

# ESA NEWSLETTER

APRIL - JUNE 2021

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## NEW ESA LEADERSHIP



East and Southern Africa  
Region



## EDITORIAL

The Corona virus pandemic has made research and names such as AstraZeneca, BioNTech, Moderna and Pfizer well known to us similarly to toothpaste brands. The inoculations journey continues.... even for our Members though the uptake remains low, more so for availability of the vaccines. As a people, we remain hopeful, knowing too that myths abound in different quarters among our general populations.

And yet, our journey in Customs continues. Thus, herein another feather to our hat of newsletters.

This year's second quarter newsletter includes: New Leadership in the ESA region and a report of the ESA Sotho Photo Contest. Other titles are on Mozambican customs getting COVID - 19 protection and sanitization equipment, EAC tariff experts gathering to prepare for HS 2022 version, Zimbabwe Customs walk in post COVID-19 recovery and JICA and URA experts conducting ROO training for South Sudan Customs Officers. Herein too is quality service and fight against corruption; the emerging brands of Ethiopian Customs Commission, and reports by the WCO ESA Regional Private Sector Group on the AfCFTA, South Africa Single Government AEO Programme, HS 2022 amendments to SACU Common External Tariff published for consultation and The Project for Capacity Development of South Sudan Customs for Introduction of Harmonized System Code Phase 2 (P.I.H.S.2).



LARRY LIZA  
DIRECTOR

We continue to cherish and archive your stories in form of articles; for we have unceasingly showcased to the world the various notable capacity building activities taking place in the Region and within our national administrations.

We appreciate all Members, WCO, Regional Training Centres, the African Union Commission, RECs, JICA, WCO ESA Project II, RPSC, GTS and all other development partners for continually supporting the growth of the WCO ESA ROCB Newsletter through regular contribution of articles, we look forward to receiving more articles from you in the new year.

Enjoy the read.

### Acknowledgements

Ethiopia Revenues and Customs Authority  
Madagascar Revenue Authority  
South Africa Revenue Service  
South Sudan National Revenue Authority  
Zimbabwe Revenue Authority  
Japan International Cooperation Agency  
World Customs Organization

World Customs Organization, East and Southern Africa,  
Regional Private Sector Group

### Editorial

Larry Liza – Editor in Chief

Faith Mosongo – Programme Officer and Editor

Eric Kaburu – Issue Editor, Design and Layout and ICT Officer



## New ESA Leadership

The WCO East and Southern Africa region elected its new leadership, most who are to lead the region for the next two years. The new line-up was announced during the 27th Governing Council of the region. The Governing Council, chaired by the outgoing Chairperson, Mr. Philiso Valashia (Botswana) was attended by Directors General/Commissioners from the region, World Customs Organization, Secretary General, Kunio Mikuriya, ROCB Director Larry Liza, among other delegates. The new Policy Commissioner members double as a Management Committee of the region.

### Policy Commission

#### Vice Chair



ZIMBABWE

#### Deputy Vice Chair



MAURITIUS

#### Additional member to the policy commission



SOUTH AFRICA

### Representatives to WCO Committees

#### WCO Finance Committee Representative



RWANDA

#### Audit Committee Representative



COMOROS & SEYCHELLES

### Finance & Governance Committee

#### Regional Finance & Governance Committee



MADAGASCAR, ZAMBIA, ETHIOPIA & BURUNDI

The following regional meetings, held virtually, took place prior to the Governing Council.

1. The 32nd Regional Steering Group (RSG) meeting, held on 29th March 2021, and chaired by Alice Kolagano (Botswana). The meeting was attended by ESA members, RILO, RTC heads, WCO, WCO ESA Project and ROCB.

2. The 20th Finance and Governance Committee (FGC) held on the 20th April 2021. It was attended by the Members of the Finance and Governance Committee, comprising Malawi (Chair), Rwanda (Deputy Chair), Madagascar and Zambia, as well as the ROCB.

3. The WCO ESA RTC Heads, ROCB and the WCO, held on 26th April 2021. The meeting was chaired by RTC Mauritius and attended by the Heads of RTC Mauritius, RTC Kenya, RTC South Africa, RTC Zimbabwe as well as the ROCB, RILO and the WCO.



