

# ESA NEWSLETTER

APRIL - JUNE 2025

## CSA to Land in Mzansi

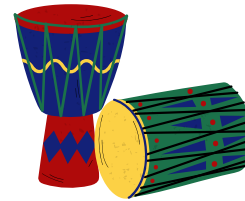




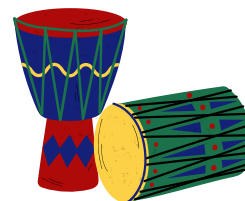
## Regional Meetings

 **Pretoria, South Africa**

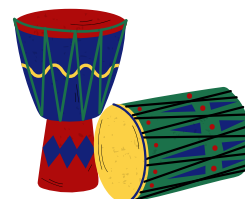
**Regional Training Centres Meeting  
8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025**



**41<sup>st</sup> Regional Steering Group  
12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025**



**31<sup>st</sup> Governance Committee  
15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025**



# Table of Contents

i.	Editorial .....	4
ii.	The Role of Customs in Border Security and Societal Protection: Lessons from Kenya's Customs Administration.....	5
iii.	Tanzania Celebrates 60 Years of Customs Excellence: A Commitment to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity.....	6
iii.	Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) is awarded the 1 <sup>st</sup> position for the Inter-Country Competition on Green Customs 2023 organized by RTC Kenya.....	7
iv.	Tech Aids 288 kg Cannabis Bust at Beitbridge Border .....	8
v.	Training of Trainers on Customs Valuation in South Sudan.....	9
vi.	Tax Incentives Concept in Mozambique.....	10
vii.	TRA Launches New Website and Upgraded TANCIS to Improve Efficiency.....	11
viii.	The Malawi Revenue Authority's Journey Towards Aligning the Regional Code with its Internal Framework.....	12
ix.	La Douane Malagasy, Modernisation et Intelligence Artificielle.....	13
x.	Tanzanian Customs Commemorate International Customs Day with a Vow Combat Smuggling.....	14
xi.	Rwanda Revenue Authority and Security Forces Unite to Combat Smuggling and Drive National Development.....	15
xii.	Mkenda Nakawale Mitomoni, a Strategic Border Postand Upcoming Leading Border Post in Tanzania.....	16
xiii.	Mwami Border Joins in the Nwala Fever.....	17
xvi.	ICD 2025 Celebration: A Reflection on Three Decades of Progress.....	18
xv.	Domesticating EAC Legal Instruments in South Sudan.....	19
xvi.	International Customs Day Themes: From Integrity to Innovation, Securing Global Trade and Prosperity.....	20
xvii.	Rwanda Women Safe Space: Empowering Women and Advancing Gender Equality.....	21
xviii.	The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) Launches New Projects on the Occasion of ICD 2025.....	22
xix.	Bridging Trust and Compliance in Tanzania through TRA's Taxpayer Appreciation Awards.....	23
xx.	Mauritius Revenue Authority Unveils Results of its 5 <sup>th</sup> Integrity Perception Survey.....	24
xxi.	Bending Not Breaking – Turning Winds of Adversity into Growth.....	25
xxii.	Tanzania's Tax Future Looks Bright with the Electronic Fiscal Device (The Role of EFD Receipt Under Export Regime).....	26
xxiii.	Ensuring Compliance: A Customs Officer's Smuggling Discovery.....	27
xxiv.	Enhancing Revenue Collection: Tanzania's Strategies for Customs Efficiency.....	28
xxv.	ROCB Staff Commentaries.....	29



Welcome to the second quarter of the year, with our warmest wishes to all our readers, members, partners, and stakeholders. May this period bring continued progress, prosperity, and strengthened collaboration as we work toward shared goals in trade, innovation, and development.

The first quarter was a testament to the power of determination and cooperation. Across Africa and beyond, significant strides were made in Customs modernization, trade facilitation, and regional integration. From the adoption of cutting-edge technologies to the strengthening of partnerships, these efforts have set a strong foundation for the months ahead.

In this edition, we kickoff with compelling lessons from Kenya on the role of Customs in border security and security before highlighting Tanzania's 60 Years of Customs Excellence as it continues to modernize trade facilitation through initiatives such as the upgraded Tanzania Customs Integrated System (TANCIS) and the launch of a new TRA website to enhance transparency. These digital advancements align with broader regional efforts, including Mozambique's tax incentive strategies and Rwanda Revenue Authority's collaboration with security forces to combat smuggling. Meanwhile, South Sudan is working to domesticate EAC legal instruments and improve Customs valuation through Training of Trainers programs, ensuring compliance across borders.

Alongside modernization, Customs authorities are reinforcing security measures to protect society. At Beitbridge Border, technology was instrumental in intercepting 288 kg of cannabis, demonstrating innovation in enforcement. Kenya's Customs Administration remains focused on border security, tackling illicit trade and ensuring compliance. Meanwhile, Rwanda's Women Safe Space initiative empowers women in Customs and trade sectors, fostering inclusivity. The Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) collaboration between South Africa and SACU further strengthens risk management frameworks. Initiatives such as Tanzania's taxpayer appreciation awards and Mauritius Revenue Authority's integrity perception survey highlight a regional commitment to trust, compliance, and economic growth.

We invite you to explore the other insightful articles from the region, showcasing progress, innovation, and other success stories.

As we advance through the year, let us build upon the achievements of the past months, leveraging technology, collaboration, and integrity to tackle emerging challenges and unlock new opportunities. Together, we can sustain the momentum of transformation, fostering economic growth, improving trade efficiency, and strengthening partnerships.

We look forward to another quarter of milestones, driven by shared commitment and the collective efforts of all stakeholders. Here's to continued success as we shape a more integrated and prosperous future.

Enjoy!

### Acknowledgement

Kenya - Kenya Revenue Authority  
Madagascar- Malagasy Customs  
Malawi - Malawi Revenue Authority  
Mozambique - Mozambique Revenue Authority  
Mauritius - Mauritius Revenue Authority  
Namibia - Namibia Revenue Agency  
Rwanda - Rwanda Revenue Authority  
South Africa - South Africa Revenue Service  
Tanzania - Tanzania Revenue Authority  
Zambia - Zambia Revenue Authority  
Zimbabwe - Zimbabwe Revenue Authority  
Japan International Cooperation Agency

### Editorial

Larry Liza - Editor-in-Chief & Director  
Faith Mosongo - Programme Officer & Editor  
Erick Kaburu - ICT Officer, Design & Layout



**Larry Liza**  
Editor-in-Chief & Director



# The Role of Customs in Border Security and Societal Protection: Lessons from Kenya's Customs Administration

Over time, the world has become increasingly interconnected. The Role of Customs administrations in safeguarding national borders and protecting societies from harmful products cannot be overstated. Customs agencies are the first line of defence against illicit trade, smuggling, and the infiltration of dangerous goods that threaten public health, safety, and economic stability. Within the East Africa region, Kenya's Customs administration has emerged as a leader in implementing innovative strategies to secure borders and protect its citizens.

The Customs administration has adopted a proactive approach to border security, recognizing that the challenges of globalization, terrorism, and transnational crime require dynamic and adaptive solutions. Kenya Customs has deployed Officials at all gazetted points of entry, including airports, seaports, and land borders. This ensures that every consignment, whether it arrives by air, sea, or land, is thoroughly inspected. For instance, at the bustling port of Mombasa, which serves as a gateway for trade in East and Central Africa, Customs officials work tirelessly to intercept counterfeit goods, narcotics, and other illicit products. This has significantly reduced the influx of harmful products into the country.

Moreover, Kenya Customs has partnered with development partners such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), Trademark Africa and the World Bank among others, to equip border stations with state-of-the-art technology. These partnerships have enabled the installation of scanners, surveillance systems, and other tools that enhance the efficiency and accuracy of inspections. For example, the use of non-intrusive inspection technology at border points has allowed Customs officers to detect concealed contraband without the need for physical searches, thereby speeding up the clearance process while maintaining security.

