

WCO Integrity Newsletter

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WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

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Dear Readers,

As you know, the Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) held its 12th Session from 28 February to 1 March 2013 at World Customs Organization (WCO) headquarters.

The Agenda included an update on the latest integrity activities with a special focus on the revised version of the Integrity Development Guide (IDG) which was recommended for adoption by the Policy Commission and the Council in June 2013. The WCO integrity development strategy was also presented to the ISC. A special item was dedicated to the African Union and to the implementation of the Revised Arusha Declaration by the region's Customs administrations. This fell within the scope of a joint WCO-African Union project to assess the use of WCO integrity tools. A panel discussion entitled "Talking openly about corruption builds trust" highlighted the fact that communication about corruption is a step towards identifying a solution.

With regard to the new version of the IDG, it is worth stressing that WCO Members were invited to submit examples of best practices to the WCO Secretariat to illustrate the different measures taken by administrations in terms of application of the elements of the Revised Arusha Declaration. Members having already written articles for the *Integrity Newsletter* were invited to consider how some of these could be made into case studies to serve as practical examples. To that end, the WCO Secretariat will contact some of those countries. The case studies will not consist of merely listing measures taken by an administration to fight corruption, but instead will focus on one or two of those measures and follow their progress in order to assess their impact on the level of integrity within the administration.

As pointed out by all those who took the floor at the ISC, including the Chairperson, the publication of this Newsletter depends entirely on your contributions, so please feel free to submit any articles.

You are reminded that the articles published in the *Integrity Newsletter* are provided by WCO Members and therefore reflect their personal views only.

The WCO Capacity Building Directorate



MESSAGE FROM THE ISC CHAIR

Dear ISC Colleagues,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all for your active and enthusiastic participation in the 12th Session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC) that I had the distinct honour to chair on February 28-March 1, 2013.

As I remarked at that session, and as others noted as well, the WCO ISC has become a robust and dynamic Member-driven working body that proactively addresses issues related to combating corruption, safeguarding integrity and ensuring good governance. We have also seen that Members are keen to engage bilaterally and in larger settings in order to advance integrity-related objectives.

Along these lines, the WCO Secretariat encourages your continued intercessional engagement by way of the tools and platforms that the WCO Secretariat provides, which includes the WCO Integrity Newsletter. In addition, your ideas for Agenda items for the next session are also welcomed.

Moreover, I wanted to again express my appreciation for your support of the updated WCO Integrity Development Guide, because it truly is proving its worth as a living instrument to enhance the integrity situation for Members and stakeholders at the ground level.

I am proud to serve as your Chairperson and I look forward to seeing you all next year at the 13th Session of the WCO Integrity Sub-Committee that will take place from 3-4 April 2014 in Brussels.

David Dolan (USCBP)

WCO Integrity Sub-Committee Chairperson



BRAZIL



Introduction

The Customs Administration of Brazil operates through the Secretariat of the Federal Revenue of Brazil (RFB) which has a workforce of approximately 30,000 staff.

With close to 600 units, the Secretariat of the RFB is present throughout the country. As it is important for such a large and widespread institution to pay special attention to integrity among its staff, certain measures have been taken to fight corruption and promote integrity and these are presented below.

Code of Conduct

The first version of the Code of Conduct for Public Officials is now available to all civil servants for review and to obtain suggestions for improvement. The Code of Conduct is a tool designed to help guide the activities of civil servants within the RFB according to ethical and moral principles. The Code is expected to enter into force in the first half of 2013. The draft Code was developed by the Ethics Committee for the Public Section of RFB (CEPS-RFB) and draws inspiration from several Codes in application, such as the Code of Professional Ethics for Civil Servants of the Federal Executive Branch, the Code of Conduct of the High Federal Administration, the WCO Model Code of Conduct, and the Model Code of Conduct for the Inter-American Centre of Tax Administrations (CIAT).

The main objective of the CEPS-RFB is to promote and disseminate notions of ethical conduct expected of all public officials working within or with the RFB.

Internal Affairs Department

The RFB's Internal Affairs Department is responsible for preventing and investigating misconduct and taking disciplinary action. It collects information via complaints, the media, and other government institutions. The Head of Internal Affairs is appointed by the Minister of Finance, on the recommendation of the Secretary of the RFB, for a three-year term and may be reappointed. The civil servants working within Internal Affairs are recruited internally through a specific selection process.