## Horny Business Trophy



Angola won the 2021 ESA Sotho Photo Contest of the WCO ESA region, voted by the members and announced during the Governing Council. Angola's photo showcased the impounding of wildlife products – feline teeth and rhino horns. Mauritius's COVID Army came a close second, and revealed precautionary measures by officers rummaging a ship. Malawi, the Warm Heart of Africa, came third with Gone Bananas, impounded energy drinks concealed in a banana consignment.

Oh highlight in this year's edition was that some members Customs stories carried highlighted the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. All in all, the photos submitted for the contest were as follows:

Angola's **Horny Business**, Burundi's **Customed Pilot**, Ethiopia's **Fishy Business**, Kenya's **Cannabis Cookie**, Madagascar's **Sniffy Officer**, Malawi's **Gone Bananas**, Mauritius's **COVID Hunters**, Rwanda's **Sanitizing Agenda**, South Africa's **Faithful friend**, Uganda's **X-ray Vision** and Zambia's **State Guard**.

These go a long way in sharing best practises and experiences that prop up our efforts in promoting trade facilitation, revenue mobilisation, compliance and enforcement, integrity and human capital development.



## Mozambican Customs Gets COVID-19 Protection and Sanitization Equipment.



Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA) offered Covid-19 sanitization and protection equipment to Mozambique Revenue Authority and other international trade stakeholders during a workshop that discussed Covid-19 guidelines and joint border management, trade and gender.

The workshop took place in Central Tete province this fortnight with the participation of officials from different government institutions such as Provincial Directorates of Finance, Trade & Industry, Health, Agriculture & Fisheries as well as other branches of Law Enforcement Agencies: Police, Criminal Investigation Unit, Immigration, border protection, including the Confederation of Trade Association and Freight Forwarding Chamber

The proceedings of the workshop were chaired by Inocêncio Mota, Deputy Director General of Customs, accompanied by Carlos Comissal, Province Director of Finances and Elias Comar, AT delegate in Tete province as well as Rosário Marapusse,

Trade Mark East Africa representative. The other participants shared their views and inputs through the digital platforms.

The same topic was discussed in a similar workshop last May at the Ressano Garcia Border Post with participants from Customs of Mozambique and two dignitaries: Nuala OBrien Northen, Ireland Ambassador to Mozambique and Sarah Love, Development Deputy Director at the British High Commission in Mozambique. It was also attended by the main funders of Trade Mark East Africa.

by: Rosário Mendonça



## EAC Tariff Experts Gather to Prepare HS 2022 Version Implementation

In pursuit of its efforts to implement the 2022 version of the Harmonized System in a timely manner, the East African Community (EAC) held a regional meeting of tariff experts from 15 to 19 March 2021 in Moshi, Tanzania. It was jointly organized by the EAC Secretariat and the WCO, within the framework of the EU-WCO Programme for the Harmonized System in Africa (HS-Africa Programme), funded by the European Union.

The objective of the meeting was to transpose the EAC Common External Tariff (CET) to the 2022 version of the HS. Participants reiterated the importance of a well-coordinated approach to the implementation of HS amendments for EAC Partner States, to fully respect their commitments of Contracting Parties to the HS Convention and of signatories of the EAC Treaty.

During the meeting, the HS 2022 amendments were considered and incorporated in the draft EAC CET 2022. In addition, a comprehensive review of the CET was carried out to ensure that the draft includes all amendments to the EAC CET that had been published in EAC legal gazettes starting from July 2017, and that all typographical errors are rectified.

The meeting was an important step in the process of the preparation of the 2022 version of the EAC CET. The meeting concluded by recommending to EAC policy organs to adopt the EAC CET 2022, with the entry into force on 1 January 2022.





## Customs Paramount to Post COVID-19 Recovery

The advent of COVID-19 has resulted in unprecedented social and economic challenges like poverty and unemployment. The OECD Economic Outlook (2020) indicates an almost 13% decline in global GDP in the first half of 2020. This has brought renewed pressure on countries to work towards economic recovery post-pandemic, renewal of trade processes and supply chain transparency and predictability to protect citizens from poverty, disease and hunger. In such a global pandemic, international trade is pivotal to keep economies afloat and support livelihoods. Thus international co-operation is needed to keep trade flowing hence the pivotal role played by Customs administrations in ensuring minimal disruption of cross border trade.

