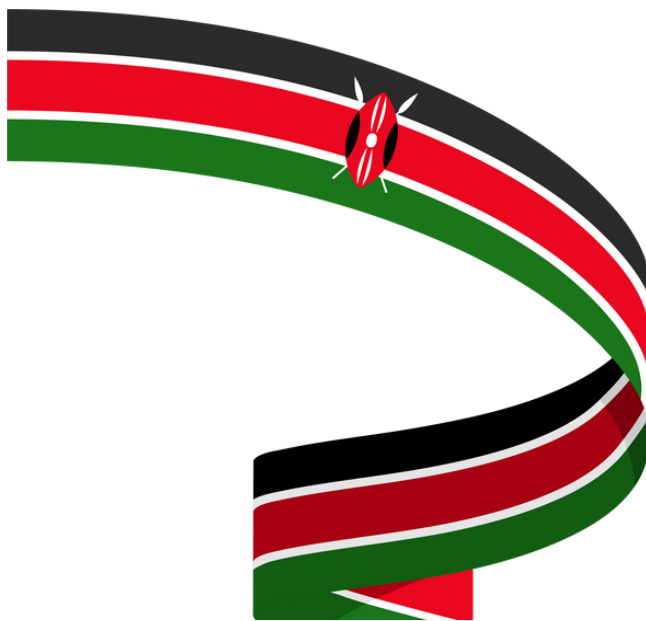
The NCPs' meeting was crucial as they reviewed reports, measured Member administrations' progress against illicit trade, and evaluated their support role for the RILO and the broader region.



Operational Seminar for Kenya Customs

The ROCB participated in the operational seminar against illicit trade for Kenya Customs, held in Nairobi, Kenya, on the 10th & 11th July 2023. The activity was meant to enhance the skill and knowledge level of Customs in identifying illicit trade, counterfeit and pirated goods, through new techniques regarding risk assessment and cargo targeting training. On the other, it will also assist law enforcement agencies in developing a more cooperative response to the increasing international threat of counterfeiting and illicit trade, by encouraging the exchange of best practices and sharing of expertise with Customs experts and Private sector representatives (Right Holders).

The participants analyzed the latest trends of fraud and were also taken through Kenya's legal mechanisms for combating illicit trade and in particular fake illicit champagne and Cognac, and their results.



4. Professionalism & Partnerships

The ability of Customs to contribute to regional growth and development rests on the organizational efficiencies and effectiveness of Customs administrations in implementing modernized systems and procedures enabled by a strong professional workforce. This objective seeks to enhance integrity, professionalism and human capital development in Member Customs administrations through the development of subject matter experts, promotion of gender equality and diversity and enhancing research initiatives.

WCO ESA Membership Certificates

As part of the ROCB's ongoing efforts to improve our services and enhance our relationship with our Members, the ROCB issued Membership Certificates to all our Members. The certificate details the respective Member's number, the certificate also serves as proof of Membership to the region and may be used to demonstrate each administration's affiliation with the ROCB, especially following the ROCB's registration as a legal entity in Kenya, under the host country's Privileges and Immunities Act.

The office also issued Certificates of Recognition to the ESA RTCs.

Both sets of certificates will also serve as a proof of affiliation and support our Members and RTCs in furthering their other engagements and obligations.



Cooperation with Institute of Export and International Trade

On 11th July 2023, the WCO ESA Director, Larry Liza, hosted a delegation from the Institute of Export, during the meeting, the two organizations discussed potential areas of collaboration for the mutual benefit of our Members, with a focus on enhancing capacity building in international trade and promoting trade facilitation. The key points of discussion included the importance of digitalization and data management in trade, as well as cooperation among key stakeholders as outlined by the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards and the regional strategy.

Accompanying Mr. Marco were Divia Patel Smith, Deputy Director of Strategic Projects and International Development; Oxana Borta, Senior Advisor to the Director General; Eugene Waluvengo, the Lead for Africa; and Sylvia Nalwanga, an International Trade expert. The WCO regional office's team also included Programme Officers Elizabeth Kamunyu and Faith Mosongo.



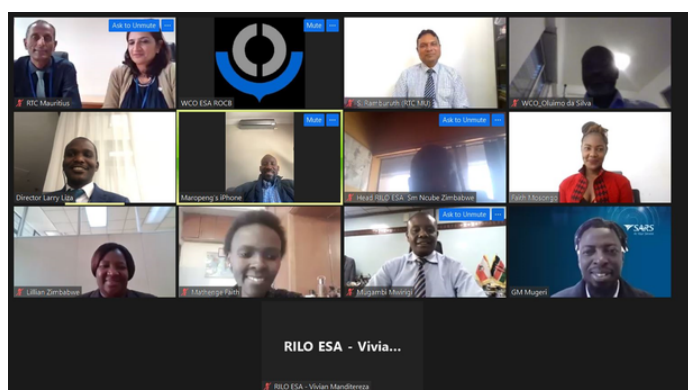
The Regional Training Centres (RTC) Heads Meeting

The meeting of the WCO ESA RTC Heads, ROCB, RILO and the WCO took place virtually on 1st August 2023. Participants included the Heads or representatives of the RTC Kenya, RTC Mauritius, RTC South Africa, RTC Zimbabwe as well as the ROCB, the RILO and the WCO.

The Chairperson of the RTC Heads for the year 2023-2024, Mr. Maropeng Phineas Sebothoma, South Africa, thanked all the participants for attending the meeting and pointed out that the main agenda of the meeting was to kick start the implementation of the decisions made during the RTC Heads meeting held in May 2023 in Madagascar. He emphasized the principal role played by the collaboration of all regional entities in the delivery of capacity building initiatives in the region.

While the meeting examined the ongoing initiatives by the Regional Training Centres in their respective areas of excellence, it was noted that the capacity building initiatives have been largely concentrated around the support of Members in their efforts towards achieving more efficient and effective Customs Administrations. It was thus agreed that going forward the RTCs will further explore the holding of all-inclusive regional initiatives that will cut across all our stakeholders, including and not limited to: Member Administrations; Partner Government Agencies; Regional Economic Communities (RECs); Development Partners; Universities and related Research Centres; the Private Sector and all other partners with aligned goals.

The meeting further agreed to support the socializing of integrity policies in the region as well as developing a regional Code of Conduct on Integrity. This support is not limited to the area of integrity but will be extended to all areas covered by the ESA Regional Strategy and other emerging topics of interest to the region and the global Customs family.



Virtual Reality Assisted Training Program in the ESA Region

WCO ESA ROCB introduced the Virtual Reality Assisted Training Program (VRT) to Kenya School of Revenue Administration (KESRA) students for the WCO Regional Training Centre (RTC) Kenya. The students explored the VR training devices, including headsets, controllers, computers, TV screens, and kiosks. The program also offers a 3D experience on desktops and notebooks. The course also covered WCO's roles nationally, regionally, and globally. The VRT system enhances Customs officers' skills, improving Customs operations and revenue mobilization compliance. RTC Kenya students demonstrated port operations like cargo inspection. Additional training content, including VR e-commerce at airports, data analysis on the WCO CLiKC platform, and future VR Metaverse training, is in development.

The VRT program, a collaboration between WCO Headquarters in Brussels, RTC Korea, Korea Customs Service, CCF-Korea, and HO Entertainment, aids Customs officials in physical inspections of containerized cargo at ports. Inspection scenarios consider WCO Risk Management compendium indicators.



ZIMRA International Relations Visits the ROCB

The WCO ESA Director, Mr. Larry Liza, hosted a delegation from the International Affairs Section, Corporate Affairs Division, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) led by their Manager, Ms. Inzwirashwe Chenai Muwonwa. The ZIMRA delegation reiterated Zimbabwe's commitment to supporting the implementation of the ESA Regional Strategy and to hosting of the RILO office. The meeting further discussed possible areas of collaboration between the ROCB and RTC Zimbabwe in delivering sustainable capacity building in the region line with the objectives of the regional strategy.

Accompanying Ms. Inzwirashwe were Mr. Tapiwa Marunda and Ms. Mildred Hove.



High Level Engagement on Promotion of Safe and Inclusive Working Environment

The "High-Level Engagement on the Promotion of a Safe and Inclusive Working Environment" was organized by the WCO ESA Regional Office for Capacity Building. Over 120 participants from the region and globally attended the virtual meeting, including officials from Customs administrations, WCO Regional Training Centres, Regional Economic Communities, the private sector, and other partners. Notable attendees were the WCO ESA Vice Chair, Mr. Sudhamo Lal; Secretary General of the World Customs Organization, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya; Commissioner General (Zimbabwe), Ms. Regina Chinamasa;

Director of Customs from Mauritius, Mr. Vivekanand Ramburun and a host of Directors General/Commissioners. Others were the Inclusive Trade Director from Trade Mark Africa, Ms. Gloria Atuheirwe; and CEO of Global Trade Solutions, Ms. Louise Wiggett, Human Resources & training Director from Mauritius, Mr. Dhoojanaden Maunikum; and the WCO ESA ROCB Director, Mr. Larry Liza.

Mr. Sudhamo Lal emphasized the importance of a "Safe and Inclusive Working Environment" in his opening remarks. He spotlighted the role of gender equality and diversity in sustainable development, linking it to workplace happiness and performance. Dr. Kunio Mikuriya's keynote addressed the essence of a positive workplace. He highlighted its importance for employee satisfaction and productivity, pointing to clear missions, teamwork, performance rewards, training, effective communication, and work-life balance as crucial components. He further noted that this focus is pivotal for Customs modernization in the ESA region, recognizing the value of its workforce.

The meeting concluded with remarks from Mr. Vivekanand Ramburun of Mauritius.