Kenya Customs enhances border security through regional collaboration with EAC partners, intelligence sharing, and joint patrols. Inter-agency efforts combat smuggling and wildlife trafficking, using motorcycles for mobility in remote areas. Adapting to diverse border challenges, Kenya Customs explores advanced technologies like drones and body cameras to improve surveillance, efficiency, and transparency.



**Dr. Lilian Nyawanda**  
**Commissioner Customs & Border Control**  
**Kenya Revenue Authority**



## Tanzania Celebrates 60 Years of Customs Excellence: A Commitment to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity



As we celebrate International Customs Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 with the theme “Customs Delivering its Commitment to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity”; the Commissioner General of Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) Mr. Yusuf Mwenda and the Commissioner for Customs and Excise Mr. Juma Bakari highlighted the crucial role of Customs in facilitating cross-border trade in a seamless, secure and efficient manner.

Commissioner General Mr. Yusuf Mwenda called on government agencies, Customs officials and stakeholders to work together to promote trade, secure borders and promote prosperity. He underlined the commitment of the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to modernise Customs procedures as evidenced by ongoing technological initiatives. He spoke about the launch of the enhanced Tanzania Customs Integrated System (eTANCIS) which will ensure improved Customs operations and increased efficiency.

As we celebrate International Customs Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 with the theme “Customs Delivering its Commitment to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity”; the Commissioner General of Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) Mr. Yusuf Mwenda and the Commissioner for Customs and Excise Mr. Juma Bakari highlighted the crucial role of Customs in facilitating cross-border trade in a seamless, secure and efficient manner.

Commissioner General Mr. Yusuf Mwenda called on government agencies, Customs officials and stakeholders to work together to promote trade, secure borders and promote prosperity. He underlined the commitment of the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) to modernise Customs procedures as evidenced by ongoing technological initiatives. He spoke about the launch of the enhanced Tanzania Customs Integrated System (eTANCIS) which will ensure improved Customs operations and increased efficiency.



**Stefano N. Mathias**  
Tanzania Revenue Authority



TRA Management Team



## Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) is awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> position for the Inter-Country Competition on Green Customs 2023 organized by RTC Kenya



The Inter-Country Competition on Green Customs 2023 targeted participants of the Green Customs Course– Module 2 which was completed on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023. The participants to the competition were Customs officers from WCO ESA RTCs, namely RTC Kenya, RTC Mauritius, RTC South Africa and RTC Zimbabwe. The objective of the competition was to guide participants to develop innovative solutions to identified gaps and that have hindered Customs control of environmentally effective sensitive commodities (ESCs). The participating countries had to design a control List of ESCs under each of the MEA including pictures, charts, HS Code, UN Code, CAS no. or any other relevant information on it. The final product will be used as a reference tool by Customs Officers at the border. MRA received hard copies of certificates from RTC Kenya in March 2025 and same were handed over to members of the winning team by Mr. Ramburun, Director Customs, MRA on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

It is to be noted that the Kenya School of Revenue Administration (KESRA), which is also a WCO RTC, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme launched the Green Customs Curriculum in the financial year 2022 - 2023. The aim is to equip Customs officers to effectively implement and enforce trade related

MEAs and conventions for environment protection. Three modules of Green Customs training have already been conducted under this curriculum.



**Sudhir Dey Ancharaz**  
**Technical Officer Capacity Building Team**  
**Customs Department**  
**Mauritius Revenue Authority**

## Tech Aids 288 kg Cannabis Bust at Beitbridge Border

The Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) has made significant strides in Customs enforcement by upgrading its enforcement tools with the installation of modern drive-through cargo scanners at four major border posts. These advanced cargo scanners can process approximately 100 trucks per hour in drive through mode, greatly enhancing the movement of goods, and improving trade and travel management at the central hub of the South-North corridor for trade in the SADC region.

The implementation of these drive-through cargo scanners has notably reduced clearance times at major border posts, receiving positive feedback from transporters, truck drivers, clearing agents, and border agencies. This improvement not only facilitates smoother trade operations but also supports the broader economic activities within the region.

In addition to streamlining processes, these scanners have proven to be effective tools in the fight against smuggling. A recent case at the Beitbridge Border Post exemplifies this success: a consignment of 288 kg of cannabis was intercepted. The cannabis was cleverly concealed in jute bags, shrink-wrapped into ten packages, which were hidden in a cover load of maize loaded in a side tipper truck.

Upon scanning the truck, a vigilant image analyst prompted a physical examination, which led to the discovery of the contraband. The estimated street value of the seized cannabis is USD\$144,000.00, underscoring the importance of advanced enforcement technology in Customs operations.

This major seizure highlights the critical need for Customs Administrations to invest in technology to enhance enforcement activities. By adopting modern scanning solutions, agencies can improve their operational efficiency while effectively combating smuggling and other illegal activities, whilst facilitating the movement of legitimate cargo.

**Collins Ncube**  
Zimbabwe Revenue Authority





## Training of Trainers on Customs Valuation in South Sudan



The JICA Project for Enhancing Capacity of Customs to Operate by International Standards (PECOIS) embarked on a transformative journey to strengthen South Sudan Customs operations and enhance trade facilitation. A critical component of this journey is the implementation of effective Customs valuation practices that adhere to international standards.

To address this need, a comprehensive Training of Trainers (ToT) program was developed by the project with support from the Uganda Revenue Authority and a training focusing on equipping Customs officials with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement effective Customs valuation practices concerning Uganda's operations was held at the URA HQs in Kampala, Uganda. Ms. Brenda Wanene Asst. Commissioner Trade URA and Dr. Kon Daniel the Deputy Commissioner for South Sudan Institute of Revenue Administration (SSIRA) re-echoed their consolidated cooperation with the EAC.

Proper Customs valuation is crucial for the economic landscape of South Sudan, as it helps ensure fair trade practices, encourages compliance and generates much-needed revenue for the government. With a rapidly growing economy and expanding trade relations,

South Sudan's Customs authorities recognize the importance of adopting a transparent and standardized approach to valuation.

The Training of Trainers program aims to create a cadre of skilled trainers who will, in turn, impart knowledge to Customs officers across South Sudan. Throughout the training, trainees received hands-on experience through face-to-face Q and A sessions with URA Customs Valuation Unit officers, case studies and practical exercises that will enhance their understanding of complex valuation concepts.

By empowering Customs officers with the required competencies, South Sudan will be better positioned to manage its borders, facilitate trade, and protect its economy. This crucial step strengthens the Customs framework, enhancing trade transparency and efficiency while fostering economic growth and stability for the country.

## Tax Incentives Concept in Mozambique

The concept of tax benefits (Tax Incentives) appears in the Tax Benefits Code (TBC), as measures that imply the exemption or reduction of the amount payable of taxes in force, to favor activities of recognized public interest, as well as encouraging the economic development of the country.

The tax benefits provided for in the TBC are, namely, deductions from the tax base, tax deductions, accelerated amortization and reinstatement, tax credit for investment, exemptions; the reduction of tax rates and the deferral of payment of these.

According to the TBC, tax benefits are considered tax expenses and for their determination and control, an appropriate declaration of the benefits enjoyed in each tax year is required. Regarding the right and conditions for obtaining tax benefits, the TBC establishes that investments carried out within the scope of the Investment Law enjoy the tax benefits defined in the TBC, as long as they comply with the conditions established therein, except in the case provided for in the same legal instrument.

For all purposes, it must also be considered that they enjoy tax benefits provided for, in that Code, the investments carried out outside the scope of the Investment Law in commercial and industrial activities, developed in rural areas; in wholesale and retail trade in new infrastructures built for this purpose; and in the manufacturing industry.

Exemption from Customs duties is only granted when the goods to be imported are not produced in the national territory or, being produced, do not satisfy the specific characteristics of purpose and functionality required or inherent to the nature of the project and the respective activity to be developed and explored. This exemption does not cover food, beverages, tobacco, clothing, light vehicles and other items for personal and domestic use.