Conflict of interests

Law No. 11890 (24/12/2008) stipulates that those holding a position as a Career Auditor within the RFB are not permitted to undertake other paid activities (public or private) that could potentially create a conflict of interests, except for teaching.

Recruitment procedures

Career Auditors at the RFB

A Career Auditor is recruited through a competition. The applicant must possess at least an undergraduate qualification or equivalent legal qualification. Promotion is granted based on merit and good performance.



Participation in programmes and training courses organized by officially recognized schools is also a requirement for promotion.

Managerial and executive positions

Since 2009, managerial positions at the RFB have been filled through open competitions. The Internal Administrative Act establishes the rules of the selection process for positions such as “Chief of Local Units” and “Chief of Customs Units”. A Database was created as a new way of selecting civil servants, based on merit, who are capable of and interested in occupying managerial positions. It also contains information on interviews carried out to assess the managerial skills required by applicants.

Sanctions

The law lays down serious penalties for civil servants involved in inappropriate behaviour. These penalties include: warning, suspension, termination, forfeiture of pension, dismissal from a position or the public service, or payment of a civil penalty.

Confidentiality of information

Tax secrecy in Brazil falls under the National Tax Code which prohibits the disclosure by the State or its civil servants, including RFB officers, of information on the economic status of clients, of taxpayers, or of a third party, or on the nature and conditions of their business or activities.

To preserve the availability, integrity, confidentiality and authenticity of information, the RFB has established a specific structure responsible for managing information security, ensuring that controls are implemented to provide essential protection to their information assets, using risk management. The RFB Security Policy states that civil servants only have access to resources, information and services within a computerized environment. Taxpayers can access the information themselves by means of a digital certificate or access code.

Conclusion

The Secretariat of the RFB plays a role in preventing and combating tax and duty evasion, smuggling, piracy, commercial fraud, trafficking in drugs and endangered animals, and other unlawful acts relating to international trade. It has evolved in terms of strengthening a culture of integrity, as demonstrated above.

All leadership positions are occupied by the organization’s staff members. This ensures stability within the RFB, even in times of major political change.

Considering the above, the RFB considers itself to be an efficient, modern and professional Tax and Customs Administration which guarantees the integrity, impartiality and continuity of its activities according to the strict observance of integrity, promoting respect for all citizens who request its services.

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EGYPT



Efforts by the Egyptian Customs Administration to enhance integrity

The Egyptian Customs Administration (ECA) wishes to share its efforts to enhance integrity with the assistance of the Customs Reform Central Directorate (CRCD) and other WCO Members.

The CRCD has been working at different levels simultaneously.

Sharing of international practices to combat corruption

The WCO conducted an Integrity Development Workshop in Egypt September 2012. Subsequently, through one of the USAID project managers, the ECA managed to open a communication channel with the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) to assist the ECA in implementing a Strategic Plan to combat corruption.

Fostering rules on integrity and enhancing transparency

This has been achieved through decrees pertaining to transparency and in accordance with Article 47 of the Egyptian Constitution on the accessibility of information and with Article 204 referring to the establishment of a framework for the National Commission for Combating Corruption.

The CRCD has developed a *Code of Conduct for Work Ethics in the ECA* which is based on the WCO Model Code of Conduct, in order to complement the Customs Code of Ethics. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and reference for all employees in situations they might encounter as well as to establish ethical criteria and basic rules and principles of Customs work ethics. Finally, it sheds some light on the role of Customs officials in enhancing the service and the credibility of the service provided.

The CRCD has also developed a draft *Employees' Handbook* which is meant to serve as a guide for ECA employees, explaining the administrative structure of the ECA, career paths, existing training programmes and all the issues of relevance to new recruits.

The CRCD has designed a number of posters for stakeholders containing diagrams explaining Customs regimes and procedures.

Disseminating the culture of integrity and transparency

In January 2013, the CRCD held three workshops covering all Customs regions. They were attended by a total of 230 employees of different administrative levels and were intended to present the proposed *Code of Conduct* and *Employees Handbook* and to obtain feedback from our colleagues before publishing and circulating them within the Customs Administration. The workshops also involved practical training sessions on situations employees could experience while on duty. In addition, the workshops discussed how transparency issues are dealt with in different foreign legislations in comparison to the Egyptian legislation. During the workshops, a questionnaire on concepts of integrity was handed out to participants. It was followed by group discussions on reporting of corruption.



