

Workshop on the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in the European Union

Clermont-Ferrand, 23rd – 25th November 2016

Conclusions

Open session, 23rd November 2016

This session offered the opportunity to identify challenges, share experiences and express innovative ideas on trade facilitation, international development and the modernisation of customs by:

- recalling the context and presenting the state of play and the future of the implementation of the TFA in the European Union and its Member States;
- benefitting from the perspectives of the World Customs Organisation, of FERDI-Université d'Auvergne and four partner countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal), and of companies actively involved in international trade and customs activities (Michelin, Valrhona, Limagrain);
- elaborating on progress regarding AEO programmes and Single Window within the context of TFA implementation.

Sessions reserved for Customs Administrations in the European Union, 24th – 25th November 2016

Participants called for the European Union (EU), jointly with its Member States, to promote and continue playing a leading role in Trade Facilitation by:

- ensuring forward looking implementation;
- acting both as an example to follow and an engine for further progress;
- continuing to provide technical assistance and capacity building to help others meet their obligations.

They called for the EU and its Members States to communicate widely and share their experience based on their high degree of implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

They also considered that more work is necessary in some areas to go further beyond the fundamental requirements of the WTO TFA in order to ensure the EU's continued competitive edge.

- In this spirit and on the basis of the results of the analysis at this workshop, participants identified topics for an outline of next steps to enhance WTO TFA implementation, where relevant jointly with other agencies. Such enhanced implementation shall include exchange of experiences and best practices to be further developed, in particular regarding:

Article 1 (Publication and Availability of Information)

Article 2 (Opportunity to comment, Information before entry into force, and Consultations)

Article 4 (Procedures for Appeal or Review)

Article 8 (Border Agency Cooperation)

Article 10 (Formalities, in particular regarding Single Window)

- The customs administrations of the EU deliver performances beyond the WTO TFA obligations and this needs to be communicated more effectively. Appropriate indicators should be formulated to promote and demonstrate this, regarding, for example:

Articles 7 and 10 (Release and Clearance of goods, Formalities and documentation requirements, including simplified procedures)

Articles 6.1 and 6.2 (Fees and Charges)