The Outcomes of the High-Level Promotion of Safe and Inclusive Working Environment

i. Promotion of Shared Experiences: The region should facilitate the exchange of experiences to determine best practices, considering the varied backgrounds of each administration.

ii. Utilization of WCO Tools: Members are advised to leverage the World Customs Organization (WCO) tools, guidelines, and standards focusing on Gender Equality and Diversity (GED).

iii. Monitoring Gender Framework: There's a need to consistently oversee the application of the ESA Regional Gender Framework.

iv. Data-Driven Policies: It is essential to employ gender-disaggregated data when framing policies, projects, and initiatives. This ensures more accurate and targeted interventions.

v. Safer Work Environments: Tax authorities and Customs Administrations should prioritize initiatives that ensure a safer and more inclusive working ambiance for all involved parties.

vi. Membership in 'Safer Stops Safer Lives' Program: Governments, Customs Administrations, and other associated entities should consider joining the 'Safer Stops Safer Lives' initiative. This fosters a robust partnership, particularly bridging the gap between public and private sectors.

vii. Harmonization of Border Procedures: A synchronized approach to Customs procedures at borders is crucial to boost cross-border commerce.

viii. Advocacy for Customs Gender Champions: The appointment and active role of Customs Gender champions at border points are vital for championing gender inclusivity.

ix. Funding & Awareness for 'Safer Stops Safer Lives': Developmental allies and governments are called upon to offer financial support and further awareness for the 'Safer Stops Safer Lives' initiatives.

x. Acknowledgment of WCO ESA ROCB's Efforts: Participants called for concerted efforts by the region to continue spearheading the gender agenda in the region, alongside equity, equality and inclusion. They acknowledged and appreciated the commendable efforts of the WCO ESA Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), the WCO Secretary General, the ESA Vice Chair (Mauritius) as well as that of the former Vice Chair (Zimbabwe).

These strategies underline the region's commitment to prioritizing gender inclusivity and diversity, ensuring growth and development that benefits all Members of society.



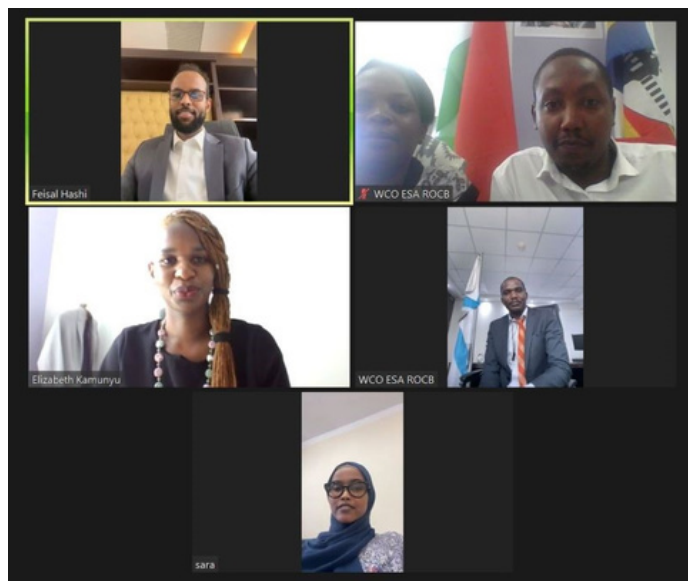
The ROCB meeting with Somalia.

Following the Governing Council directive in May 2023, the ROCB team, led by the WCO ESA Director Mr. Larry Liza, held a virtual meeting with the Somalia Revenue Directorate. The Directorate was represented by Mr. Feisal Hashi, Director General of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance of the Federal Government of Somalia, and Ms. Sarah Abukar, Head of Corporate Service.

During the meeting, Mr. Larry Liza highlighted the importance of this engagement, which aimed to introduce the WCO ESA, discuss regional matters, and address emerging issues. The discussions also encompassed the benefits and opportunities available to Somalia as it seeks to augment its participation in regional meetings and capacity-building activities. Furthermore, the Director expressed a desire to visit Somalia, in line with a directive from the Governing Council.

Mr. Hashi conveyed his appreciation to the ROCB for orchestrating the meeting. He spotlighted Somalia's ongoing modernization efforts, including the Somali Customs Automated System (SOMCAS), the digitization of Customs entry points, and their alignment with international Customs best practices to enhance trade.

He emphasized Somalia's dedication to maintaining an active presence in the region and pledged to extend an invitation to the Director to visit Somalia when the timing is favorable.



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The Virtual Global Conference of the Network of Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs

The WCO ESA ROCB team attended the 3rd World Customs Organisation's Virtual Global Conference on Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs. Launched on International Women's Day in 2022, this WCO initiative bolsters awareness and supports ongoing work on gender topics. This year's focus: staff engagement and GED assessments to enhance Gender Equality and Diversity in Customs administrations. Two panel sessions discussed this theme.

Over 130 individuals, including delegates from Customs administrations, the private sector, and WCO regional entities, among others participated. It was moderated by Mr. Ludovic Kelly, the Head of Communications and Events.

WCO Secretary General Dr. Kunio Mikuriya recalled that the WCO's GED efforts began in 2013 with the 'Women in Customs, Trade, and Leadership' conference. Since then, tools like the Gender Equality Organizational Assessment Tool (GEOAT), Virtual Gender Working Group, and GED-focused

surveys have been introduced. The GEOAT helps WCO Members evaluate Gender Equality and Diversity. The Virtual Gender Working Group and the WCO Compendium spotlight global GED best practices.

Recent WCO research shows Customs administrations are 32% females and 68% males, with senior management at 26% females and 74% males. Aligned with the WCO's 2023 Theme, two GED courses are now available on WCO platforms. Additionally, the WCO is cultivating its GED specialists to aid member nations.

Dr. Mikuriya emphasized that Gender Equality and Diversity is part of the broader HR Development Policy. He highlighted the need for evaluations to identify HR gaps and guide future strategies. The pursuit of Gender Equality, Dr. Mikuriya noted, goes beyond achieving gender balance. The WCO's approach has grown to include Diversity and Inclusivity, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal for 2030 and the WCO's 2020 Declaration on Gender Equality and Diversity.

WCO Council Chairperson, Mr. Edward Kieswetter, also the Commissioner of South African Revenue Service (SARS), led a session on staff-focused Gender Equality initiatives. He identified four key facilitators for GED success: leadership, conducive environments, agency, and accelerated learning.

The conference featured speakers like Ms. Jeannette C. Makgolo, Commissioner General of the Botswana Unified Revenue Service, and Ms. Gusti Agung Ayu Ari Tiastary, Chairperson of the Gender Virtual Working Group, who shared organizational insights on Gender Equality and Diversity.



Regional Finance Policy Review, Nairobi, Kenya

Revenue Services Lesotho (RSL)'s Head of Finance, Ms. Kabanyane Tladi, supported the ROCB in reviewing the regional Financial Policy documents. The ESA Governing Council, in its meeting this May in Madagascar, directed that the region consolidates its financial policies, and requested Lesotho to lead this process as a member of the region's Finance and Governance Committee (FGC).

Ms. Tladi has been a pillar to the committee and the region in reengineering our financial systems. Her extensive experience and profound understanding of financial policies position her as an invaluable asset to the process of policy formulation. This expertise continues to immeasurably contribute to the establishment of a robust and effective financial policy framework for the region. The ESA Vice Chair, Mr. Vivekanand Ramburun (Mauritius) expressed the region's appreciation to the RSL Commissioner General Ms. Mathabo Mokoko and Lesotho for their gracious support to the ROCB and to the region.



ROCB Cooperation with UNCTAD

The WCO ESA held a virtual meeting with UNCTAD to discuss collaboration areas, particularly in Transit Trade Facilitation. This initiative follows the Governing Council's call for enhanced cooperation with key partners.

The dialogue touched on the challenges and solutions for the ESA region and Africa, emphasizing the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA). This agreement covers Freedom of Transit (Article 11) and Customs Cooperation (Article 12). The discussions also emphasized the automation of Customs procedures, digital transit data exchange, advantages of a regional approach, and e-learning for National Transit coordinators.

The ESA's strategic objective emphasizes on harmonizing and automating Customs procedures to reduce international trade costs and time. Notably, over 50% of ESA Members use UNCTAD's ASYCUDA for their trade and transport operations, marking the partnership's potential to amplify capacity and streamline transit cargo movement in ESA corridors.

Representing WCO ESA were Director Mr. Larry Liza, UNCTAD Chief Mr. Poul Hansen, and Project Lead Mr. Arman Zhalitov. Also in attendance: UNCTAD's Regional Coordinator Mr. Khauhelo Mawana, Project Manager Ms. Arántzazu Sánchez, and WCO ESA Programme Officers Ms. Kamunyu and Ms. Mosongo.

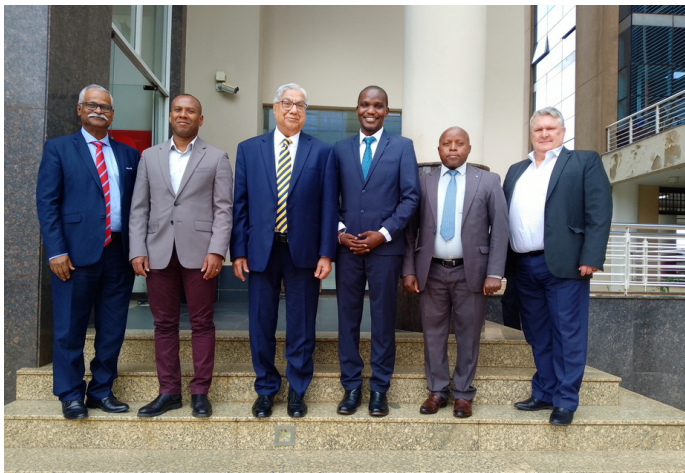


The ESA Region Management Committee Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya

The ESA Region Management Committee Meeting was held at the ROCB offices in Nairobi, Kenya. Mr. Sudhamo Lal, the WCO ESA Vice Chair and Director General (Mauritius), chaired the meeting. He was accompanied by Mr. Vivekanand Ramburun, the Director for Customs (Mauritius).