**Benjamin Massocha**  
**Mozambique Revenue Authority**





## TRA Launches New Website and Upgraded TANCIS to Improve Efficiency



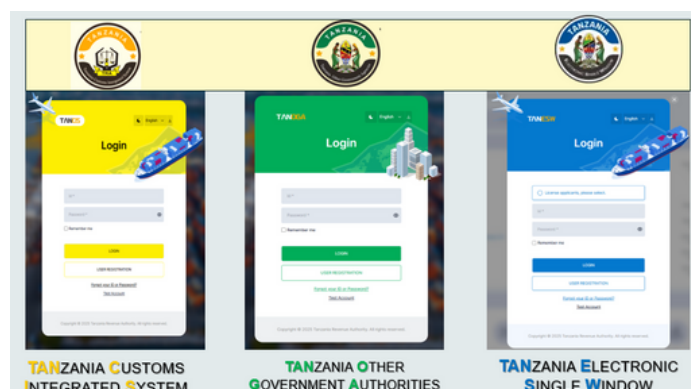
Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) marked a significant milestone towards modernizing revenue administration and enhancing its commitment to efficiency and prosperity. On 20th January 2025 we launch our new website and the enhanced Tanzania Customs Integrated System (eTANCIS), whereby TRA has embarked on a new trajectory to transform its interaction with both national and international business partners. This digital leap reflects TRA's dedication to fostering seamless communication, ensuring swift and accurate service delivery, and simplifying processes for taxpayers.

The new TRA website is designed to increase engagement with stakeholders, providing a user-friendly interface that facilitates self-registration, service requests, and direct interaction with even the Commissioner General. It integrates manifold government systems, making it a comprehensive portal for taxpayers to access vital information, licenses, permits, and certificates (LPCO) without the need to visit TRA offices physically. This new platform also supports dual languages (English and Swahili), ensuring accessibility for a broader audience and enhancing communication efficiency.

Simultaneously, TRA introduced the enhanced TANCIS, a fully automated system aimed at revolutionizing customs operations.

Commissioner for Customs and Excise, Mr. Juma Bakari, highlighted that the upgraded TANCIS integrates with 36 other government agency systems through Tanzania Other Government Agencies (TANOGA) portal. This integration streamlines cargo clearance at borders, ports, and airports, reducing congestion and expediting service delivery. The system also incorporates advanced technologies such as smart gates, QR codes, and artificial intelligence to facilitate pre-arrival declarations, auto-valuation, and predictable duty payments.

TRA's journey toward business process re-engineering is not just about technology but about building a culture of taxpayer compliance and trust. With a vision to become the leading customs administration in East and Central Africa, TRA remains committed to innovation, efficiency, and supporting Tanzania's socio-economic growth.



# The Malawi Revenue Authority's Journey Towards Aligning the Regional Code with its Internal Framework



## 1.0 Introduction

A strong ethical Customs system reduces corruption, boosts efficiency, enhances revenue, and builds trust.

In February 2024, the ESA Regional VWG on Integrity began developing a Regional Code of Conduct to promote and implement integrity standards.

## 2.0 Malawi's commitment to upholding integrity and its participation in the ESA ROCB integrity initiatives

MRA upholds integrity in Customs through strong policies, regional partnerships, and global standards. It enforces ethics with a Code of Conduct, Anti-Corruption Strategy, and policies on gifts, whistleblowing, and audits. Aligned with the WCO Integrity Guide and Revised Arusha Declaration, MRA promotes transparency, accountability, and zero tolerance for corruption.

## 3.0 Implementation process

MRA's alignment with the Regional Code of Conduct on Integrity follows a structured approach, starting with a policy review to identify gaps. Ongoing capacity building and training support adoption, while digital reporting systems enhance compliance. The integration reinforces transparency, accountability, and ethical Customs administration.

## 4.0 Progress made so far

The completed Gap Analysis identified areas for aligning integrity policies with the Regional Code,

providing a clear roadmap to enhance transparency and accountability. The transition is supported by ongoing training, stakeholder consultations, and an Implementation Matrix outlining actions, timelines, responsible departments, and monitoring mechanisms.

## 5.0 Challenges faced and how they are being overcome

Challenges faced include resource limitations, resistance to change, and policy coordination issues. To address these, MRA has utilized public-private partnerships, integrity training, digital reporting tools, and inter-agency collaboration to enhance compliance and ethical practices.

## 6.0 Impact and long-term benefits

Aligning with the Regional Code of Conduct on Integrity will enhance transparency, accountability, and professionalism in Malawi's Customs administration. This will reduce corruption, improve trade efficiency, attract FDI, and strengthen regional integration.

## 7.0 Conclusion

MRA's alignment with the Regional Code of Conduct enhances ethical Customs and trade facilitation. Committed to transparency and innovation, it urges regional Customs to embrace integrity for a trustworthy, efficient trade system.

**By Francis Tepeka**

**Chief Investigations Manager, Internal Affairs Division,  
Malawi Revenue Authority**



# La Douane Malagasy, Modernisation et Intelligence Artificielle



**Mr. Lainkana Zafivanona**

**Directeur Général des Douanes Malagasy**

Digitalisation, intelligence artificielle, efficacité croissante, chiffres probants sur les recettes et les infractions constatées à l'appui : tels ont été les sujets au centre de la Journée Internationale de la Douane 2025, le 26 janvier dernier, pour la Douane Malagasy. La célébration de cette journée a été l'occasion pour l'administration douanière de souligner les acquis inédits du plan stratégique 2020-2024 qui vient de prendre fin. Ce fut également l'occasion de présenter la prochaine étape, incarnée par un nouveau plan quinquennal.

Les résultats ont largement dépassé les attentes. Le programme de modernisation affiche un taux de réalisation de 80 %. Chacun des quatre axes principaux a franchi le seuil symbolique des 75 % recommandé par le FMI.

## **78 % des opérations effectuées en moins de 3 heures**

Les initiatives destinées à fluidifier les procédures douanières se sont révélées particulièrement efficaces, réduisant significativement les délais de dédouanement. Aujourd'hui, 78 % des opérations de dédouanement sont réalisées en moins de 3 heures, plaçant Madagascar parmi les pays les plus performants de la région.

## **Pionnière de l'intelligence artificielle**

Grâce à ce programme de modernisation, la Douane Malagasy est pionnière parmi les services publics du pays dans l'utilisation de l'intelligence artificielle au sein de ses opérations. Elle utilise également des systèmes

technologiques avancés comme le réseau RESNET, qui connecte tous les bureaux douaniers en temps réel, améliorant ainsi la coordination à l'échelle nationale. Le système Smart Scanning permet une inspection rapide des conteneurs, tandis que l'Enhanced Risk Assessment (ERA) évalue en temps réel les risques de fraude sur toutes les marchandises entrant ou sortant du territoire national. Grâce à l'utilisation de l'ERA, les recettes douanières de janvier 2025 ont augmenté de 68 % par rapport à celles de janvier 2024.

## **Plan stratégique 2025-2029 : modernité et efficacité accrues**

Afin de poursuivre la réforme engagée depuis 2019, un nouveau plan quinquennal est mis en œuvre dès cette année 2025. Ce dernier comporte 12 objectifs stratégiques, desquels découlent 16 nouveaux projets dont les résultats se complèteront pour converger vers la vision fixée : « La Douane, une administration innovante, redevable, partenaire du développement économique durable ».

La Journée Internationale de la Douane a toujours été l'occasion de mettre en lumière le rôle essentiel des douanes dans le développement économique du pays. En poursuivant ses efforts de modernisation et de performance grâce à ce nouveau plan stratégique, la Douane Malagasy est une parfaite illustration du thème de la JID : « Une douane qui concrétise ses engagements en matière d'efficacité, de sécurité et de prospérité ».



## Tanzanian Customs Commemorate International Customs Day with a Vow Combat Smuggling



Each year on the 26<sup>th</sup> January, the World Customs Organization commemorates International Customs Day. This special day is celebrated globally to honor Customs staff, educate the public, and mobilize decision makers. Additionally, the day aims to promote the WCO's standards and guidelines to ensure that these standards and guidelines are translated into real-world practices.