The purpose of those discussions was to: (1) identify the mechanisms that could be developed to establish a reporting system; (2) define the proposed guarantees for protecting whistleblowers; (3) establish mechanisms for informing employees about the penalties imposed following the infringements.

The outcomes of the workshop were as follows:

1. A department responsible for handling complaints and providing consultation to employees has been included in the organizational structure.
2. A web page for enhancing integrity amongst employees has been created on the ECA's official website.
3. The Code of Conduct has been approved by the Commissioner and will be published shortly.

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MONTENEGRO



Code of Ethics for Customs Officers and employees

The Montenegro Customs Service has made integrity a pillar of its reputation, and business ethics a guiding principle in the accomplishment of its duties. Therefore, and to comply with international standards, the Customs Service drafted a new Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees which was adopted in July 2012 and implemented in January 2013.

The Code of Ethics contains a clear ethical framework for the conduct of Customs officers. It comprises provisions on issues of legality, impartiality, professional standards and accountability, conflicts of interest, gift acceptance, etc. The Code also contains a series of practical measures which must be undertaken in order to ensure that the actions of Customs officers are in harmony with the regulations or provisions of the Code. By way of example, the Code defines the procedures related to potential and real conflicts of interest, gift acceptance, and declaration of assets. The Customs Service has also set up a system of internal sanctions in the event of conduct unbecoming of Customs officers. Such sanctions are established in accordance with the law.

Implementation of the Code of Ethics

Since maintaining a high level of integrity in the Customs Service involves the efficient implementation of the Code of Ethics, it was decided to establish a Board of Ethics. This independent body provides an opinion on the application of the Code of Ethics and monitors the application of ethical provisions and standards in practice.

The Board of Ethics consists of a Chairperson and two representatives chosen from Customs officers, one representative of the Customs Union and a representative from a non-governmental organization (NGO) involved in the protection of human rights and freedoms.



Trustees for Ethics

In order to improve the implementation of the Code, prevent occurrences of corruption and take action in the event of unethical and unprofessional conduct, the Customs Service has nominated four trustees for ethics who are officers in charge of monitoring the application of the Code of Ethics within Customs houses.

Customs officers can turn to the trustees for ethics for guidance on all issues and dilemmas related to integrity, their rights and the conduct to adopt. The latter can offer clarification on specific problems, provide assistance in interpreting the provisions of the Code of Ethics and express a need for education on integrity and the fight against corruption.

The Customs Service has initiated a campaign entitled "Consistent implementation of provisions of the Code of Ethics and decisively combating corruption" aimed at familiarizing front-line Customs Officers with the preventive aspects of the Code, as well as sanctions envisaged in case of breaches of the provisions of the Code.

Informing the Public

Promoting ethical values and enhancing the importance and reputation of the Customs Service relies on involving the public. To that end, the Customs Service organized a Conference entitled "Promotion of the Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees" in October 2012. The Conference brought together representatives of State institutions responsible for prevention and repression in the fight against corruption as well as in the NGO sector. Experts from Montenegro and neighbouring countries (Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia) shared their experience and best practices in this area. The dedication of the Customs Service in applying integrity standards was recognized as an example of good practice in enhancing integrity.

Customs is paying special attention to co-operation with the private sector while focusing on transparency. This has been highlighted through participation in a round table entitled "Impact of the Code of Ethics on the reduction of corruption in private sector" held in November 2012. Aside from promoting the rules and standards defined in the Code, the Customs Service has also emphasized the important role of the private sector in the efficient implementation of the provisions of the Code of Ethics, through awareness-raising and increasing incentives for physical and legal persons to report any irregularities detected.

The full commitment of the Customs Service of Montenegro in combating corruption and enhancing integrity resulted in the development of a new Code of Ethics for Customs officers and employees, thus establishing a higher level of professional responsibility and zero tolerance to corruption.