Other Members of the MC attending were the Deputy Vice Chair, South Africa (Mr. Beyers Theron); Madagascar (Mr. Lainkana Zafivanova Ernest) and Burundi (Mr. Frederic Manirambona). The meeting reviewed the current status and requirements of the ESA region and its regional entities, implementation of the Regional Strategy, status of implementation of the decisions made during the 29th Governing Council, examining the state of regional finances, WCO modernization process, among others.

The ROCB Director, Mr. Larry Liza, hosted the meeting while the Commissioner General, Kenya, Mr. Humphrey Wattanga, hosted a dinner for the delegation & ROCB.



ESA Region Customs Reforms & Modernization Survey

The ROCB spearheaded the ESA regional survey on Reforms and Modernization, 2023 where 18/24 Members participated in the survey. The survey aimed to gather information on various aspects of Customs functions, such as revenue, trade volumes, intra-regional trade, automation of processes, HS implementation, risk management, cross-border e-commerce, single window implementation, Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), coordinated border management, one-stop border posts, donor support, advance rulings, gender mainstreaming, human capital development, and the use of information communication and technology in Customs.

This survey was in response to the Governing Council's decision, which called on the ROCB to provide data and baseline statistics to support national and regional development. It is part of other surveys that the ROCB has been collecting over the years on Customs Reforms & Modernization aimed at providing Members with the information to help them make informed strategic decisions.

The full report on the outcomes of the survey on Reforms & Modernization in ESA will be shared with the region in an e-book format.

Engagements with Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG).

On the 6th July, the ESA Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG) held its Governance Meeting – 2023 & Election of a New Chair & Vice-Chair virtually.

The meeting was chaired by the Director WCO ESA Mr. Larry Liza who also facilitated proper governance of the voting process.

Dr. Juanita Maree (South Africa) was elected as the Chairperson while Mr. Fred Seka (Rwanda) was elected as the Vice Chairperson.



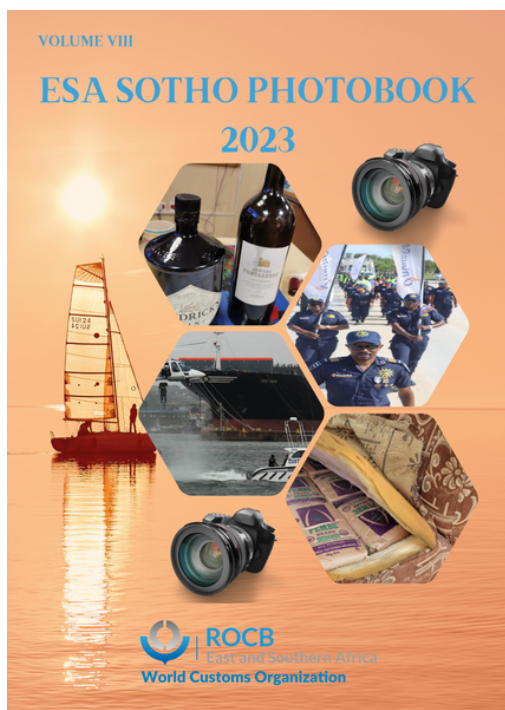
Publication of the ESA Region Photobook 2023

The ROCB published the 8th volume of the ESA Region Sotho Photobook for the year 2023. A book, arising from the efforts of our member countries in promoting and showcasing their works, achievements and milestones as Customs administrations.

This year we had joint winners, and joint runners-up. Mauritius essentially retained the trophy they won last year, with their photo titled 'Canna in Paradise', the case of liquid synthetic cannabinoid, a rising trend among drug traffickers. However, Namibia shared the winner position showcasing their new field uniform during the International Customs Day celebrations in 2023.

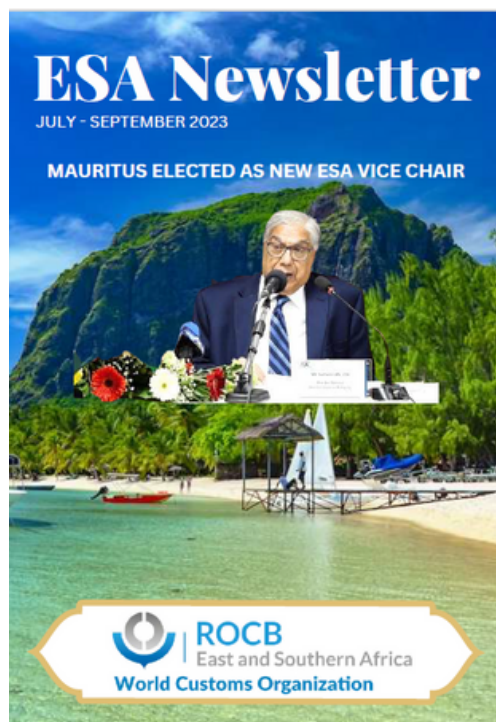
South Africa and Uganda followed suit and shared the 1st runners up position. Most Members continue to showcase their efforts related to compliance and enforcement, and to an extent reforms and modernization, among other functions related to Customs.

The voting took place during the 29th Governing Council meeting held from the 11th to the 13th May 2023 at Antananarivo, Madagascar.



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. During the reporting period two newsletters were published and shared with the region and the global Customs family. There issues herein are: July – September 2023 issue and October - December 2023 issue;



RILO ESA ACTIVITIES REPORT

01/04/2023 - 30/09/2023



1.0 CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT NETWORK (CEN) MANAGEMENT

2.0 INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

3.0 INFORMATION & INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE

4.0 JOINT OPERATION / PROJECT MANAGEMENT

5.0 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

6.0 LEARNING AND GROWTH

7.0 PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

RILO ESA Activities in Pictures

RILO ESA 20th NCP administrative meeting
held in Kenya from 6th to 8th August 2023

1



RILO ESA, Uganda and Namibia participated in the UNODC preparation meeting on the Customs operation on wildlife trafficking Nairobi, Kenya.



2

RILO ESA Officers with Heads of RILO CA and WA in Nairobi, Kenya

3



RILO ESA participated in the RTC, RSG and GC meetings held in May 2023, Madagascar.



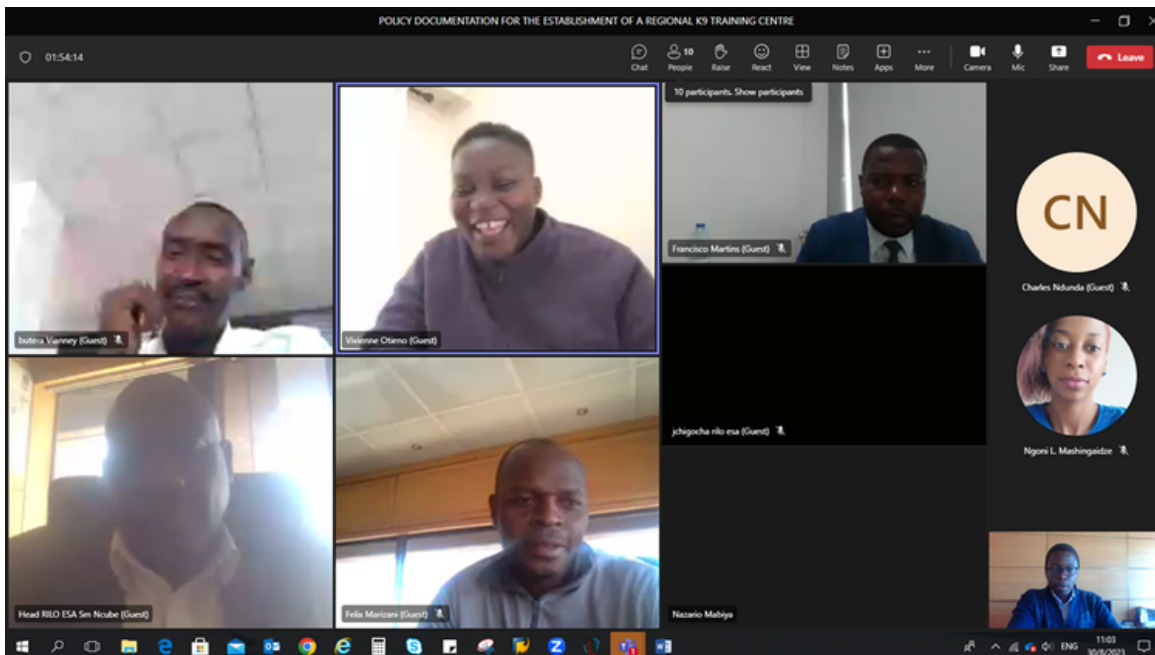
4

Head RILO ESA and RILO Officer during the RSG meeting in Madagascar.

5



Virtual meeting held on 31/08/2023 with the committee for the development of a policy document on regional dog training centre.