The WCO, as the overseer of global customs processes joined hands with other global organizations like the WTO, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and UNCTAD to ensure trade flows are kept open during the COVID-19 phase and to support a strong recovery of the global economy. These organizations agreed to coordinate efforts and direct more action on customs and trade facilitation for an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organizations agreed that "Effective trade facilitation - based on international standards - will play a central role in supporting businesses, including Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, towards enabling business resumption and renewed economic growth in the months and years to come".



By Sendra Chihaka, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority

In the same vein, WCO also called upon Customs administrations to use the concept of Coordinated Border Management to "cooperate and coordinate with relevant government agencies and supply chain stakeholders". It also called for strengthening of cooperation with the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association and other organizations and supply chain stakeholders so that adequate and timely information and guidance is availed to WCO Members.



## JICA And URA Experts Conduct ROO Training for South Sudan Customs Officers.



Thirty officers from National Revenue Authority South Sudan Customs division trained as HS instructors in phase one (2016-2019) have been introduced to Rules of Origin (ROO). The training which commenced on 22nd March to 2nd April 2021 at the Juba Grand Hotel was facilitated online due to the unprecedented Covid19 times by JICA expert team in collaboration with an expert from Uganda Revenue Authority Customs department.

ROO are rules to attribute a country of origin to a product to determine its economic nationality. This stems from the fact that implementation of trade policy measures such as tariffs, quotas, trade remedies, in various cases, depends on the country of origin of the product at hand.

EAC ROO is a set of criteria used to distinguish between goods that are produced within the EAC Customs territory and are eligible to Community preferential tariff treatment and those produced outside of the EAC customs territory that attracts import duties specified in the Common External Tariff.

However, ROO has become a challenging topic in international trade not only because they constitute a highly technical area of rule-making, but also because their designation and application have not been harmonized across the world.

Project for Capacity Development of South Sudan Customs for Introduction of Harmonized System Code (P.I.H.S.2) continues to engage and collaborate with EAC counterparts and keeps involving EAC-related authorities in South Sudan to promote proper understanding of the ROO concept and its functions.





## P.I.H.S.2 Launches New Customs Mobile Application

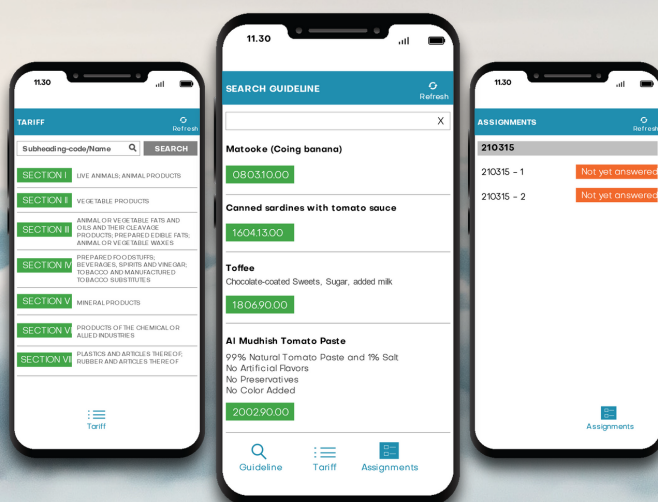


The Project for Capacity Development of South Sudan Customs for Introduction of Harmonized System Code Phase 2 (P.I.H.S.2) has launched a new Customs mobile application (Smart South Sudan HS App / Smart SS HS App). The project has granted free access to the application for all customs officers and clearing agents.

Mr. Mitsunori Numaguchi the project chief advisor states that Smart SS HS App is a powerful and intuitive collaborative mobile application, it is conformable with Android phones and provides users with the opportunity to search HS code classification guidelines, find the latest South Sudan Common External Tariff, and study HS monthly assignments supported by JICA experts for free. The new application helps officers develop their capacity to correctly classify commodities and contribute to the improvement of Customs efficiency, declaration and modernization in South Sudan Customs.