Tanzania's Customs department likewise joined other world Customs organization to celebrate the day. The theme for this year is "Customs Delivering on its Commitment to Efficiency, Security and Prosperity". The colorful event was graced by the presence of Commissioner General Mr. Yusuph Juma Mwenda. In his speech among others Commissioner General vowed to support Customs department in the fight against smuggling. "smuggling apart from denying government Revenue, threatens people's security" he noted. Consequently, one way of strengthening security for the Tanzanian population is to curb smuggling. He also used the opportunity to warn the perpetrators that, strong legal action will be taken against them if caught. The actions include forfeiture of the goods as provided by section 210 of the East African Community Customs Management Act, 2004 (Revised, 2019). It is thus in their best advantage to refrain from such illicit activities.

Tanzania Customs also has committed itself to improving operational efficiency through automation. For example, recently a web-based IT system called TANCIS (Tanzania Customs Integrated System) has been upgraded to fifth generation. The objective of this improvement is to provide smarter Customs operations. The enriched system is expected to enhance productivity in cargo clearance, information generation, and management of statistics which may lead Tanzania Customs to work in a data-driven environment.

It is expected that the measures taken to enhance efficiency and security will lead to an improved society wellbeing.



**Edmund Augustino**  
 Tanzania Revenue Authority



## Rwanda Revenue Authority and Security Forces Unite to Combat Smuggling and Drive National Development



On November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, authorities at the Rusumo One Stop Border Post successfully apprehended a trailer truck driver traveling from the United Republic of Tanzania. The joint operation, carried out by the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA), Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB), and Rwanda National Police, led to the discovery of a large smuggling operation. The truck, which was meant to deliver a legitimate shipment of charcoal, was found to be concealing smuggled goods, including car spare parts, cosmetics, and women's shoes.

The total value of the seized goods is estimated at 178,000 USD (over 240 million Rwandan Francs). These items were expected to generate up to 77 million Rwandan Francs in tax revenue.

Under the EAC Customs Management Act of 2004, individuals found guilty of smuggling may face penalties of up to five years in prison, a fine of 50% of the value of the smuggled goods, or both. In addition, prohibited items are destroyed, while abandoned goods may be auctioned.

The Government of Rwanda continues to work diligently to combat smuggling and other illegal activities, with a strong commitment to upholding the rule of law. Authorities urge citizens to remain vigilant and participate in efforts to avoid illegal practices that undermine national development.

The Government has issued a warning to those engaged in such illicit activities: anyone attempting to circumvent the law for personal gain will be caught and punished accordingly. Citizens are encouraged to report any suspicious activities, as their cooperation is essential in protecting the nation's resources and ensuring sustainable progress.

## Mkenda Nakawale Mitomoni, a Strategic Border Post and Upcoming Leading Border Post in Tanzania



On 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2011 through Legal Notice No EAC/46/2011 the Commissioner for Customs Hon; Walid Juma appointed Mkenda as a border station. This is the border between Tanzania and Mozambique situated at Songea District in Ruvuma Region.

Since 2019 Mkenda has been experiencing a rapid growth in exportation. It has been noticed that 30% of food crops grown in Songea rural areas have recently been exported to Mozambique through Mkenda border post. This has made it an essential and potential border post not only for Tanzania but also for Mozambique as well. The recognition of this border post is not limited to exportation of crops but also to the exportation of daily human consumptions and needs that are bought from Songea. The government initiatives toward facilitation of international trade between Mozambique and Tanzania have been highly appreciated such as the construction of 20 tones capacity bridge and frequent renovation of Mkenda border road.

In 2024, the importation of goods through Mkenda border grew exponentially which in turn led to high revenue collection. Recent reports reveal that there is frequent importation of vehicles from Mozambique

and South Africa through Mkenda. It's contribution to the revenue has been raised to more than 100% compared to the last 2 years. This made the border to become one of the fast-growing border stations in Tanzania.

It is expected that the ongoing discussion between the two government to construct a tarmac road from Songea to the border and from the border to Mozambique will facilitate trade, enhance good friendship and economic diplomacy between the two nations and fortunately result in economic growth. The future of Mkenda is so bright, that in anticipating ten years to come it will be among the leading borders in Tanzania.

**Ipyana Francis**  
**Tanzania Revenue Authority**



## Mwami Border Joins in the Ncwala Fever



Every year during February, the Ngoni people of eastern province come together to celebrate the colorful Ncwala traditional ceremony. As one of the biggest ceremonies's in Zambia, everyone including the locals and the corporate world from all over the country looks forward to witnessing this beautiful ceremony.

The Ncwala is commemorated to celebrate the first harvest by giving thanks to the ancestors. This year was no different from other years as Zambia Revenue Authority joined the masses in participating in the celebrations on 22nd February 2025 by exhibiting and engaging taxpayers in tax issues.

Prior to the climax of the event, where a black bull is slaughtered and the chief Mpezeni drinks the blood and shares it with the ancestors, the Ngoni dancers made their rounds in the communities of Chipata and Mwami border, showcasing their dancing and singing skills to the locals.

Mwami Customs officers did not waste the opportunity to join in song and dance when the Ngoni warriors went to the border to showcase their singing and dancing skills. This goes to show that the ZRA is committed to standing with the locals on any level, even if it means doing it through song and dance.

## ICD 2025 Celebration: A Reflection on Three Decades of Progress



This year's International Customs Day celebration occurred on 24<sup>th</sup> January in Pretoria as a hybrid event. The event was held under the World Customs Organization's (WCO) theme: Customs Delivering on its Commitment to Efficiency, Security, and Prosperity.

A festive atmosphere enveloped Linton House as Customs officials, SARS colleagues, leadership, and private sector partner representatives gathered to celebrate the occasion.

At the start of the event, the Director of Customs Border Operations, Ports of Entry, Customs and Excise Compliance, Beyers Theron, welcomed attendees to celebrate and reflect on 30 years of SARS Customs. Highlighting key milestones in the transformation journey and emphasizing the importance of efficiency, security, and prosperity as set out by the WCO, he acknowledged the contributions of Customs officers, process engineers, business analysts, developers, project managers, policy writers, and private sector counterparts in their role in modernizing Customs.

“...We’ve come a long way in transforming Customs and Excise operations ....The Customs and Excise operations environment of today is unrecognizable in comparison to what existed when SARS was established in 1997,” he said as he went on to highlight key developments.

He praised the investment made in Customs through the deployment of 115 junior Customs and Excise officers (Cadettes) to key ports of entry. He also commended the resilience of Customs officers in adapting to extreme circumstances, especially the challenges faced during the bustling 2024 festive season.

“Today, I wish to thank each and every one of you,” he said.

The keynote speaker for the day, SARS Commissioner and WCO Council Chairperson, Edward Kieswetter also expressed his gratitude to Customs professionals for their service and dedication. He praised the invisible and unappreciated aspects of Customs work officers endure while they safeguard the nation and ensure public safety.

While congratulating Customs Officers, the Commissioner used the opportunity to further highlight the importance of embracing digital AI technologies and modernizing Customs processes. He also mentioned the need for collaboration and solidarity among global partners to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

The ICD celebration also honored the fallen Customs and Excise heroes. A remembrance moment was held for deceased Customs Officers, while deserving officers received WCO certificates of merit for their contributions. Long-serving colleagues were recognized, with some dedicated to Customs for over 40 years.



## Domesticating EAC Legal Instruments in South Sudan



On February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025, The Project for Enhancing Capacity of Customs to Operate by International Standards (PECOIS) convened the third Monitoring meeting in Juba South Sudan as a commitment to the enduring goals of regional integration with a particular emphasis on advancing the South Sudan integration process, and to share the milestone achievements recorded in line with shared objectives for a more cohesive and economic vibrant East African Community.