6

1.0 Customs Enforcement Network (CEN) Management

1.1 CEN Usage

- Eight (8) out of 20-Member States recorded seizures in the CEN during the half-year representing a yearly usage of 40%. This was a decline from 42.11% compared to the same period last year, 2022.
- The number of entries uploaded onto the CEN System declined from 501 Entries for the same period last year to 446 Entries (a 10.98% percentage decline).
- The highest user remains South Africa with 206 Entries for the half-year followed by Zimbabwe with 75 Entries.
- The nCEN System challenges remain a major challenge among Member States as most members are failing to upgrade the system. The WCO has however given Member States an alternative to use a dedicated CENcomm3 platform for each country.

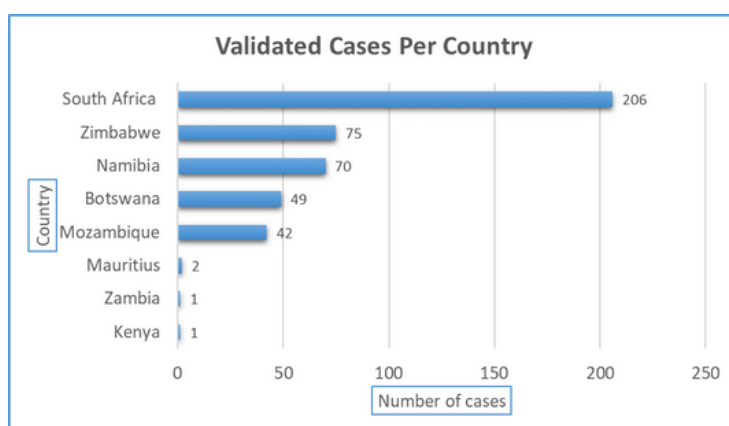
1.2 Seizures by Country

Validated Cases

| Country | Cases | %Age Contr |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| South Africa | 206 | 46.19% |
| Zimbabwe | 75 | 16.82% |
| Namibia | 70 | 15.70% |
| Botswana | 49 | 10.99% |
| Mozambique | 42 | 9.42% |
| Mauritius | 2 | 0.45% |
| Kenya | 1 | 0.22% |
| Zambia | 1 | 0.22% |
| Angola | 0 | 0.00% |
| Burundi | 0 | 0.00% |
| Ethiopia | 0 | 0.00% |
| Lesotho | 0 | 0.00% |
| Madagascar | 0 | 0.00% |
| Malawi | 0 | 0.00% |
| Rwanda | 0 | 0.00% |
| Seychelles | 0 | 0.00% |
| Eswatini | 0 | 0.00% |
| Tanzania | 0 | 0.00% |
| Uganda | 0 | 0.00% |
| Total | 446 | |

Comments

- South Africa recorded the highest number of Seizures with 206 cases uploaded onto the CEN system for the half year. The figure represents 46.19% of the total entries made.
- Zimbabwe was the second highest contributor to the system with 75 cases (16.82% of total) followed by Namibia with 70 cases (15.70%).
- Twelve countries did not upload any entries for the period under review.



Comments

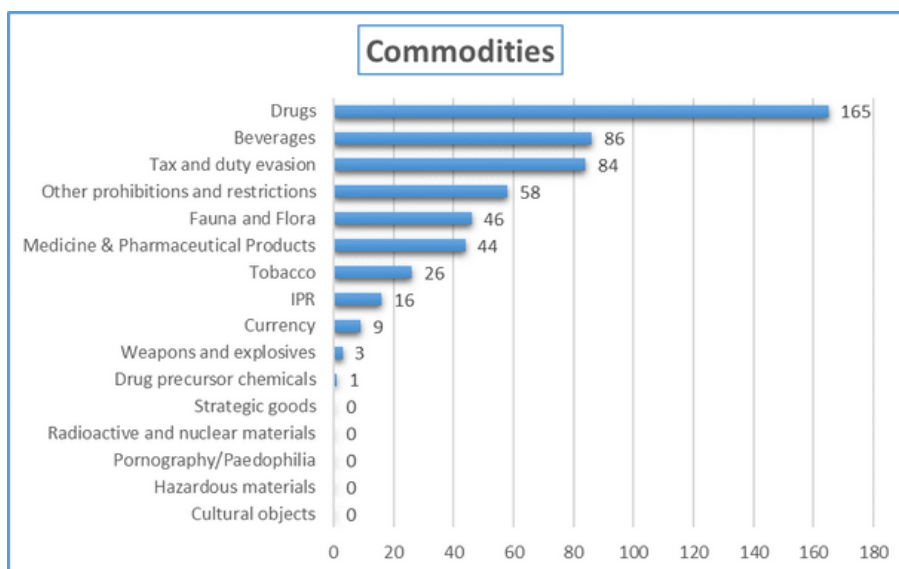
Only three (3) Member States contributed above 50 seizures cases to the CEN for the period.

Kenya, Mauritius and Zambia contributed less than five (5) cases each.

1.1 Seizures by Commodity

The total number of cases per commodity was 538 for the half-year.

- Seizures were uploaded for 8 out of the 16 commodities in CEN.
- Drugs topped the list with 165 seizures (30.67% of total commodities seized). The figure represented a decrease in drug cases from the 195 cases recorded during the same period last year.
- Beverages and Tax & Duty Evasion ranked second and third on the list with 86 and 84 cases respectively.



1.4 Year on year comparison (2020/21 – 2021/22)

The total number of cases per commodity was 538 for the half-year.

- Seizures were uploaded for 8 out of the 16 commodities in CEN.
- Drugs topped the list with 165 seizures (30.67% of total commodities seized). The figure represented a decrease in drug cases from the 195 cases recorded during the same period last year.
- Beverages and Tax & Duty Evasion ranked second and third on the list with 86 and 84 cases respectively.

| Commodity | Value (2023) | Value (2022) | Variance |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Drugs | 165 | 195 | -15.38% |
| Beverages | 86 | 119 | -27.73% |
| Tax and duty evasion | 84 | 41 | 104.88% |
| Other prohibitions and restrictions | 58 | 82 | -29.27% |
| Fauna and Flora | 46 | 5 | 820.00% |
| Medicine & Pharmaceutical Products | 44 | 41 | 7.32% |
| Tobacco | 26 | 8 | 225.00% |
| IPR | 16 | 39 | -58.97% |
| Currency | 9 | 0 | |
| Weapons and explosives | 3 | 0 | |
| Drug precursor chemicals | 1 | 0 | |
| Cultural objects | 0 | 0 | |
| Hazardous materials | 0 | 0 | |
| Pornography/Paedophilia | 0 | 0 | |
| Radioactive and nuclear materials | 0 | 0 | |
| Strategic goods | 0 | 0 | |
| Total | 538 | 530 | 1.51% |

Comments

- Total cases per commodity increased by 1.51% compared to the same period of the previous year.
- The greatest increase was recorded for Fauna & Flora with an 820% increase, from 5 Entries recorded for the same period last year to 46 Entries during the period under review.
- The greatest decrease was for IPR with a 58.97% fall (39 cases to 16 cases) followed by 29.27% for Other Prohibitions & Restrictions (82 cases down to 58 cases).
- Seizures were recorded for Currency (8 cases), Weapons & Explosives (3 cases) and Drug Precursor chemicals (1 case), up from no seizures in the same period last year, 2022.

1.5 Value of the Contraband

Comments

The total value of contraband seized during the half-year was USD21, 512, 162.00 down from US\$35,286,844.00 for the same period last year.

Top of the list were drugs with USD10, 810, 391.00 worth of drugs seized (50.25% of all seized items).

Only 2 commodities had more than USD1million worth of goods seized (Drugs and Drug precursor chemicals).

1.5 Value of the Contraband

Comments

The total value of contraband seized during the half-year was USD 21, 512, 162.00 down from USD 35,286,844.00 for the same period last year.

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Only 2 commodities had more than USD1million worth of goods seized (Drugs and Drug precursor chemicals).

1.6 Significant Seizures (Per commodity)

1.6.1 Drugs

Drugs worth a total of USD 10, 810, 391.00 were seized during the half-year. The three biggest entries into the CEN system for the period were:



a) Heroin: 206kg valued at USD 261,207.00 concealed in Bottles containing hair food in RSA on 20/06/2023. The consignment was an import from the Netherlands to RSA.

b) Cocaine: 40kgs valued at USD1, 065, 700.00 seized at an Express courier in Johannesburg, RSA on 14/09/2023. The cocaine was concealed in vehicle spare parts.



c) Cocaine: 10 Kgs concealed in art toys and valued at USD 552, 330.00 seized in RSA destined to New Zealand.



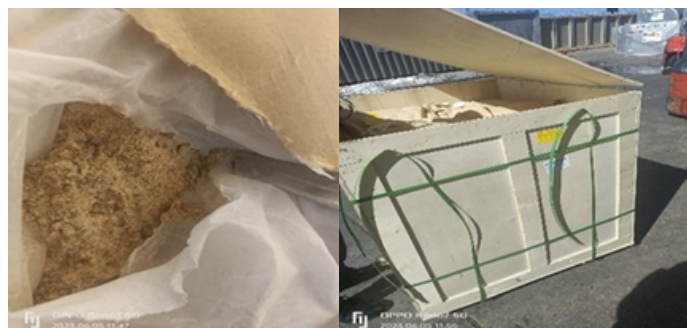
1.6.2 Medicine & Pharmaceutical Products

The total value of seized medicine and pharmaceutical products for the half year was USD 435, 907.00. The top seizure was for Anabolic Steroids (9 650 Ampules/15 000 Tablets) valued at R7 891 000.00.



1.6.3 Drug Precursors

A single seizure for drug precursors was reported during the half year. The shipment was from China and destined to RSA. The precursor (Acetantranil) was concealed in three wooden crates.



1.6.4 Fauna & Flora

A single seizure for drug precursors was reported during the half year. The shipment was from China and destined to RSA. The precursor (Acetantranil) was concealed in three wooden crates.