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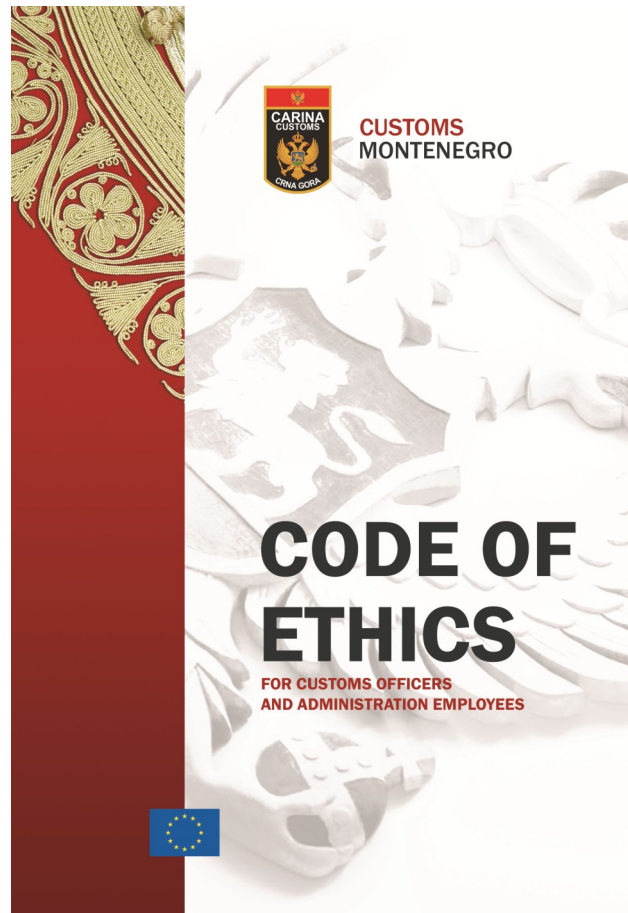
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SNAPSHOT OF MEMBERS'
BEST PRACTICES



Promotion of the Code of Ethics for customs officials





DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



Road of the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic toward institutional strengthening and transparency

The government of the Dominican Republic is committed to increasing the strength and transparency of public institutions, in order to promote integrity among its employees and enhance the efficiency of services provided to the end user.

In keeping with this vision, the current President, Mr. Danilo Medina, has implemented a Code of Ethical Guidelines which commits all government officials to adopt appropriate standards of behaviour. The Code describes sanctions to be implemented if government officials fail to act according to the undertaking they made, and it should be noted that this is something that has never been done before. The President's intention is to empower government officials to carry out their administrative and operational activities free of influence peddling and corruption in order to create the foundation for a moral and ethical administration.

For the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic, like many other institutions within the country, the regulation of integrity failure and corruption at work are key issues that must be addressed. In order to deal with these issues, over recent years the Administration has launched an array of measures and strategies aimed at strengthening the institution, improving integrity among its employees, enhancing the public perception of the administration, achieving better levels of efficiency of internal operations, increasing the country's competitiveness by providing a better and faster service to the end user and, finally, gaining international recognition among other Customs administrations around the world. Some of the strategies and measures are described below.

The implementation of the Customs Management Integrated System (SIGA, Sistema Integrado de Gestion Aduanera) is without doubt one of the biggest achievements. SIGA is a flexible instrument that provides management with a control mechanism and contributes to the efficiency of Customs procedures, ensuring the standardization of administrative and operational processes in the search for efficiency.

Another major achievement is the ratification by Congress of the Revised Kyoto Convention on Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures. The implementation of the highest international standards of trade facilitation should contribute to increasing the country's competitiveness and business climate. Within this context, the General Directorate of Customs has been involved in the revision of internal policies and procedures, which provide for regulatory compliance at all levels of the institution and serve as a reference for the Standards and Recommended Practices set out in the Revised Kyoto Convention.

With the goal of improving the procedures, policies and organizational structures of Customs, an external consulting firm was hired to assist with developing the Administration's new organizational structure along with the policies, procedures, roles and functions associated with SIGA.



The Administration also designed and implemented a comprehensive plan for strengthening the human resource capability within the institution, which gave consideration to increasing salaries and benefits for Customs officials at every level of the institution. From 2011 to 2012, 84 training courses were given on a series of subjects and approximately 3,064 employees were trained.

In order for innovation to be effective within the Administration, there is a need for internal controls. This implies that each individual knows the rules they must follow in the workplace, and act accordingly. In this regard, Customs has used risk-based control management to identify risks that could affect each of the internal departments, and rolled out a pilot plan that included risk evaluation and an audit plan.

This set of measures emphasizes the efforts made by the General Directorate of Customs of the Dominican Republic with a view to strengthening and promoting ethics and transparency in the public administration. It is important to emphasize that this cannot be achieved in a space of a few short years, but requires a strong commitment to constantly improve and adapt internal processes and procedures in response to the different factors that affect our environment over time.