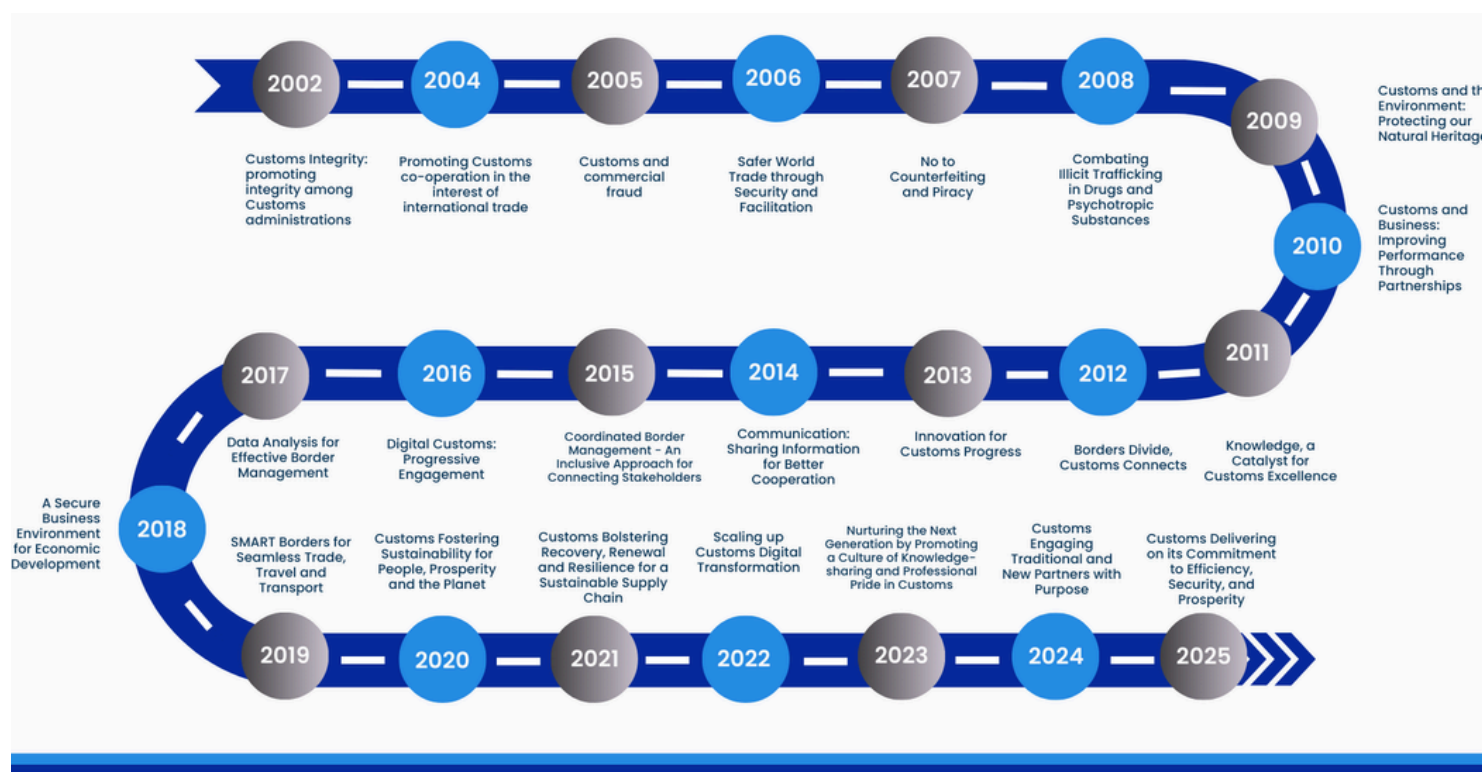
Recognizing the critical role that South Sudan plays in the integration process, stakeholders in the meeting underscored the necessity of integrating South Sudan fully into the Customs Union Agenda, to enable it to emerge as a robust participant in the broader regional market.

The Ministry of EAC Affairs in South Sudan reaffirmed that establishing of a streamlined Customs Union framework is both timely and strategic, thus facilitating greater economic cooperation among partner states.

The domestication process involves aligning South Sudan's national laws and regulations with regional agreements and protocols established under the EAC framework. As such, through collaborative efforts, URA shared its journey in the domestication of EAC legal instruments, best experiences and practices adopted in the realm of Customs.



# International Customs Day Themes: From Integrity to Innovation, Securing Global Trade and Prosperity



International Customs Day serves as a guiding star, prompting Customs administrations worldwide to reflect on progress, celebrate successes, and share best practices to enhance operational efficiency. As the adage suggests, "Wisdom does not come overnight," the day provides an opportunity for Customs officers to learn from the past and prepare for the future. This tradition commenced on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1953, when 17 countries convened in Brussels for the founding meeting of the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), which later renamed the World Customs Organization (WCO) in 1994. Since 1983, January 26<sup>th</sup> has been commemorated as International Customs Day, with each theme acting as a strategic compass for global Customs operations.

These themes are more than symbolic; they serve as a rallying call for Customs administrations to focus on essential pillars such as trade facilitation, integrity, and Customs-business cooperation. As the African proverb asserts, "When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion," the themes emphasize the strength that lies in collaboration.

Through partnerships, innovation, and integrity, Customs authorities remain vital guardians of global trade and security.

In 2025, as the WCO marks its 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary under the theme "*Customs Delivering on its Commitment to Efficiency, Security, and Prosperity*," the theme advocates transforming commitments into tangible outcomes that promote trade facilitation, ensure security and drive sustainable growth.

Reflecting on the thematic journey of the past 25 years reveals the evolution of Customs administrations in response to the demands of a changing world. Themes have ranged from promoting integrity and trade security to fostering digital transformation and creating SMART borders. As the proverb says, "A river is easier to cross at its source," the early adoption of these themes has enabled Customs to navigate complex challenges with agility, contributing to a safer and more prosperous world.

**Mr. Stefano Mathias**  
Tanzania Revenue Authority



## Rwanda Women Safe Space: Empowering Women and Advancing Gender Equality



Before the end of 2024, over 200 women from various workstations across the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) gathered at the Kigali Marriott Hotel for the RRA Women Safe Space event. This significant initiative, organized in partnership with UNDP Rwanda under the EQUANOMICS flagship, aimed to address critical issues such as sexual harassment, abuse of authority, discrimination, and other barriers to gender equality within RRA.

Participants engaged in insightful discussions and training sessions on gender concepts and anti-harassment strategies, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to combat these challenges effectively.

Speaking at the event, the RRA Deputy Commissioner General urged women to stand firm in defending their rights. She emphasized the importance of balancing

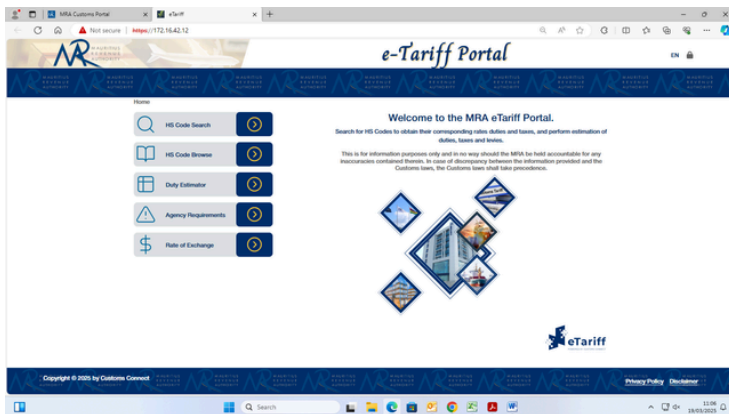
professional and family responsibilities while encouraging them to speak out against harassment. “Be smart, accomplish your tasks both at work and at home, and never hesitate to denounce harassment,” she advised.

Echoing this sentiment, the Head of the Transformational Governance Unit at UNDP Rwanda reaffirmed UNDP’s commitment to supporting RRA in fostering a gender-sensitive workplace free from sexual harassment. Her pledge to provide continuous support highlights the collaborative effort needed to create a safe and equitable working environment.