The total value of Fauna and Flora entries uploaded onto the CEN system for the period was USD 374, 475.00. The three outstanding entries were:



a) 15 pieces of Rhino Horns, weighing 23.6kg with an estimated street value of USD 149,297.00 destined for Dubai were seized in 19/09/2023.

b) Sea Cucumbers, weighing 105kg, with an estimated value of USD 40,138.00 were found concealed in Styrofoam boxes preserved in cold storage. The consignment was destined for Hong Kong.



c) Pieces of Rhino Horn, weighing 4kg with estimated value of USD25,181.00 intercepted at the Couriers. The parcel was from RSA destined to China.



2.0 Intelligence Products

2.1 Alert Messages

A single seizure for drug precursors was reported during the half year. The shipment was from China and destined to RSA. The precursor (Acetantranil) was concealed in three wooden crates.

The total value of Fauna and Flora entries uploaded onto the CEN system for the period was USD 374,475.00. The three outstanding entries were:



RILO-ESA ALERT 31-2023

124kgs Cannabis concealed in Booster chargers and Air fryer from RSA to the UK and China.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Date: 28 September 2023 | Contact: RILO-ESA Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for East & Southern Africa Zimbabwe Revenue Authority 10th Floor ZB Centre, Cnr First Street / Nkwanne Nkhurumah Ave Harare, Zimbabwe Direct line: +263 242773143 E-Mail: rioesa@zimra.co.zw |
| Origin: South Africa | |
| Commodity: Cannabis | |

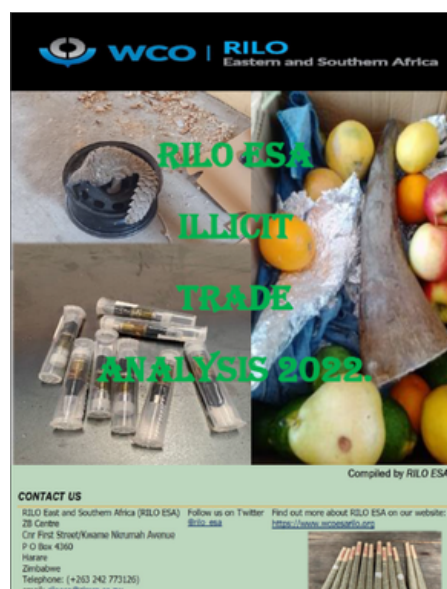
Drafted and distributed the 13 Alerts during the half-year.

- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 06 - 2023:** 25Kgs Crystal Meth concealed in a welding machine from RSA to New Zealand.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 07 - 2023:** 2.7kgs Gemstones in a candleholder from RSA the USA.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 09 - 2023:** 17Kgs Ketamine & Phencyclidine-type substances from RSA to Australia concealed in Flavoured drink containers.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 10 - 2023:** 448 Bottles of Stilpain (Painkiller) from RSA to the USA concealed in tissue oil boxes.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 12 - 2023:** 8.6kgs heroin concealed in cans of tomato puree from RSA to New Zealand.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 13 - 2023:** 12Kgs Cocaine from RSA to Norway moulded in handmade soaps and hand balms.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 21 - 2023:** 10Kgs Heroin from RSA to the UK concealed in bottles of braai sauces, juices and etc.

- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 22 - 2023:** 11.5kgs Cocaine in water purification cartridges.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 27 - 2023:** 40kgs Cocaine concealed in vehicle spare parts from RSA to New Zealand.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 28 - 2023:** 20kgs Crystal Meth concealed in ornaments from RSA to New Zealand.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 29 - 2023:** Cannabis resin bars in milk powder.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 30 - 2023:** 2.3kgs Cocaine concealed in passenger luggage from Sao Paulo to RSA.
- **WCO RILO-ESA Alert 31 - 2023:** 124kgs Cannabis concealed in Booster chargers and Air fryer from RSA to the UK and China.

2.2 Analysis

Drafted and circulated four (4) Analyses Reports during the six months:



RILO ESA Illicit Trade Report 2022

BURS CEN Data Analysis 2019 - 2023





A Review of Illicit Drug Trade in ESA



ZIM CEN Data Analysis 2019 - 2023

**Period
2019 – 2023
A detailed Analysis by
the RILO ESA**

2.3 RILO ESA Newsletters

Produced and circulated one half-year RILO ESA Newsletter covering period January to June 2023.

Received and circulated to all NCPs the following newsletters from other RILOs:

- WCO RILO WE Infor Magazine
- WCO RILO ECE Herald

3.0 Information & Intelligence Exchange

Received and distributed several Alerts from other RILO as follows:



- 11 x RILO ME Alerts
- 7 x RILO JIO Alerts
- 5 x RILO ECE Alerts

Received and circulated the RILO WE Infor Magazine and the RILO ECE Herald.

Received and shared information and alerts from ESA member states, especially RSA to other RILOs (mainly the RILO WE and RILO AP) and to other ESA member states.

4.0 Joint Operations /Project Management

Received and cascaded Invitations to participate in various joint operations mostly from WCO and recently UNODC. The RILO ESA office continuous to encourage all Member States to continue participating in such operations to enhance effectiveness in curbing smuggling in the region and beyond.

4.1 Operation Praesidio II

Targeted at **illegal trade in wildlife and endangered species** in order to curb illegal wildlife trade and crimes and mainly focused in the following Member States; **Botswana, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia & Zimbabwe** The Project from the 19th - 30th June 2023 and post-operational phase on 21st -22nd August 2023.

The Head RILO ESA attended a Pre-Operational workshop for Operation PRAESIDIO II, which was held in Uganda 24th - 26th April 2023.

4.2 Currently running operations:

4.2.1 Operation Thunder 2023

Operation Thunder 2023, which is a continuation of the large-scale INTERPOL-WCO fauna and flora enforcement operation – also referred to as **illegal wildlife and timber trade enforcement operation** is currently in its operational phase.

- Pre-operational phase ran from 1st September to 2nd October 2023;
- Operational phase will run from 2nd to 27th October 2023; and

- Post-operational phase will run from 29th October to 31st December 2023.

RILO ESA attended the virtual Operation Thunder 2023 Pre-Operational meeting held on 01/09/2023.

4.3 Operation DEMETER IX

Operation DEMETER IX provides Customs Administrations and their partners an opportunity to collaborate on combating the **illegal trade of waste and substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol**.

- Pre-operational phase took place between 01 August to 30th September 2023;
- Operational phase is running from 1st to 31st October 2023;
- Post-operational phase will be held from 1st November to 15th December 2023. **[Expecting participating Member States to post their Cases]**

Upcoming operations:

4.4 Operation STOP III

An operation to intercept & seize fake or substandard medicines, vaccines & medical devices and other products for everyday consumption that endanger consumer health and safety.

The Operation will take place from 4th to 15th December 2023.

Member States are encouraged to Register and participate

4.5 Operation SAMA (UNODC Sponsored Project)

The Operation will combine Customs' and other key Stakeholders' efforts to dismantle the illicit trade and trafficking at the national and international levels of wild fauna and flora species through cooperative enforcement efforts led by Customs Administrations in Africa. RILO ESA and Namibia participated in the UNODC preparation Meeting on the Customs Operation on wildlife trafficking held in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was held to draft the

concept note and action plan for the operation.

Invitations have since been sent to all ESA member states to participate in the operation.

4.6 Operation SITT

The operation's target is to combat illicit trade in cigarettes in the ESA Region. Its target will be shipments from within the region and beyond.

A virtual meeting was held on 19/07/2023 with the committee that was set to come up with the Operational plan and action plan for the operation.

The RILO ESA was tasked with coming up with an analysis for the illicit trade in cigarettes in the region, an analysis that is still being carried out. Requests for data were sent to members and responses are still being received.

5.0 International Cooperation

concept note and action plan for the operation.

Invitations have since been sent to all ESA member states to participate in the operation.

5.1 20th NCP Annual Administrative Meeting

The RILO ESA 20th Annual Administrative Meeting of the National Contact Point (NCP) was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 8th to 11th August 2023. The Head RILO and one officer attended the meeting.



The meeting was held under the Theme: "Stimulating a culture of timeous intelligence sharing and increased participation in the fight against illicit trade among member states".

39 delegates from 11 Member States, the ROCB, TWIX-EA, RILO WE and KRA attended the meeting.

The Commissioner C&BC Kenya Revenue Authority officially opened the meeting. The Director, ROCB and the Head RILO ESA also gave opening remarks.

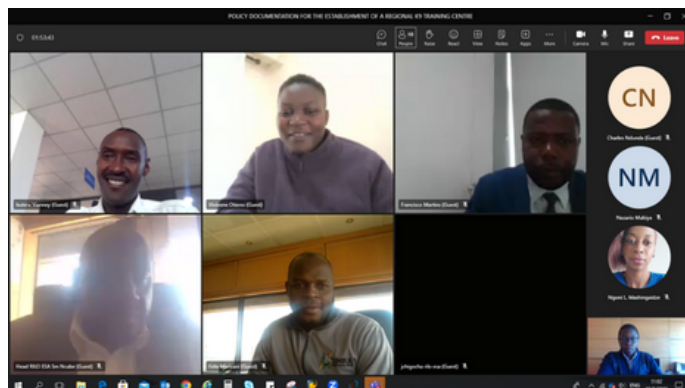
Countries represented in the meeting included Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. NCPs from these countries presented their country reports.