Smart SS HS App user interface is very friendly and easy to navigate through. It enables Customs officers and clearing agents to quickly search HS code guidelines, refer to the Tariff and answer monthly assignments with feedback effortlessly provided.

The application is a very effective solution for reducing emails, engaging trainees while keeping track of them and will significantly improve the efficiency and productivity of Customs as it streamlines and simplifies the collaboration of users and gives them full responsibility over HS Code.





## Quality Service and Fight Against Corruption; The Emerging Brands of Ethiopian Customs Commission.

The Ethiopian Customs Commission/ECC/ has won two national awards on the 2020/2021 fiscal Year.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Federal Ethics and Anti- Corruption Commission (FEAC), FEAC had prepared a national recognition program for government agencies that had a better success story and institutional preparedness on the fight against corruption. On the event, ECC was one of the few government agencies that had awarded a certificate of excellence and a trophy for its remarkable achievement and being a role model for other government institutions towards fighting against corruption and creating an enabling environment, strategic plan and organizational structure to promote integrity.

The recognition program was held under the FEAC year 2021 motto "focus for enhancing ethics of the generation!" At the event, H.E Sahlework Zewde, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on her speech emphasized that keeping the very limited public resource from embezzlement and striving for equitable and accountable service delivery are a milestone for promoting good governance and sustainable development of a country. She congratulates government institutions those selected as a model in fighting against corruption and award certificates and trophies.

On the other hand, ECC was one of service providing government institutions that honored the year 2020 Ethiopian quality award for quality service delivery. The national quality award was organized by the Ethiopian Quality Award Enterprise in collaboration with the Ethiopian civil service commission every year and ECC became the year 2020 quality award winner. On the occasion, ECC Commissioner H.E Debele Kabeta remarked such recognitions will have special significance to the commission to achieve its vision in a shorter time by uplifting motivation among staff and beneficiaries.



Photo; H.E Debele Kabeta (ECC Commissioner) with a trophy awarded by the Federal Ethics and anti- corruption commission





## 10th WCO-ESA-RPSG Webinar

The 10th WCO-ESA-RPSG Webinar – "AfCFTA: Implementation and progress to date" – was held on 10 June and aimed to encourage a more comprehensive discussion around the AfCFTA. The webinar was chaired by Dr. Juanita Maree and joined by seven leading customs panelists from the respective RECs in Africa:

1. Demitta Gyang - AfCFTA Secretariat
2. Dhunraj Kassee - AUC
3. Balness Sumani - COMESA
4. Stephen Analo - EAC
5. Maggie Tladi - SACU
6. Alcides Monteiro – SADC
7. Larry Liza – WCO ESA ROCB

The webinar marked the first time that all the respective RECs were present on one call, which shows the interest in the AfCFTA to work towards a more integrated Africa in terms of trade. The biggest trade agreement in history, covering a combined GDP of US\$2.5 and could increase intra-African trade by up to 52.3%, showing the immense potential.

However, after a relatively slow start thus far, trading under the AfCFTA must be accelerated – again highlighted throughout the discussions. Indeed, acceleration will aid the

long-term objective of the AfCFTA, which is "boosting intra-African trade, integration, and development by creating an integrated market for goods, services, promoting the cross-border movement of capital and persons".

From the perspective of the AUC, several critical reflections were directed to the private sector in the region:

- Is the private sector sufficiently conversant with the AfCFTA?
- How much is the private sector involved in the implementation of the AfCFTA?
- Is the private sector adequately represented in the Institutional Mechanism responsible for implementing the AfCFTA at the Continental and National levels?
- Is the private sector adequately capacitated in terms of tools, expertise, knowledge, and experience?
- Is the private sector ready to take a long drive?

Collectively, the WCO ESA RPSG is eager to see how trading under the AfCFTA unfolds.