The RRA Women Safe Space event marks a pivotal step toward gender equality within the organization. By fostering open dialogue and education, RRA is actively shaping a more inclusive, respectful, and empowering workplace for all.

***WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
ARE HUMAN RIGHTS!***

# AEO: South Africa and SACU Join Forces to Strengthen Risk Management



The launching of new projects and initiatives has become the epitome of ICD celebrations at MRA. This year, the Junior Minister of Finance, Republic of Mauritius, Chief Guest of the occasion, launched the following new projects for the benefit of trade and the business community at large.

1. WCO E-Tariff Tool: aims to facilitate trade by providing economic operators with easy access to Customs Tariffs and guidance on importing or exporting goods. It is also equipped with Duty estimator which assists the business community to properly plan and budget before committing on any business transactions. This tool transforms the classification of goods into a more automated, predictable, streamlined and meaningful process.

2. E-Certificate of Origin: The digital issuance and verification of certificates reduces administrative burdens and risks of tampering while streamlining workflows. Businesses can benefit from quicker processing times thus reducing the overall cost of

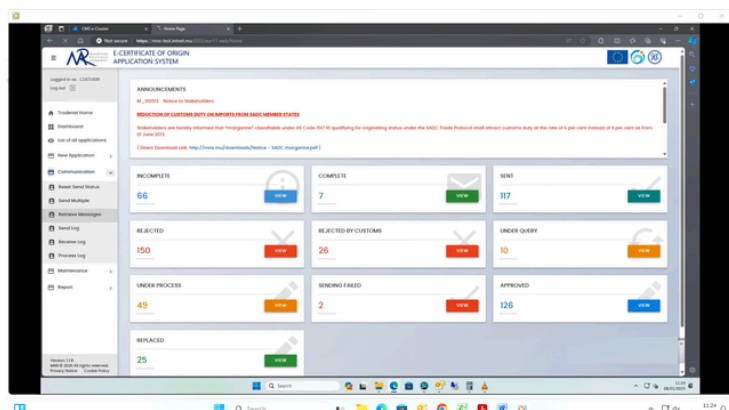
compliance. The integration of QR codes into the digital certificates serving as a robust mechanism for ensuring the authenticity of the certificates enabling importers and other stakeholders swiftly and accurately verify the origin of the goods.

3. E-Courier for Public: MRA's e-Courier System streamlines e-commerce clearance, ensuring transparency and efficiency. It allows courier operators to submit declarations, process payments, and track shipments. Now extended to the public, online shoppers can file declarations and pay duties via mobile apps, enabling quick, secure importation of personal e-commerce consignments.

4. Mobile Payment: Scan-to-pay simplifies Customs duty payments, replacing cash and bank transfers. It speeds up processing, enhances security, reduces fraud, and improves transparency, ensuring a seamless and efficient experience for stakeholders.



**Sudhir Dey Ancharaz**  
**Technical Officer Capacity Building Team**  
**Customs Department**  
**Mauritius Revenue Authority**





## Bridging Trust and Compliance in Tanzania through TRA's Taxpayer Appreciation Awards



**From left: Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, Minister for Finance, Board Chairman of TRA and last Commissioner General of TRA Mr. Yusuph J. Mwenda.**

The Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) continues to strengthen trust and cooperation between the government and the business community through the annual Taxpayer Appreciation Awards. This initiative plays a key role in promoting voluntary tax compliance by recognizing individuals and businesses that consistently meet their tax obligations. The awards align with international standards, such as the SAFE Framework of Standards under the Customs-to-Business Partnership and support TRA's broader goal of encouraging more businesses to become Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs), who benefit from simplified Customs procedures and improved trade facilitation.

Recipients of the awards are selected based on several key criteria, including accurate record-keeping, timely tax payments, proper use of Electronic Fiscal Devices (EFDs) and Electronic Tax Stamps (ETS), significant contributions to national revenue and active cooperation with TRA. Award categories range from the prestigious Commissioner General's Award to recognitions for high-net-worth individuals, small-scale traders and sector-specific performers.

According to Commissioner General Mr. Yusuph Mwenda, the awards not only celebrate excellence but also help build a sustainable culture of compliance and accountability. Publicly recognizing top taxpayer boosts morale, encourages ethical business practices and demonstrates the shared benefits of tax compliance. This, in turn, motivates other taxpayers to improve their compliance, fostering greater trust between TRA and the private sector. Ultimately, the Taxpayer Appreciation Awards contribute to increased revenue collection, support national development, and reinforce TRA's commitment to creating a transparent, inclusive and efficient tax system for all.

**Irene E. Mwanga**  
**Tanzania Revenue Authority**

## Mauritius Revenue Authority Unveils Results of its 5<sup>th</sup> Integrity Perception Survey

Since its inception, the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) has conducted Integrity Perception Surveys (IPS) every three to four years through independent consulting firms in line with the World Customs Organization's Customs Integrity Perception Survey model. The survey is structured around six key factors of the Revised Arusha Declaration and covers four segments: staff, business, opinion leaders and general public. This process provides MRA with valuable information to improve its integrity strategies. The recent 5th IPS results were awaited in the post-COVID context, as MRA now administers financial schemes for the government. Key findings are discussed in the ensuing article.

- MRA needs to strengthen its communication strategy around its integrity efforts, including whistle-blowing policy.

MRA's takeaway from this survey is its employees value integrity in the workplace and express greater pride in working for it, while external stakeholders commend its commitment to fair and transparent dealings. Despite the improvement in OII and with a deeper comprehension of stakeholder perceptions, MRA is determined to excel in integrity practices for a lasting impact.

- The Organisation Integrity Index (OII) increased to 76.8 in 2024, from 75.7 in 2020 and 74.0 in 2016 - conveying resilience and MRA's continued strong image across its stakeholders.



**Miss Ayesha Devi Sobrun**  
**Technical Officer, Internal Affairs Division**  
**Mauritius Revenue Authority**

- Circa four fifth of the 1,795 respondents perceive an improvement in MRA's integrity level mainly in the Automation and Reforms dimension with increased online services like e-filing.
- The business segment noted better Audit, Investigation, and Assessment services.
- Staff OII is quite strong, suggesting greater staff clarity about MRA's initiatives and enhanced experiential knowledge.
- Fewer malpractice incidents were reported in 2024, with increased preference for anonymous reporting.
- MRA is implementing multiple impactful integrity initiatives as attested by its direct stakeholders (staff and business). However, awareness among other segments is lower.





## Bending Not Breaking – Turning Winds of Adversity into Growth



In the pursuit of Customs excellence, adversity is like the wind that bends a tree but does not break it. 'Adversity' is a misfortune, a difficulty or unpleasant situation. In Africa, as saying goes, "the smooth seas does not make skillful sailors"; as Customs officers, we must understand that failure is not the end, but the beginning of wisdom, and serves as stones to build the bridge to success.

Just as hunters learn from missed shots, successful Customs officers learn from setbacks and view every setback as a lesson in perseverance. Each challenge reflects areas of growth and helps us rise above self-doubt and fear and to promote resilience and improvement.

Humility, like the roots of the baobab, runs deep and keeps one grounded in the storms of life. Customs officers must be **HUMBLE** enough to reflect on their actions, to seek advice, and to accept the wisdom of others. This openness plants the seeds of innovation, allowing us to face operational obstacles and policy challenges with clear conscience and a willingness to adapt.

"The river never stops flowing for a stone," is an African proverb. Similarly, we should face up to the challenges with resilience, focusing not on why obstacles are encountered but on how to overcome them. Accepting that the road to excellence is rough by nature makes every step forward a victory.

Therefore, true growth, like a tree that bearing fruit, comes from stepping out of the shade of comfort zone, learning from every easy mistake, and keeping hope alive. By doing so, we can turn adversity into opportunity and cultivates the spirit of resilience and excellence that drives personal and collective success. The greatest loss in life is one of **HOPE**, for without it motivation and learning skills will wither, leaving little opportunity for growth or recovery.