Below are some of the outcomes from the meeting:

- Two committees/Working Groups were formed during the meeting to spearhead the development of the two Regional Policy Documents (the Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL) and the Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTC) Policy documents). It was agreed that, the policy documents should be completed before end of October 2023 bearing in mind the November 2023 RSG Meeting
- Customs Administrations using nCEN to upgrade their systems to the latest version with assistance from WCO.
- Customs Administrations should avail full time officers dedicated in the capturing of seizures direct into the CEN System.
- Customs Administrations who require CENcomm3 training should seek assistance from RILO ESA office and WCO so that they make use of CENcomm3 to upload their seizures in the CEN.
- Comoros was officially welcomed as a RILO-ESA Member. Comoros joined the RILO ESA in May 2023.
- ICT hardware and network systems should be upgraded to alleviate challenges hindering the upload of cases to CEN
- Improve on hand over/take over when there is a change of NCPs.

5.2 Other Meetings

Virtual Meetings were held with the Committees on the drafting of the RCL and RDTC Policy documents:



- 30/08/2023** – Virtual meeting with the committee on the policy document on RCL.
- 31/08/2023** – Virtual Meeting with the committee on the policy document on RDTC.
- 22/09/2023** – A follow-up meeting with the committee on RDTC.

5.3 RTC/RSG and GC meetings

RILO ESA Manager and one RILO officer attended the RTC/RSG and GC meetings held in Madagascar from 3rd to 13th May 2023.

The following are some of the decisions made by the GC concerning the RILO ESA:

- Directed the RILO and the ROCB with the support of the WCO and South Africa, to develop a Regional Policy document on the establishment of a Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL) and a Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTC) that will detail the strategy/process of implementation and the hosting requirements.
- Tasked the RILO and the ROCB to ensure the legal frameworks are entrenched in the establishment of the new RCL, including Article 5.3 of the WTO TFA related to Test Procedures, to promote acceptability of the results of the laboratory.
- Called for statistics from the RILO on the cases requiring laboratory services in the region and reporting on the status updates

- Recommended that Members with training or other technical needs notify the RILO and WCO for assistance and those who require country specific analysis done to contact the RILO ESA for support. h) Encouraged Members to participate in all WCO RILO operations, meetings, workshops and administrative NCP meetings.



Progress on the GC Resolutions:

| | GC Resolution | Progress to date | Comment |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | Drafting of a Policy document on the establishment of a Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL). | On-going: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A committee was formed comprising NCPs of Mauritius, Namibia, Zambia, RSA and the RILO. A meeting was held on 30/09/23 to discuss the document. | The Document ready for discussion with the ROCB and the SARS Office |
| 2 | Drafting of a Policy document on the establishment of a Regional Dog Training Centre (RDTC). | On-going: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A committee was formed comprising NCPs of Angola, Kenya, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and the RILO. Two meetings were held on 31/09/23 & 22/09/23 to discuss the document. | The Document is ready for discussion with the ROCB |
| 3 | Requesting for statistics on the cases requiring laboratory services in the region and reporting on the status updates. | On-going: Requests were sent out to members and responses were received from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Madagascar Eswatini (Kingdom of) Reminders were sent and the RILO awaits responses. | Preliminary list included the following commodities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drugs & drug precursors Ethanol Fabrics |
| 4 | Members with training or other technical needs notify the RILO and WCO for assistance and those who require country specific analysis done to contact the RILO ESA for support. | On-going: Trainings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held a discussion with Rwanda on the use of CENcomm3 on 23/05/23. Trained Zambia NCP and other officers on CENcomm3 on 23/05/23. CEN Data Analyses were done for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Botswana and Zimbabwe. | RILO ESA open for any assistance required by Member States |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 5 | Encouraged Members to participate in all WCO RILO operations, meetings, workshops and administrative NCP meetings. | On-going: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitations are sent out and reminders/follow-ups done to encourage members to actively participate in operations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation DEMETER IX • Operation STOP III • Operation SAMA • Operation SITT |
|---|--|--|--|

6.0 Learning and Growth

- Any Member State needing Training on the nCEN, CENComm 3 are free to approach the RILO ESA Team

7.0 Plans for the Future

- Attend all meetings that the RILO ESA will be invited to.
- Actively participate in the following operations that the RILO ESA is part of the OCU:
 - i. Operation SAMA with the Pre-Operational phase starting in December 2023.
 - ii. Operation SITT to hold during the first quarter of 2023.
- To hold virtual meetings with the NCPs at least once every two months to encourage the sharing of seizure data.
- To organise and conduct training with Member States on the use of WCO tools.
- To constantly update the RILO ESA website with new stories. To hold meetings at least once every quarter with the website committee to discuss on ways to improve the site.

8.0 Recommendations & Way forward

Member States encouraged to upgrade their nCEN to the latest Version. Assistance to be sought from the WCO to assist with the quick upgrade of the nCEN systems in member states.

Those members facing difficulties in updating the nCEN should use the CENcomm3 to share seizure data.

Member states to capture and submit their seizures for data analysis and sharing, timeously.

Member States encouraged to utilise the WCO Tools

Member states with training or other technical needs encouraged to notify the RILO and WCO for facilitation of assistance.

Members who need country specific analysis done may contact the RILO ESA office.



Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO)

The Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Eastern and Southern Africa (RILO ESA) is a Regional Centre for collecting and analysing data as well as dissemination of information throughout the Global Customs Enforcement Network (CEN).

Updates from the Regional Private Sector Group (RPSG)

Introduction

This report aims to provide an overview of the work conducted by the World Customs Organization, East- and Southern Africa Regional Private Sector Group (WCO ESA RPSG) from May 2023 to October 2023. The work conducted includes;

- (1) Webinars,
- (2) Governance meetings,
- (3) Position papers,
- (4) Weekly Cross-border reports,
- (5) FIATA,
- (6) Yearly Program, and
- (7) Website updates.

Webinar on Connectivity and Digitalization – Linking Customs with Business

A common theme in the 21st Century has been converting information from a physical format into a digital one. The same is true for Customs and trade-related matters, in that cross-border trade can now occur with fewer documents and procedures than ever.



Indeed, information sharing can now occur at the touch of a button – connecting many different role players from all levels throughout the supply chain.

On 20th April 2023, the World Customs Organization East and Southern African Regional Private Sector Group (WCO ESA RPSG) hosted its first webinar for the year. The webinar addressed the topic of digitalization and connectivity and the importance of linking Customs to business in the East- and Southern Africa trade landscape. The 90-minute webinar brought together expert speakers who shared their valuable knowledge and expertise with the attendees. The first speaker was Ms. Patricia Mwela from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry in Zambia, who discussed respective Zambian trade facilitation measures. Shortly after, a panel of three gentlemen identified as (1) Rajnish Hawabhay (MNS), (2) Charansingh Dabeasing (MACCS), and (3) Afzal Delbar (CHBA) – discussed the importance of establishing a linkage between Customs and business. Finally, the webinar was brought towards its conclusion by the World Customs Organization's Technical Attaché, Mr. Christian Lembke, who discussed and highlighted global standards for a connected world by enhancing digitalization and inter-connectivity in Customs and trade.

Unfortunately, the level of digitalization and connectivity is not yet uniform across the region. Therefore, the main aim of this webinar was to shed some light on some lessons learned and share some success stories on digitalization and connectivity in the ESA region. The webinar is available on YouTube and the WCO ESA RPSG Website (<https://www.wcoesarpsg.org/>).



Governance Meetings

i) First Governance Meeting

The first Governance meeting took centre stage on 2th March 2023, from 14:00 to 15:30 (CAT; UCT +02:00). The meeting was enthusiastically led by Chair Dr Juanita Maree, who has been at the group's core for the previous two years. Not all the countries in the ESA region were present in the meeting; however, they were kept up to date through the minutes of the meeting and further communication. The key concepts discussed at the meeting were the action items from the previous governance meeting on 13th October 2022 and the workplan progress for the year ahead. The Chair also ensured an alignment with the Vice-Chair before anything on the workplan was finalized. At the same time, feedback was provided regarding the workplan alignment with the ROCB, SADC, and AU. Feedback was also provided on the webinars set to take place throughout the year. Before the floor was opened for general comments and eventually the closure of the meeting, attendees were allowed to provide feedback on the ROCB newsletters and the latest developments on border crossings and corridor management.

ii) Second Governance Meeting: Election of a new Chair and Vice Chair

The second Governance meeting for the year took place on 6th June 2023 with the main aim of selecting a new Chair and Vice-Chair to serve for the next term. Three separate polls were created during the meeting to facilitate the voting process. With the first poll, members were allowed to nominate a single candidate for Chair; with the second, they were allowed to nominate one candidate for Vice-Chair. Members who had technical difficulties could submit their nominations through the chat function. During the nomination process, the existing Chair and Vice-Chair left the meeting to ensure no influence could be exerted over any nominations. According to the poll results, there were two nominees for Chair and four for Vice-Chair.

Once the nominees were established, the third poll was created for the members to vote for their new Chair and Vice-Chair. The nominees were also requested to leave the meeting to ensure a fair and transparent voting process. Upon conclusion of the voting process, it was found that Juanita Maree received the most votes as Chair, and Fred Seka received the most votes for Vice-Chair. Thus, they will remain in their roles for a second consecutive term, which is allowed according to the WCO ESA RPSGs Terms of Reference. We congratulate them on their re-election and are assured they will lead the WCO ESA RPSG with great success and distinction.



