



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION
AND THE
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE
WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION (WCO)[?]
AND THE
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
(UN/ECE)**

RECOGNIZING that trade facilitation reduces transaction costs in national and international economies and strengthens trade relations through the simplification, rationalization and whenever possible elimination of procedures,

RECOGNIZING that Customs administrations play a key role in international trade, and that the manner in which they implement their responsibilities can have a substantial impact on the ease, cost and speed of movement of goods across international borders,

RECOGNIZING that international business needs uniform, clear and simple Customs rules and procedures to facilitate cross-border trade and develop global business strategies building on and implementing world-wide trade liberalization following the conclusion of the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the World Trade Organization,

RECOGNIZING that the **World Customs Organization (WCO)** is the world-wide focal point for Customs issues, including technical and policy matters directly affecting Customs administrations,

RECOGNIZING that **UN/CEFACT^{??}** is the world-wide focal point within the United Nations system for the development, maintenance and promotion of general trade facilitation measures, standards and best practices,

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that international non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations actively participate and support these efforts,

NOTING the existing working relationship between the WCO and UN/CEFACT and their common strategic objectives in the area of efficient international trade procedures,

FURTHER NOTING the official observer status already existing between both Organizations,

BELIEVING that modern business and Customs techniques can reconcile more effective official controls with improved trade facilitation,

[?] World Customs Organization (WCO) is the working name of the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC).

^{??} The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) operates under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The **World Customs Organization** and the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe** have agreed as follows :

- I. To establish effective and systematic consultation, co-operation, and the exchange of information between them,
- II. To promote co-operation between Customs administrations, Government officials, top executives from the private sector, and national trade and transport facilitation committees to support the concept of trade facilitation and to promulgate standards and best practice,
- III. To consult and co-operate in order to produce and promote mutually beneficial objectives and policies in contacts with other international institutions, including but not limited to the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, UNCTAD, OECD and the International Chamber of Commerce,
- IV. To hold regular meetings to facilitate the exchange of views and
- V. To review the provisions and operation of this Memorandum in the light of experience and to consider modifications and developments to cover specific projects, as appropriate.

Done in Brussels on 25 April 2001

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC
COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**WORLD CUSTOMS
ORGANIZATION**

**Danuta Hübner,
Executive Secretary**

**Michel Danet,
Secretary General**