**Mr. Stefano Mathias**  
**Tanzania Revenue Authority**

## Tanzania's Tax Future Looks Bright with the Electronic Fiscal Device (The Role of EFD Receipt Under Export Regime)

Tanzania's Revenue Authority (TRA) is experiencing a period of remarkable transformation, marked by unprecedented success in tax collection and the implementation of innovative systems.

From achieving groundbreaking tax collection records in three decades to introducing seamless tax-gathering setups like Electronic Fiscal Devices (EFDs) and pioneering new methods of tax collection at border points, the TRA's future appears exceptionally promising.

Different Tax reforms have been a focal point of economic discussions in recent years, with governments and policymakers striving to create a tax system that is both fair and efficient. Fiscal policy, which encompasses taxation and government spending, plays a crucial role in economic stability, affecting everything from inflation and employment to public services.

Recently, the TRA Commissioner General Juma Mwenda announced that the system, named Tanzania Custom Integrated System (TANCIS), is linked to about 36 governmental institutions in situations, including ports, airports and border customs stations whereby each institution will ensure that all goods whether exported or imported from/to Tanzania must be accompanied with the sales or buying receipt known as EFD receipt.

The EFD receipt is a crucial document in the Tax regime to the effect that, it portrays the actual price of goods to be exported which later on used by TRA to assess domestic tax under the Domestic Revenue Department. This seamless tax regime brings about more transparency in tax compliance hence increases revenues. EFD receipt help to identify the filers and non-filers of tax returns as well as exporters not registered for Value Added Tax.

It is my own view advise to all Exporters Companies and to the public general to be proud of our country by issuing EFD receipt whenever we sale and the vice versa.



### Mashine za EFD

**Mfanyabishara unaponunua mashine ya EFD kwa mara ya kwanza, unapaswa kuleta risiti ya manunuzi ya mashine hiyo kwenye ofisi yetu ndani ya mwaka wa mapato ili kurejeshewa gharama yako ya manunuzi kwa mfumo wa Kodi.**

**KWA MAELEZO ZAIDI WASILIANA NASI**  
**0800-780078/0800-750075/0800-110016**  
 Tuma ujumbe WhatsApp 0744-233 333  
 Barua pepe: huduma@tra.go.tz  
 Tovuti: www.tra.go.tz




**Elikana Teonest**  
**Tanzania Revenue Authority**



## Ensuring Compliance: A Customs Officer's Smuggling Discovery



Customs officers experience several challenges in enforcing tax laws because of the complex nature of the job. The smuggling of goods across borders is one of the problems we aim to address through patrols and goods inspection. The Kenya Revenue Authority has clear guidelines on importing goods, which it expects all transporters to comply with and Customs officers to enforce. Despite knowledge of these guidelines, several transporters and importers try to avoid tax payments.

One of my most memorable achievements as a Customs officer was identifying smuggled goods by a transporter. The transporter needed to be cleared from our checkpoint, and he provided the required paperwork based on the guidelines. As I checked the paperwork, I noted the goods he had declared on it. The preliminary search of the truck showed that everything was normal. However, I noticed a change in mood by the driver when I insisted that a thorough search of the goods should be done before clearance. The driver was hesitant to allow a further search, which made me suspicious and motivated to determine the cause of his anxiety.

During the initial search, we randomly selected boxes on top for inspection. The second search went deeper into the truck, and the bottom boxes were selected. The search revealed that the driver was trying to smuggle cigarettes into the country in repackaged boxes. The revelation was important to me because it was my first major discovery as a Customs officer, and the amount of smuggled goods was significant. The event helped to highlight the importance of Customs enforcement in regulating the entry of goods into the country.



**Marcus Gurvey Ojango**  
**Kenya Revenue Authority**

## Enhancing Revenue Collection: Tanzania's Strategies for Customs Efficiency



Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) is a government agency established by Act of Parliament No. 11 of 1995 and started its operation on 1st July 1996. While carrying out its statutory functions, the organization is regulated by Laws and is responsible for administering impartially various taxes of the Central Government.

The average monthly revenue trend for the last Semiannual performance review has raised from 2.319 TZs Trillion in the last semiannual of the financial year 2023/2024 to 2.755 TZs Trillion in the same period of financial year 2024/2025.

Among many others, strategies that have helped the Custom department to contribute toward achieving organization objectives are as follows;

- Improvement in the quality of service provision through good Customer care has resulted in voluntary taxpayer compliance.
- Modernization and innovation. The automation of Customs procedures through enhanced Tanzania Customs integrated system (TANCIS) has been a milestone strategy as it embraces transparency and hence reduces fraud in revenue collection.

- Constantly educating and engaging with stakeholders including importers, exporters, Clearing and Forwarding agents has helped insight into immediate mitigation measures for their operational challenges.
- Information exchange with neighboring border stations has resulted in trade compliance as it strengthens joint controls over border smuggling and all other illicit trade.
- Quality examination of imported cargo to ensure its conformity with valuation, classification, rules of origin and Customs regimes codes assists in ascertaining the correct amount of tax.
- Strategic Patrols, Surveillance and use of intelligence prevent smuggling and all other means of tax avoidance.
- Close monitoring and supervision of Bonded warehouses and Export processing zones to ensure compliance



## Communication, a Silent Backbone of Successful Organizations

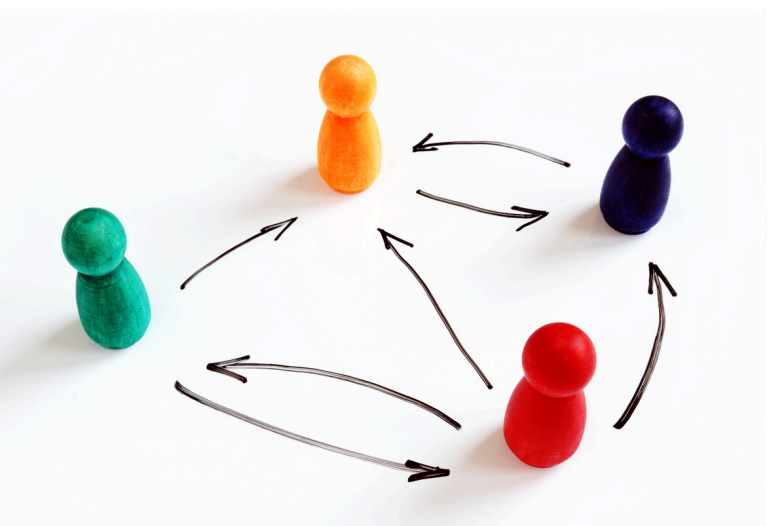
The importance of proper organizational communication cannot be overemphasized; structured business communication is the backbone of any organization, as it establishes a crucial pathway to connect different departments and key stakeholders. Good communication is often forgotten by organizations while drafting their respective strategies, organizations usually concentrate on the finance and technical aspects, as these are deemed more critical. This has however, often proven to be a fatal mistake for organizations, taking into consideration that communication breakdown would easily result in misinformation, panic, poor publicity, and even loss of trust, especially in cases where the business solely depends on stakeholder and public goodwill.

It is important to note that good communication ensures that every team member understands what is expected of them hence enhancing cooperation, and working together towards achieving a common goal. Structured communication fosters an environment where ideas are shared freely, expectations are well outlined and understood, and relationships thrive. Effective communication further helps in the alignment of goals, enhancing collaboration, boosting productivity, and promoting a cohesive and healthy organizational culture, among other advantages.

The East and Southern Africa Region recognizes communication as one of its key pillars, and as we work towards finalizing the new Strategy and Implementation Plan 2025-28, the Regional Office for Capacity Building continues to put in place various measures to ensure that all our Members and stakeholders are well informed and have the necessary tools and expertise towards ensuring the successful implementation of the strategy. While growth, expansion, and sustainable development are at the heart of the region's mission, the region continuously strives to enhance our capabilities and reach more professionals nationally, regionally, and globally. Through good communication, strategic partnerships, and innovative solutions, the region aims to break barriers and ensure that all Customs and Tax professionals everywhere can access the tools they need for success.