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TUNISIA

Corruption discussion paper (by Commander Jawher Hassayoun)

The nature of corruption

In the first place, we have the legal approach to the matter of corruption which defines this phenomenon as being “the receipt, by a public official or like person from an individual, of material benefits which are conferred solely by reason of his/her duties or the manner in which he/she has performed or indeed not performed them.”

Secondly, alongside this legal definition, we also have the economic approach to corruption which seeks to apply microeconomic concepts to the study of this phenomenon. In this connection, certain authors maintain that there is supply and demand in the field of corruption and that its price can vary or be adjusted in the light of various factors.

The economist therefore faces several questions: What are the organizational conditions which favour corruption? What type of rationale does corruption follow? How is the price of the transaction arrived at? What mechanisms apply to the latter? What is the economic cost of this phenomenon?

This approach is certainly helpful, but it is powerless to explain and to find suitable remedies for this scourge. In fact, it merely addresses one aspect of the problem, namely the cost or payback. The other aspects of corruption remain unexplored or are covered by other fields such as the political approach.





In view of the above considerations, a sociological approach is necessary for two reasons. The first relates to the nature of the phenomenon (a social phenomenon). The second reason is a practical one and enables the problem of corruption to be viewed from all angles.

Definition adopted

Corruption in public office is regarded as being: “a clandestine exchange between two markets: the political and/or administrative market and the economic and social market. The exchange is an occult one, since it violates public, legal and ethical norms and sacrifices the common good to private [...] interests.” (Della Porta and Meny, 1995):¹

This definition seems to be more flexible than the legal definition, which draws a distinction between corruption, dishonest receipt of money by a public official and intrusion, and it is also a holistic one because it has the advantage of covering all acts which infringe the duty of integrity and probity incumbent upon any public official or other person in a position of public authority.

Characteristics of corruption

Corruption always entails a “violation of ethical norms that are protected by law”. It also presupposes clandestinely. Corruption also “reduces uncertainty” because it substitutes certainty for the unknown and because that substitution occurs to the detriment of a third party – the State in the case of corruption of a public official, the employer or employer’s representative in all other cases. Therefore, the corrupting party and the corrupted party are going to enter into transactions in order to satisfy their mutual interests to the detriment of the interests of that third party, which is morally alienated and financially disadvantaged.

That characteristic of corruption “reducing uncertainty” accounts for the fact that cases of corruption appear with greater frequency where officials possess discretionary powers.

Forms of corruption

The problem in relation to forms of corruption concerns more particularly the boundary between prohibited acts which are assimilated to corrupt acts and permitted acts which do not constitute corruption. For example, an individual may insist on obtaining a right that is guaranteed by law and which “constitutes an obligation on the part of the official”. However, delays or incompetence by the administration may prevent his obtaining satisfaction. Outside the official channels provided for the purpose, he will have recourse to a “relationship” to bring its influence to bear and obtain what is due; can we talk about corruption in this case?

Some authors reply in the negative, because the individual did not seek a favour that was not due to him and did not therefore seek an infringement of the law. Furthermore, the service provided through the “relationship” did not form the subject of a monetary transaction and hence entail the concept of clientelism which is characteristic in such cases.

1. Della Porta (D), Meny (Y), 1995, *Democracy and Corruption*

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However, other authors answer this question in the affirmative; they regard such an act as corrupt because the absence of a monetary transaction does not necessarily entail the lack of any payback. Corruption in the modern era tends to overlook that monetary form and to seek other, invisible and undetectable forms.

This example illustrates the sociological definition of corruption, a definition which is flexible and covers all acts of failed probity or absence of probity on the part of a public official, in addition to corruption properly speaking and related acts such as dishonest receipt of money by a public official, influence peddling, intrusion and clientelism.

TANZANIA



Tanzania Revenue Authority anti-corruption initiatives

The Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) started operations in July 1996. Its functions are essentially to assess, collect and account for government revenues. The TRA recognizes the growing importance of good governance as a test of effectiveness and in achieving its organizational vision and mission. While cost-effective revenue collection is the core business of the TRA, the provision of high quality customer service is paramount in order to establish trust and confidence with taxpayers, the public and employees who are our most valuable external and internal customers. Since its establishment, the TRA has responded to the threat of corruption by developing a range of management control strategies geared towards improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. With improved governance structures and commitment by the TRA Board of Directors and Management, the Authority has made progress in building a more professional, efficient and ethical organization.