More information:  
<https://www.wcoesarpsg.org/category/webinars/>





## A Custom Eyed View

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives in ways that we never imagined hence the phrase “The new normal”. One thing, however, has become very clear; the continued importance of worldwide trade and of initiatives supporting the graceful flow of products across borders, especially essential goods to areas where they are most needed. Most countries have taken steps to adapt to the new norm, and this has been reflected on the ground. The challenge going forward is the way to minimize that impact and support a robust recovery once things improve. Customs have a key role to play here.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the importance of both the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) and therefore the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), including major concepts supported by these instruments: an all-digital clearance process, and efficient risk management. Implementing modern risk-based Customs processes that balance the need for compliance with trade facilitation will help to ensure that essential goods reach their destination on time, compliance is maintained, and managing the clearance process remotely and digitally enables the health of Customs officers and importers/exporters to be protected.

If a transparent balance is to be struck between managing compliance and supporting trade facilitation, both the general public and private sector must play their part. Of key importance is that they got to have well developed continuity plans that enable Customs and other border agencies to work outside of their normal environment, and to be able to rapidly adjust to changed circumstances. Below are some key recommendations that are already highlighted by the WCO, and from a personal sector perspective, are essential if we are to return through this crisis as painlessly as possible.

### **Expedite critical goods:**

Expedited clearance of products directly impacting or helping to alleviate issues or situations associated with the coronavirus outbreak. Clear guidance has been given by the WCO. Additionally, the WCO website also guides the United Nations model agreement on expedited clearance of essential medical and emergency goods.

### **Risk management systems and pre-arrival processing:**

Encourage adoption of risk management systems and pre-arrival procedures, to expedite the discharge of low-risk shipments upon arrival, and to attenuate personal contact, which can protect both Customs officers and importers/exporters. Notably, we have seen this in action in our local borders (Beitbridge, Plumtree, Chirundu et al) via Preclearance procedures with regards to goods including motor vehicles

Whilst some measures are going to be implemented only on a short lived basis during the pandemic, many should become a part of everyday operations, and therefore the use of risk management should be a tool in every Customs administration's armory. Both risk management systems and risk profiling are key enablers for trade facilitation and assuring compliance. It also helps administrations to optimize the utilization of finite Customs resources.

### **Minimize physical inspections:**

To more effectively employ limited inspectional resources, Customs authorities should reduce non-essential or non-time-sensitive physical inspections and administrative verifications, and focus instead on critical formalities and high-risk shipments.

### **Electronic filing:**

Digitalization has never been more important than now. To take care of social distancing, the electronic transmission of Customs declarations and associated documents is important. Care should be taken that the move towards digitalization doesn't replicate old paper-based manual processes. A move towards digitalization should cause full paperless transactions without the necessity for printed copies of electronic declarations, manual rather than digital signatures, date stamps, and face to face approvals being applied rather than via email or electronic approval via the Customs clearance system.

Leaving manual processes in situ not only results in significant delays and costs but within the current COVID-19 crisis places both Customs officers and importers/exporters in danger thanks to the need for unnecessary physical contact.