**Faith Mosongo,**  
Programme Officer.



## Will AI and Robotics Takeover our Jobs?

From finance to medicine, to manufacturing to Customs operations. AI and robotics are taking over all the sectors worldwide. As a finance officer at the ROCB, I have experienced firsthand how technology can reshape customs operations. Through Virtual Reality Training (VRT), we train customs officers on automation and the role of technology in modernizing their work. Yet, in every training session, a common question arises: Is AI coming for our jobs? A fear that is shared across multiple professions.

AI is advancing at an unstoppable pace, almost like a wildfire. AI-powered tools can now handle tasks that once required human expertise, like auditing financial statements, diagnosing diseases and even conducting customs inspections. The question shouldn't be whether it will replace jobs but how we adapt to stay relevant.

History has shown that every major technological advancement sparks fear of job losses, yet it also creates new opportunities. The Industrial Revolution replaced manual labor, but those who adapted thrived. Today, AI and robotics are the game changers, automating almost everything. Although the fear for job loss is real, there are also many opportunities. The key is to Adapt, upskill, and integrate AI.

Acquiring the relevant skills is crucial. We can take advantage of platforms like Coursera, Udemy and LinkedIn among others that readily offers valuable courses at affordable costs. While this may equip us with the necessary technical skills this alone is not enough. AI may be great at processing data, but it won't negotiate a contract, inspire a team, or resolve a conflict. These are the skills that will always set us apart.

The real challenge isn't AI replacing us, it's whether we're ready to grow with it. Those who adapt will succeed, while those who resist will be left behind.



**Clemence Wawuda,**  
Finance Officer.





## Customs to Boost Efficiency, Safety, and Economic Growth

The World Customs Organization (WCO) has chosen 2025 to emphasize "Customs Delivering on its Commitment to Efficiency, Security, and Prosperity." This theme underscores the key role Customs officers play to simplify trade, protect borders, and boost financial prosperity.

This year, the goal is trade facilitation, heightening security, and boosting lasting economic growth. WCO Members are encouraged to align with this vision by showcasing their initiatives, highlighting progress, and sharing measurable achievements that contribute to these goals.

The world wants Efficiency, Security and Prosperity, which will happen when Customs improves. The global aim is Efficiency, Security and Prosperity which will be accomplished through commitment to improve Customs. Efficiency, in particular will be achieved through modernization of Customs procedures, the promotion of data-driven operations and analytical tools, the use of inspection and monitoring devices, and cooperation and engagement with public and private entities.

In the security field, Customs has an impact on many areas. These include strengthening supply chain safety, restricting the movement of illicit goods, fighting against money laundering, and boosting emergency preparedness.

The end goal, which is prosperity, relies on our ability to collect fair revenue, foster innovation, encourage new ideas for sustainable economic growth, and create inclusive policies that simplify trade for all.

WCO ESA ROCB continues to value your support and commitment in observing the new theme and also in making International Customs Day a success. This day provides an opportunity to appreciate Customs officers, create awareness of what happens in Customs, and convince decision-makers to give them the resources they need to tackle tough problems.



**Erick Kaburu,**  
ICT Officer.



## The Unspoken Grief

Reading Notes on Grief by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie made me reflect on the many ways we experience grief in our daily lives, the kind that isn't always acknowledged. While losing a loved one is the most recognized form of grief, we also mourn in other quieter ways. We grieve the job opportunity we never got, wondering what could have been. We grieve the old versions of ourselves, struggling to accept how much we've changed. We grieve friendships and relationships we thought would last forever, only to watch them fade away.

Yet grief doesn't stop there. We also grieve the loss of stability when life takes an unexpected turn, financial struggles, job loss or a major transition that forces us to start over. We grieve the loss of time, feeling regret over missed experiences or years that feel wasted.

Grief is personal. It is not neat or linear. It does not follow timelines or schedules. Yet, despite its unpredictability, many of us move through familiar stages according to Elisabeth Kübler-Ross model. It often begins with denial, a defense mechanism that cushions us from the shock. Then comes anger, where frustration builds at ourselves, others or the circumstances beyond our control. Bargaining follows, filled with "what ifs" "if only" moments, hoping we could have changed the outcome. As the reality sets in, depression surfaces. This stage can feel heavy, messy and overwhelming. Eventually, we arrive at acceptance the final stage. Acceptance is not necessarily a happy or uplifting stage, it does not mean we have moved on. It does however mean that we have accepted loss and have understood what it means in our life. It is in the acceptance stage that we begin to heal and find beauty in spaces where loss once existed.



**Linda Siele,**  
Administrator & Executive Assistant.



## The Future of AI: Delivering Results as a Service (RaaS)

Artificial intelligence's purpose has shifted from processing data to producing direct results. One of the models beginning to trend in this transformation is Results as a Service, RaaS, an AI-powered solution that gives a precise answer rather than peddling itself off as a tool or a platform. This entails a revolutionary approach and process efficiency, reducing costs and improving decision-making. In contrast to SaaS, software as a service requires analysis and interpretation by the user. RaaS differs from SaaS by ensuring that the involved party in business will take action instead of analyzing, as the decision has already been made for them.

RaaS is gaining traction in the following areas:

**Efficiency:** Organizations require fast data-driven decisions without breaking the bank with extensive investment in their analytics team.

**Data Boom:** Ability to reach back, extract, and get intelligence in seconds.

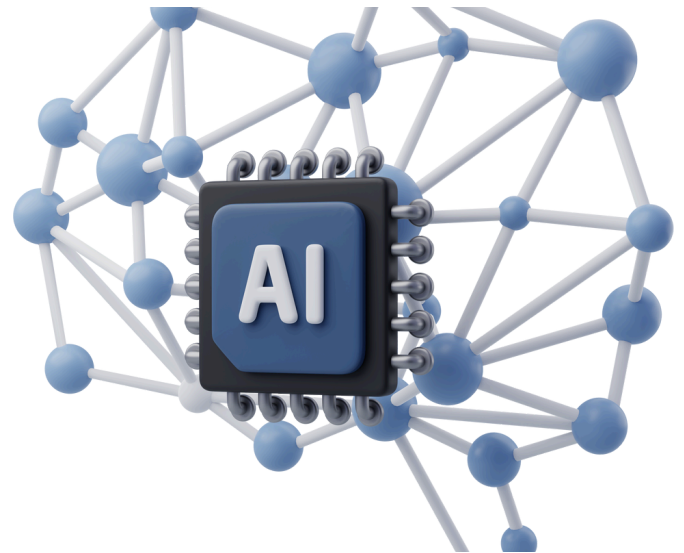
**Cloud Computing:** It boosts the speed, scalability, and accessibility to many users.

**Machine Learning:** Advanced technology that detects the current trends, understands its words, and predicts greatness.

RaaS has made its mark in several areas in real life: healthcare, where AI-powered diagnostics enable physicians to analyze images and diagnose diseases quickly; in finance, assessing risks and detecting fraud which in turn improves security; in marketing, analyses each customer's actions and predicts the correct demand; and in manufacturing, AI predictions help identify equipment failures early and ensures quality control.

You may ask, are there any challenges? What's next? Well, RaaS faces the need for quality data input, AI ethical considerations, and data privacy. Gradual advancements in AI and regulation improvements are expected to be the savior of AI-enabled decision-making that will assist organizations and businesses to be more efficient in a data-driven world.

The future of Artificial Intelligence is delivering results that drive success.



**Jamilah Mutah,**  
Administrative Assistant.



# ROCB STAFF



**Larry Liza**  
Director



**Faith Mosongo**  
Programme Officer



**Clemence Wawuda**  
Finance Officer



**Linda Siele**  
Administrator  
& Executive Assistant



**Erick Kaburu**  
ICT Officer



**Jamilah Mutah**  
Administrative Assistant