Revenue collection has certainly increased due to efficient collection practices, improved staff competence and the establishment of simpler and modernized processes leveraging Information and Communication Technology (ICT). One of the measures taken by the TRA was to establish an **Internal Affairs Department**.

Internal Affairs Department

The Internal Affairs Department (Department) was established within the Commissioner General's Office and is composed of two Units, namely *Ethics* and *Internal Investigations*. The Ethics Unit is a proactive governance agency generally responsible for formulating governance policies, conducting ethics training and awareness-raising programmes as well as monitoring the performance of Ethics Committees at Management, Departmental, Regional and District levels. The Internal Investigations Unit is responsible for conducting reactive and proactive internal investigations which are focused on staff integrity matters. In accordance with the TRA's policy whereby all employees are required to declare their assets and liabilities, the Unit also conducts physical verifications of the declared assets and liabilities as a test of honesty. The Department is currently headed by a Director who reports directly to the Commissioner General and comprises multidisciplinary operational staff with Customs, tax, fraud investigation, law, procurement, education and business administration academic backgrounds.



Since its establishment four years ago, the Internal Affairs Department has recorded a number of achievements which have played a very positive role in promoting staff integrity. These include:

The development of a **Code of Ethics** in June 2009

The establishment of Ethics Committees at all management levels

The Committees submit quarterly reports to the Chairperson of the Management Ethics Committee who is also the Deputy Commissioner General. The Committees are, inter alia, responsible for conducting ethics awareness programmes for staff and external stakeholders, providing stakeholders with clear channels to raise their concerns, conducting corruption risk assessments and recommending appropriate measures to sustainably promote staff integrity.

Appointment of Integrity Assurance Officers

Integrity Assurance Officers are appointed in every department and region. Their role is to facilitate both proactive and reactive Internal Affairs initiatives in fighting corruption and other forms of malpractice.

Ethics training and awareness programmes

The TRA established the Institute of Tax Administration which provides both short and long training programmes on tax administration to staff.

Internal Affairs is responsible for running the Governance and Ethics Course. Ethics is also taught to newly recruited staff during their induction training at the Institute. Internal Affairs also runs integrity awareness programmes for all employees and external stakeholders. Quarterly Stakeholders' Forums are used to raise awareness.

Ethical climate assessment

Internal Affairs currently conducts an assessment of the ethical climate in all regions by closely involving TRA stakeholders. While internal stakeholders comprise staff at different levels, external stakeholders comprise Regional Commissioners, District Commissioners, the Police Force, the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau, intelligence and security services, Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, and taxpayers. Stakeholders' feedback from the assessment is incorporated in the Authority's reactive and proactive governance programmes.

Verification of employees' declared assets and liabilities

TRA Staff are required to submit a Declaration of Assets and Liabilities at the end of each calendar year. The Declaration includes all assets in the possession of an employee, his or her spouse and children under 18 years old. The Authority is empowered to verify and examine assets declared by employees and this responsibility is vested to the Internal Affairs Department. Any misrepresentation of the facts in the Declaration of assets constitutes a very serious breach of integrity. The Unit is also empowered to conduct physical verifications of the declared assets and liabilities to check whether the value of the assets matches.

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INTEGRITY PILOT PROJECTS

An update on integrity pilot projects for which there have been recent developments is set out below.

Liberia

The project relating to performance measurement as a tool to enhance integrity will be revived in Liberia thanks to NORAD¹ funding and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the WCO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (see the *Integrity News* section).



Togo

A fourth mission by the World Customs Organization (WCO) was carried out in Togo from 11 to 22 February 2013. The project objective was to support Togo Customs in implementing a performance measurement policy: production and dissemination of monthly indicators, signing of performance contracts between the different reporting levels. This project is receiving direct funding from the World Bank's *Trade Facilitation Facility* (TFF). Following the monthly reports produced using indicators, senior Customs management is now meeting on a regular basis and a range of measures has been taken by the Director General with immediate effect, including changes to certain procedures. The performance contracts with inspectors from Lome Port were signed on 17 May 2013.