Position Paper

a) A call for a more regulated logistics environment in Africa

The importance of a well-functioning logistics environment in Africa cannot be overstated, as it is an exceptional enabler of economic growth and prosperity. Under the leadership of FCFASA, the WCO ESA RPSG created a document calling for a more regulated logistics environment in Africa. The main aim of this document calls for an in-depth investigation by the African Union to assist in establishing the rules to prevent the following devastating effects on supply chain movements, which are captured in cost, time, and sustainability for the end user:

1. Effect on cross-border trade
2. Substantial competition aversion giving rise to unwanted monopolistic power – The real growth in Africa lies with its abundance of SMMEs, as approximately 80% of African traders comprise SMMEs. One of the main stumbling blocks to competitive SMMEs is access to funding and their ability to enter international markets. Thus, SMMEs must be allowed to be more competitive to ensure economic growth for the rest of the continent.
3. Cohesive behavior in activities under one umbrella -Allow subsidies for certain activities within the supply chain environment to facilitate more competitiveness.

Operating in supply chain movement from a place of dominance, due to the structure formulated over many years in supply chain movement (create an established base to integrate horizontal regulation overall activities in the supply chain and specifically the logistics environment in a very structured way, which entails having data with substantial trader information across all activities)



Weekly Cross-Border Reports

This report briefly overviews cross-border road freight flows in the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region. Border data are presented in bi-directional Heavy-Goods-Vehicle flows and show the **(1)** arrivals per day, **(2)** queue times, **(3)** border crossing times, **(4)** HGV tonnage, **(5)** delays, and **(6)** cost of delays. Main corridors in the region split the information. Transporters, traders, and cargo owners are encouraged to use the non-tariff barrier (NTBs) online tool UNCTAD and the AfCFTA Secretariat developed. For a more regional approach, transporters are encouraged to contact FESARTA and join their TRANSIST Bureau, which has achieved great success in facilitating regional trade.

The latest cross-border report issued by FESARTA for the week ending 1 October 2023 indicated that cross-border queue time averaged ~10.5 hours (down by ~2.3 hours from the previous week's ~12.8 hours), indirectly costing the transport industry an estimated \$13.9 million. Furthermore, the week's average cross-border transit times hovered around ~9.1 hours (up by ~0.8 hours from the ~8.3 hours recorded in the previous report), at an indirect cost to the transport industry of \$6.4 million. As a result, the total indirect cost for the week amounts to an estimated ~\$20 million (down by ~58,9%). The following table shows a breakdown of the most important corridors in the region:

Delays summary - Corridors perspective

| Corridor | HGV Arrivals per day | Queue Time | Border Time – Best 5% | Border Time – Median | HGV Tonnage per day | Monthly HGV Arrivals |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Beira Corridor | 320 | 11.1 | 2.3 | 13.8 | 9600 | 2240 |
| Central Corridor | 798 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 7.3 | 23940 | 5586 |
| Dar Es Salaam Corridor | 1819 | 46.4 | 1.2 | 15.0 | 54570 | 12733 |
| Maputo Corridor | 1571 | 2.4 | 0.8 | 5.6 | 47130 | 10997 |
| Nacala Corridor | 127 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3810 | 3556 |
| North/South Corridor | 3721 | 15.0 | 1.6 | 12.0 | 111630 | 26047 |
| Northern Corridor | 2817 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 9.0 | 84510 | 19719 |
| Trans Caprivi Corridor | 116 | 3.9 | 0.3 | 21.5 | 3480 | 812 |
| Trans Cunene Corridor | 100 | 39.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3000 | 700 |
| Trans Kalahari Corridor | 330 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 4.7 | 9900 | 2310 |

| Corridor | HGV Arrivals per day | Queue Time | Border Time – Best 5% | Border Time – Median | HGV Tonnage per day | Monthly HGV Arrivals |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Trans Oranje Corridor | 100 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 2.9 | 3 000 | 700 |
| Weighted Average/Sum | 11 819 | 10.5 | 1.3 | 9.1 | 354 570 | 85 400 |

Source: TLC, FESARTA, & Crickmay, week ending 01/10/2023.

As showcased above, several corridors still struggle significantly with overall slow crossings – with NTBs often the main contributors to the time delays. Fortunately, several actions can be taken to alleviate some of the Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) hindering cross-border trade in Africa, including the following:

- **Advocacy and Awareness:** Encouraging advocacy efforts and raising awareness among businesses and policymakers about the impact of NTBs can help drive reforms.
- **Capacity Building:** Training and capacity-building programs for Customs officials and trade facilitation authorities can improve their understanding of trade regulations and reduce unnecessary barriers.
- **Digitalization and Automation:** Implementing digital platforms and automation for Customs clearance, documentation, and payment processes can reduce bureaucratic delays and corruption while enhancing transparency.
- **Harmonization of Regulations:** African countries should work towards harmonizing their trade regulations, standards, and Customs procedures, which can streamline trade processes and reduce the burden of complying with different rules across borders.
- **International Support:** Collaborating with international organizations and development partners for technical assistance, funding, and capacity building can enhance efforts to address NTBs.
- **Investment in Infrastructure:** Developing and maintaining efficient transport and logistics infrastructure, including roads, railways, ports, and border crossings, is crucial to facilitate the movement of goods.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Establishing mechanisms for monitoring and reporting NTBs can help identify and address issues as they arise.
- **Public-Private Collaboration:** Encouraging collaboration between governments and the private sector can lead to innovative solutions for addressing NTBs and improving trade facilitation.
- **Regional Integration:** Promoting regional economic communities and trade agreements can help reduce trade barriers by aligning policies and regulations among neighboring countries.
- **Single Window Systems:** Implementing single window systems that consolidate all trade-related procedures and documentation into a single digital platform can streamline processes and reduce duplication.

Ultimately, a combination of policy reforms, infrastructure development, and stakeholder collaboration is essential to alleviate NTBs and promote smoother cross-border trade in Africa.

FIATA

a) FIATA RAME Conference comes to Uganda

On 1st August 2023, at the Speke Resort and Conference Centre in Kampala, Uganda, FIATA President Dr Petrov opened the annual 2023 field meeting of FIATA's Region Africa Middle East (FIATA RAME). Hosted by FIATA's Association Member in Uganda, UFFA, the FIATA RAME meeting featured a 2-day conference welcoming over 250 logistics professionals from all over Africa to discuss the challenges of logistics professionals in the region. The importance of FIATA RAME for FIATA was demonstrated by the high-level FIATA leadership present with the FIATA President, Dr Petrov (Bulgaria), FIATA Senior Vice-President, Mr Sim (Singapore), FIATA Director General Dr Graber (Switzerland), acting FIATA RAME Chair, Ms Mashiri (Zimbabwe), FIATA Airfreight Chair, Mr Woubishet (Ethiopia), FIATA IFCC delegates, Mr Tanna (India), and FIATA Vice-President, Mr Taylor (Chile).

The FIATA President invited freight forwarding associations to join FIATA to ensure a strong and unified "global voice of freight forwarders". He presented the current work of FIATA, including digitalization, a Global Air Cargo Program, multimodal corridors development and promoting a level playing field. He highlighted the FIATA Regional Strategy after three years of the pandemic and the commitment of FIATA to reinforce its regional activities and support its association members in the region. The acting FIATA RAME Chair reminded participants of the importance of ensuring that all forwarders in the region raise their voices so that FIATA can find appropriate tailor-made industry solutions. She highlighted that: "In a time of artificial intelligence, this kind of meeting allows the possibility to meet real people, to know whom we are talking to, and to trust the expertise exchanged".

iii) Nomination of RAME Chair and Vice-Chair: Africa Makes History!

For the first time in FIATA history, FIATA RAME members have nominated two female leaders to spearhead the work of a FIATA standing committee, showing the way in modernization. Dr Juanita Maree (South Africa) has been nominated for the position of FIATA RAME Chair, and Ms Sheila Mashiri (Zimbabwe) will continue as acting FIATA RAME Chair until the next election. Ms Mashiri declared that she wishes to continue to support RAME as FIATA RAME Vice-Chair and to bring her full support to Dr Maree. Ms Mashiri will also run this Autumn for a position as Vice-President of FIATA to represent the African freight forwarders community in the FIATA Extended Board. The FIATA President welcomed this historical election and congratulated FIATA RAME for showing gender balance.



iv) UFFA showcases Uganda's importance for the region in logistics

The UFFA President opened the FIATA RAME meeting, recalling Uganda's importance for the region in logistics despite being landlocked, stating: "The RAME field meeting is an opportunity to showcase the potential of Uganda and show the fraternity of our industry". General Katuma, Minister of Works & Transport, Republic of Uganda, reiterated the importance of a robust, united freight forwarder voice. Time is of the essence for the logistics industry, and he highlighted his support to foster innovation and growth for a modern and more resilient logistics supply chain. General Katuma congratulated FIATA and the forwarding community for its achievements in facing the challenges brought by COVID-19 and welcomed FIATA to support Uganda to further develop and modernize the supply chain for the resilience and adaptability of the industry. Mr Katuma noted that collaboration with neighbouring countries on crucial infrastructure is critical to reducing the cost of transport. He also considered that air transport would play a vital role in strengthening Uganda's logistics services and supporting other sectors of the economy, such as tourism, trading, and export of fresh goods. He concluded by stating: "Let's us work together to make the industry more resilient and support landlocked countries that are committing to invest in and to improve its logistics infrastructure and ensure a more resilient and efficient logistics system".

v) FIATA World Congress 3-6 October 2023

Two years after the planned FIATA World Congress in Brussels, Belgium, was postponed due to the pandemic which shook the world, the Congress organizers warmly invite you to join them this time in Europe! The 2023 FIATA World Congress occurred in Brussels, Belgium, in October. The Congress host for the 2023 FWC, Forward Belgium, the Belgian Freight Forwarding Association, have invested considerable time into planning this long-awaited Congress since the winning bid in 2018.