By Tatenda Ruzengwe, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority



## SA Single Government AEO Programme

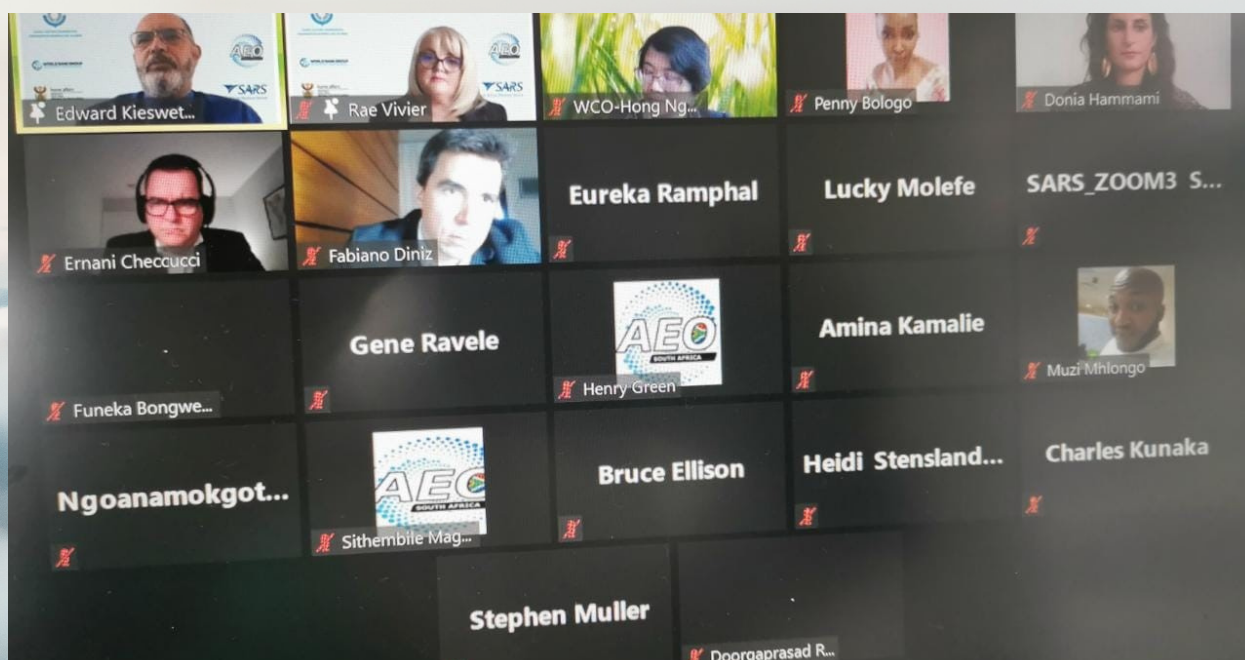
The South African Revenue Service (SARS), in partnership with the World Bank, the Border Management Authority and the World Customs Organisation hosted its first ever international Single Government Authorised Economic Operator (SGAEO) Workshop on the 2nd and 3rd of March, as well as on the 10th to 12th of March 2021. Participation in the workshop included delegates from all South African Government Agencies involved in managing trade at our borders, members of the Customs Administrations in the South African Customs Union (SACU), the SACU Secretariat and various international experts from the World Bank, WCO and private consultancy companies.

In his keynote address, the SARS Commissioner, Edward Kieswetter, stated that border management requires a fine balance of trade facilitation, collection of the correct taxes, and improving compliance and that the SGAEO becomes an important programme to enable us to work with and through stakeholders to successfully do this. He also stated that “a chain is as strong as its weakest link” and the importance of the supply chain network, the interconnectivity thereof and the requirement to collaborate in legitimate goods facilitation.

We cannot place narrow interest above collective interest. He also stated that “the Single Government Authorised Economic Operator accepts that there is more than one

agency charged with the overall management of the integrity of our ports of entry and our borders –the Border Management Agency, led by the acting Commissioner, Mr. Gene Ravele, is charged with laying the foundation and taking that which is envisaged on paper and creating it in practice”. The Border Management Agency is a very important partner in this as are other government agencies. He ended by reminding attendees that a Single Government AEO calls for collaboration between government agencies at the border and that all agencies need to work in concert and place the national interest as a single vision.

The 2021 theme of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) is appropriately termed “Customs bolstering recovery, resilience and renewal for sustainable global supply chain.” The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic prompted members of the WCO together with the World Bank to find innovative ways to ensure recovery, resilience and renewal in the year 2021 and beyond. In this regard, the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programme has been advocated by the WCO as an effective tool to promote reconstruction and economic recovery.