Egypt

Further to the action plan produced during the Integrity Development Workshop which had identified enhancing the image of Customs both internally and externally as a pilot project, the following developments have been reported: (i) the Code of Conduct has been approved by the Commissioner and will be published shortly; (ii) a national Conference was held for Customs' partners in January 2013; (iii) an integrity questionnaire has been circulated among staff and the replies are currently being analysed; (iv) activities to raise awareness about integrity have taken place within the Customs Training Centre.



Uruguay

A 10th Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Uruguay Customs and the Uruguayan Chamber of Free Zones on 10 April 2013. The implementation of the provisions specified in the MOUs follow its course.



Please contact the WCO Secretariat should you want to know more about those integrity pilot projects

Contact

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INTEGRITY NEWS

Workshop on Informal Trade Practices and Integrity

The WCO organized a Workshop on Informal Trade Practices and Integrity in Lomé (Togo) on 19 and 20 February 2013 for the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) countries. The aim of this Workshop was to enable participants to speak freely about the reality of the situation in their respective countries, about the impact that such practices could have on integrity, to learn about the measures taken to address informal trade and to gain an in-depth understanding of the issue in order to find potential solutions aimed at reducing the informal sector's share.

Integrity Sub-Committee (ISC)

The 12th Session of the ISC was held from 28 February to 1 March 2013, attended by approximately 160 participants. The Agenda and Report of this session are available on the WCO website. (<http://www.wcoomd.org/en/meetings/capacity-building/integrity-committee.aspx>)

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the WCO and UNCTAD

On 19 March 2013, the WCO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) signed an MOU defining the co-operation arrangements between the two organizations with respect of the development of a performance measurement module to be incorporated in the ASYCUDA World Customs clearance system. This MOU should be seen within the context of the projects relating to performance measurement as a tool to enhance integrity in Cameroon and Togo. This module, to be tested in Liberia, should enable WCO Members using ASYCUDA World who wish to embark on a similar project to access the requisite indicators in order to measure the performance of the different Customs services, the proper use of procedures and to identify bad practices. A WCO mission will be at UNCTAD Headquarters, Geneva, on 18 and 19 June 2013 for a working meeting with a view to developing the module.

Integrity Development Workshop in the Dominican Republic

At the request of the Director General of Customs, a WCO mission went to the Dominican Republic from 18 to 22 March 2013 to conduct an Integrity Development Workshop. The extremely proactive involvement by the Customs officials in attendance resulted in the drafting of an Integrity Action Plan which was submitted to the Director General of Customs.

The WCO Secretariat is lecturing at CERDI (Centre de recherches et d'études sur le développement international - *Centre for Studies and Research on International Development*).

On 12 April 2013, the WCO Secretariat was invited to present the work of a WCO integrity expert as part of the CERDI Masters in Public Finances for Developing Countries.



60th WCO Fellowship Programme

The group of Spanish speaking Customs officers who participated in the 60th WCO Fellowship Programme included a Fellow from Brazil who chose integrity as the theme of her study paper

Integrity Development Workshop in Tunisia

Following the 12th Session of the ISC, the Director General of Tunisian Customs sought the WCO's assistance to lead an Integrity Development Workshop based on the revised version of the Integrity Development Guide (IDG). This mission will take place from 11 to 14 June 2013.

Joint WCO/African Union Project

The African Union Commission (AU) contacted the World Customs Organization to seek assistance in conducting an assessment of the level of application of the WCO tools and instruments used in the field of integrity in Customs. This request results from a recommendation from the 4th Ordinary Meeting of the African Union Sub-Committee of Directors General of Customs which was held from 6-7 September 2012 in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia. This recommendation was aimed at placing emphasis on the role of Customs administrations in helping to strengthen trade between the countries of the African continent. This request was also presented at the 12th Session of the WCO's Integrity Sub-Committee. To carry out this assessment, the AU and the WCO have agreed to send a questionnaire structured around the elements of the Revised Arusha Declaration to all Customs administrations Members of the AU. The responses will be analyzed and based on the information received, diagnostic missions will be organized in a series of countries subject to the availability of funds.

Conference on Women in Leadership

A one-day Conference will take place on 1 July 2013 at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels in the context of the Knowledge Academy. During that event, Mrs. Gudrun Vande Walle, a Postdoctoral Researcher in the area of anti-corruption in the public service, University College Ghent, Business and Public Administration, will present her work on the impact of feminization of the work floor on corruption.

Please contact the WCO Secretariat for any information related to those integrity activities.

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