With this Congress organized and hosted under the title "The Changing Climate of Logistics", the freight forwarding community at large, including FIATA members and non-members, focussed on the sustainability of our industry and put heads together on moving forward sustainably to meet government-set goals and regulations in coming years. Several RPSG members joined the proceedings.

Yearly Program

a) Digitalization and Connectivity & Authorized Economic Operator

Digitalization and connectivity – an important, ongoing theme for the RPSG for some time now – can support Customs in performing its functions of trade facilitation, protection of society and revenue collection while placing people at the heart of the digital transformation process.

Indeed, digitalization and connectivity have had a profound impact on international trade and Customs in several areas, notably:

Customs Automation: Customs automation programs like UNCTAD's ASYCUDA help developing nations increase Customs revenues, reduce trade costs, and modernize Customs management systems.

Increased Speed and Scale: Digitalization has accelerated trade by facilitating faster and larger transactions. It enables the delivery of services across borders, breaking down barriers to international trade.

Physical Connectivity Challenges: While digitalization opens new trade opportunities, the physical movement of goods remains crucial. Transport networks, intermodal connections, and functional transport markets are essential for physical trade delivery.

Reduced Cost: Digitalization has lowered trade costs by allowing data exchange as a tradable asset and streamlining processes through digital

tools like online platforms and electronic payments.

Regulatory Challenges: Governments face regulatory challenges in adapting to digital trade. Issues like trade facilitation take on new significance as more small parcels cross borders and new challenges like cross-border data flows emerge. Furthermore, the fact that Customs are often way more digitally integrated compared to Other Governmental Agencies (OGAs) remains a hurdle for smooth-flowing trade.

Digitalization and connectivity have and will revolutionize international trade, enhancing speed, scale, and cost-effectiveness. Another aspect of thereof includes the increased use of AEO and migrating risk from Customs to the private sector in the form of the AEO.

AEO has become a flagship Customs-Business partnership programme for WCO Members as it offers an opportunity for Customs to share its security responsibilities with the private sector while at the same time rewarding them with several additional facilitation benefits. Partnership programmes with trade allow Customs to achieve more with less effort and

aim at ensuring sustainable and long-term compliance through incentives, such as reduced levels of control, simplified procedures, periodic reporting, deferred payment, reputational benefits, and facilitation benefits across borders through MRAs. In our region, a total of eight countries in Africa are fully AEO operational. A further 12 African countries have some Customs compliance programmes in place. Several AEOs (and other Customs compliance programmes) are in the making. Further detail can be obtained from the WCO's Online AEO Compendium (OAC).

Beyond developing standards and guidelines, the WCO provides capacity-building support to its members in establishing and enhancing AEO programmes in close cooperation with donor organizations, wherever required, through international, national, and regional activities. Partnerships with businesses are also indispensable, as evidenced by the contribution of the WCO Private Sector Consultative Group to the work of the WCO SAFE Working Group in supporting and reviewing the SAFE Framework of Standards implementation.

For our region, the following illustration is critical to increasing the uptake of AEO.



vi) AfCFTA Update

According to Article 23 of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), entry into force occurs 30 days after the 22nd instrument of ratification is deposited with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) – the designated depositary for this purpose. The Agreement entered into force on 30th May 2019 for the 24 countries that had deposited their instruments of ratification by this date.

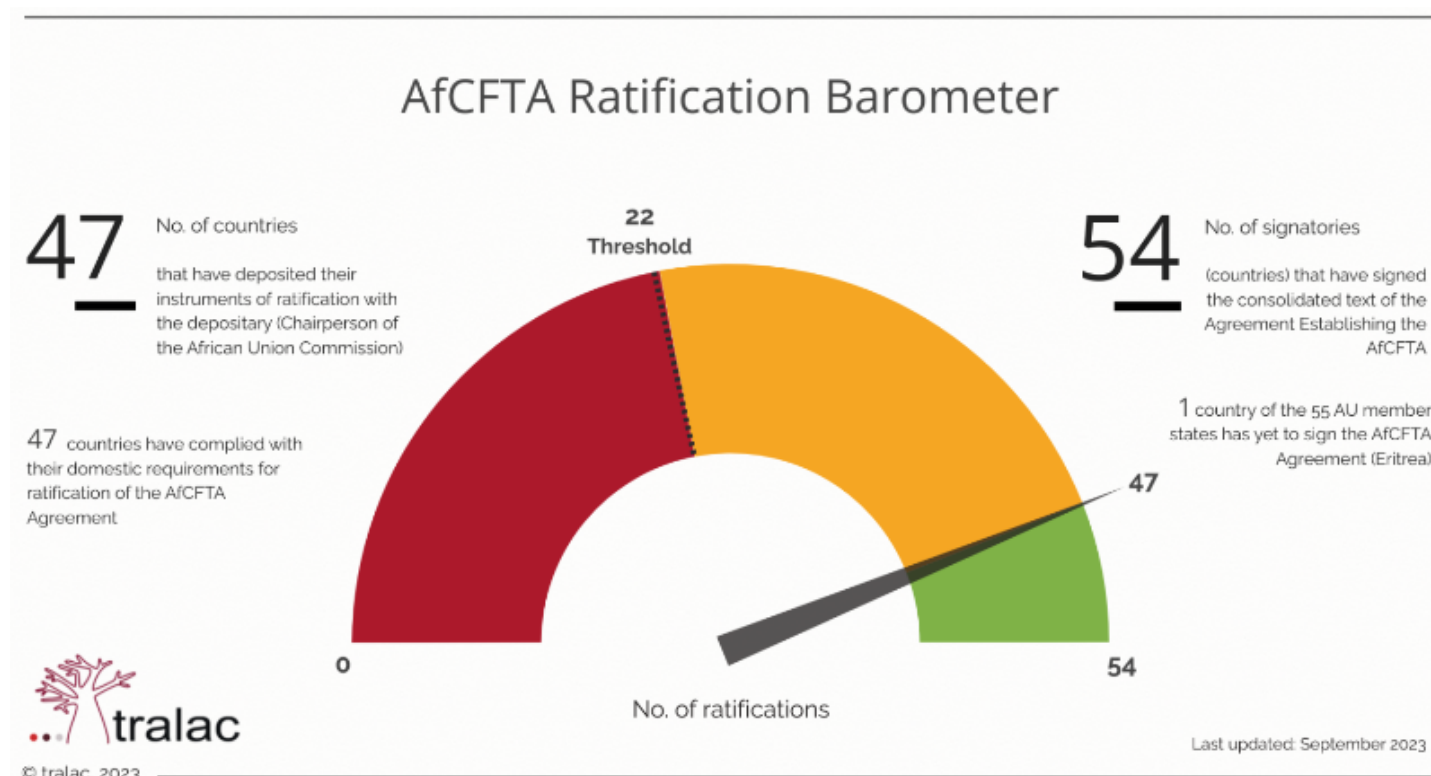
The operational phase of the AfCFTA was launched during the 12th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on the AfCFTA in Niamey, Niger on 7th July 2019. The start of trading under the AfCFTA Agreement began on 1st January 2021; however, no trade has yet occurred under the AfCFTA regime.

On 7th October 2022, the AfCFTA Secretariat launched the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative in Accra to allow for commercially meaningful

trade under the Agreement to commence for EIGHT (8) participating countries: Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Tunisia, representing the five regions of Africa. This initiative is being used to pilot the operational, institutional, legal and trade policy environment under the AfCFTA.

As of August 2023, 47 of the 54 signatories (87%) have deposited their instruments of AfCFTA ratification (ordered by date):

Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Niger, Chad, Eswatini, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Namibia, South Africa, Congo, Rep., Djibouti, Mauritania, Uganda, Senegal, Togo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Rep., Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, São Tomé & Príncipe, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Mauritius, Central African Rep., Angola, Lesotho, Tunisia, Cameroon, Nigeria, Malawi, Zambia, Algeria, Burundi, Seychelles, Tanzania, Cabo Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Morocco, Guinea-Bissau, Botswana, Comoros and Mozambique ([Tralac](#), 06/09/2023).



vii) WCO Theme of the year

The RPSG supports the WCO Theme of the year, which is *"Nurturing the next generation: promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in Customs."* Promoting a culture of knowledge-sharing and professional pride in our industry is imperative for several reasons, notably:

1. Continuous learning: Encouraging knowledge-sharing allows individuals to learn from each other and continuously improve their skills.
2. Innovation: A culture of knowledge-sharing can drive innovation and continuous improvement for a business
3. Employee retention: Creating a knowledge-sharing culture can help attract and retain top talent.

Therefore, we must take the following steps:

- Installing a knowledge base for employees and personnel.
- Creating opportunities for employees to share their skills and knowledge through training sessions or mentorship programs.
- Recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions to the organization.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions.

Promoting a knowledge-sharing culture and professional pride can benefit individuals and organizations, leading to continuous learning, innovation, and improved reputation. This reality is true in our industry as it is true elsewhere!

Website

After being offline for a while, we are pleased to announce that the WCO ESA RPSG website is running again. You are welcome to visit the website by following the link below:

<https://www.wcoesarpsg.org/>



ROCB STAFF ESTABLISHMENT

The current ROCB staff comprises the Director, two Programme Officers, Finance Officer, ICT Officer, Administrator and Finance & Administrative Assistant . All staff are from Kenya. The office received virtual support from the following Members: Botswana, Mauritius, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe.



LARRY LIZA
DIRECTOR



FAITH MOSONGO
PROGRAMME OFFICER



ELIZABETH KAMUNYU
PROGRAMME OFFICER



CLEMENCE WAWUDA
FINANCE OFFICER



JAMILAH MUTAH
FINANCE & ADMINISTRATIVE
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JUDY MWAURA
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