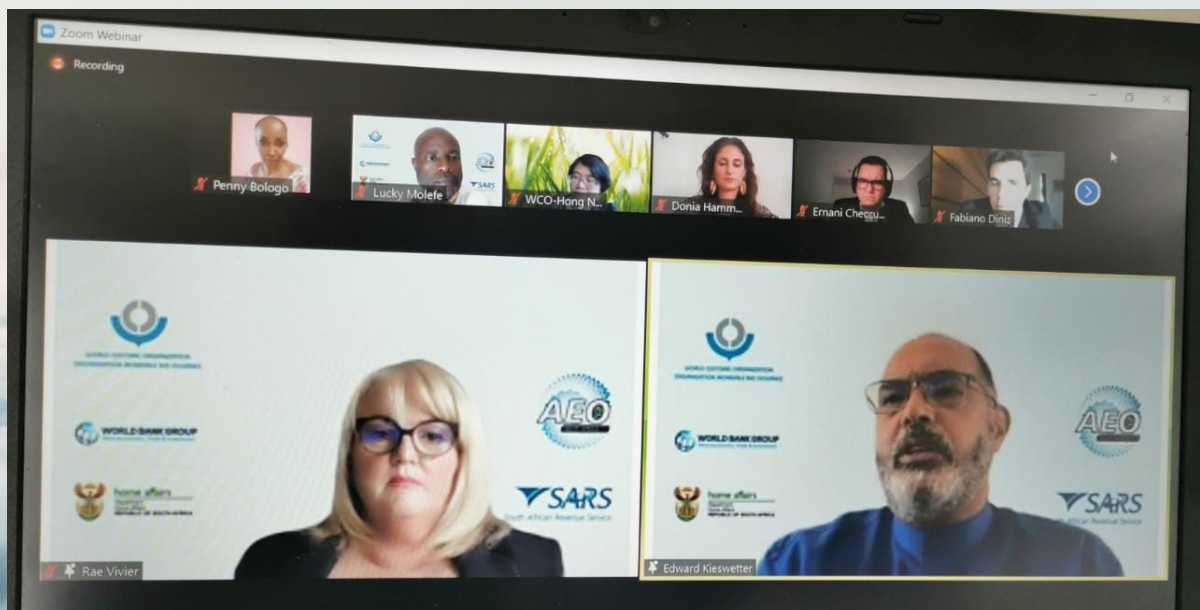




## ...SA Single Government AEO Programme

The international panellists comprised of Ms. Hong Nguyen, a Technical Officer in the Compliance and Facilitation Directorate in the WCO, Mr. Shane Sela, a Senior Trade Facilitation Specialist from the World Bank, Mr. Fabiano Diniz, a Head of the AEO National Centre in the Federal of Brazil, Steven Muller WCO, Ernani Chacoochi, Mr. Bruce Ellison, a Consultant Trade Facilitation in World Bank, Ms. Ngoanamokgotho Maggie Tladi: Deputy Director Trade Facilitation Southern African Customs Union, as well as Ms. Rae Vivier, Head of Accreditation and Licensing. These experts provided insightful information and shared an overview of the experience of other countries as well as approaches in managing risk and compliance within a modern coordinated border management context. Mr. Fabiano Diniz provided an interesting presentation of the Brazilian SGAE0 programme mainly focusing on its implementation journey, challenges and opportunities to be considered for future pilots. The last two days saw all South African Government Agencies providing presentations on possible synergies to facilitate compliant trade as well as focusing on an integrated risk management approach.

At the end of each day, delegates were asked to participate in a quick survey as a barometer to test the impact of the workshop as well as the possible future implementation of a Single Government AEO Programme in South Africa. The survey results showed that the majority of the government partners do see value in adopting a whole government AEO Programme at the borders including the SACU Region, implementing an integrated risk management concept, leveraging on technological capabilities and a possibility of piloting an SGAE0 Programme in short to medium term. The delegates expressed optimism at the thought of collaboration and facilitation of legitimate trade, which will translate to the growth of the South African economy for the benefit of all compliant traders.





# HS 2022 Amendments to SACU Common External Tariff Published for Consultation

In an effort to strengthen the inclusive and transparent character of the process of implementation of the Harmonized System (HS), the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) has recently made available the HS 2022 amendments to its Common External Tariff for public consultation. All SACU Member States - Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa - have simultaneously placed draft tariff amendments on their official websites, inviting comments and feedback from the public.

Public consultation on draft tariff amendments is part of the SACU strategy to improve the process of migration of the Union's Common External Tariff to new versions of the HS. The strategy is intended at ensuring that the process is handled in a meaningful and transparent fashion, creating a level playing field for all stakeholders wishing to contribute to this work. The SACU has been successfully implementing the strategy in cooperation with the EU-WCO Programme for Harmonized System in Africa (HS-Africa Programme), funded by the European Union.

The publication of draft tariff amendments is one of the initial phases in the process of implementation of the HS 2022 amendments. Comments and feedback received from the public will be discussed at a regional workshop to be held later in the year, which will be followed by further consultations before the amended tariff is finalised.

The improved mechanism of involving the public in the tariff amendment process provides better opportunities for traders and other interested parties to comment on the proposed tariff amendments. It also increases the level of awareness of the public about upcoming changes in advance of their entry into force, in line with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement requirements.

For more details, please contact [capacity.building@wcoomd.org](mailto:capacity.building@wcoomd.org).





## COVID-19: Bringing Efficiency in Customs Processes

COVID-19 has disrupted global trade to unimaginable levels. More than ever before have countries realised the importance of implementing trade facilitation reforms. The reforms have come in handy in the easing of the movement of critical goods such as medical supplies and key agricultural products across borders. While facilitating trade, Customs has also taken measures to manage the spread of the pandemic and minimize its socio-economic impact.

To contain the spread of COVID-19 in ESA, a raft of measures have been introduced by trade agencies in general and customs administrations in particular. These measures include the introduction of shift-work, regular disinfection of workspaces, observance of physical distance in office set-ups, suspension of face-to-face interviews and physical examinations in processes that normally require such and introduction of rebates for the clearance of COVID-19 essentials. These measures have ensured that trade flows “seamlessly” to sustain the regional economies.

COVID-19 presents a good opportunity for countries to implement the provisions of the World Trade Organisation Trade Facilitation Agreement such as border agency cooperation, the introduction of single windows, the establishment of inquiry points and information portals. SADC, for instance, through the SADC Guidelines on Harmonisation and Facilitation of Cross Border Transport Operations across the Region (COVID-19 Pandemic Revision No 1 of 23 June 2020) encouraged its members to simplify and automate trade to reduce delays at ports of entry whilst facilitating legitimate trade and abiding by all regulatory requirements. Automation of customs processes and procedures reduces human interface thereby reducing the chances of the spread of COVID-19, thus the need to embrace modernization in trade facilitation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made customs shift its traditional gate-keeping (hedgehog) approach to a more risk-management (fox) approach which is a step into the 21st century efficient customs direction!



By Sendra Chihaka, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority



## P.I.H.S.2 Holds Media Conference



The Project for Capacity Development of South Sudan Customs for Introduction of Harmonized System Code Phase 2 (P.I.H.S.2) held an online media conference on 17th May 2021 where the project experts announced the interim report and future plan of the project to the republic of South Sudan, Uganda and Japan.

Mr. Mitsunori Numaguchi, the project chief advisor, stated that "This is a three years project that started in April 2020 to March 2023". He also indicated that to achieve the project purpose (enhancing the capacity of customs tariff collection system toward adaptation of international standards in main border points including Juba and Nimule), four main outputs have been achieved in the first phase.

- 1) HS unit is continuously functioning and its capacity is enhanced
- 2) Customs officers in main border points in charge of customs clearance can impose appropriate customs tariff using HS codes
- 3) Clearing agents in main border points are enhanced to file appropriate customs declaration using HS code
- 4) The capacity of customs officers related to rules of origin is enhanced.

The customs officers from NRA stated their experiences of this project and expectations for the future. Ms. Joyce

William, Head of HS Unit of Customs HQs, acknowledged that all the project activities and significant impacts of this project. She said that teaching HS code knowledge to customs officers and clearing agents in Nimule (a border of South Sudan and Uganda) had also improved their skills.

Dr. Patrick Mugoya, Commissioner General of National Revenue Authority (NRA) South Sudan, acknowledged that this project was essential in the context of the ongoing Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms focusing on improving non-oil revenue mobilization, and in the context of trade facilitation and regional integration. The project has helped South Sudan to start implementing the East Africa Community Customs Union Protocol.

Mr. Abel Kagumire, Commissioner Customs of Uganda Revenue Authority, stated that URA has been one of the key stakeholders of this project in the spirit of regionalization and EAC integration as discussed at the 48th East Africa Revenue Authorities Commissioner generals meeting. He also strained that we should strongly support each other.



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