

Information Note¹

- Event:** World Customs Organization (WCO) Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE) Programme--China National Training
- Organizers:** WCO and the Government of China
- Date and Venue:** 18-22 October 2021, virtually via Zoom (postponed from June)
- Participants:** China General Administration of Customs (GAAC), WCO, IAEA, UNODA(BWC-ISU), OPCW, US Department of Energy, Royal Thai Customs, and 1540 Committee Expert

Background

On 12 May 2021, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, the Secretary General of WCO sent a letter to the Chair of the 1540 Committee inviting the Chair to nominate a member of 1540 Committee Group of Experts to participate in the Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE) Programme training in China. The focus of the workshop was to reach out to the customs authorities of China and embed and establish best international practices in relation to the control of WMD, and related items. The workshop was originally planned to take place from 21-25 June 2021 and was postponed to 18-22 October 2021.

Highlights

In the opening remarks delivered the Director of the Department of General Operation of the General Administration of Customs (GAAC), she introduced China's non-proliferation policy, the role of GAAC in implementing export controls, cooperation with other countries and dialogue with multilateral export control regimes. She also introduced China's Export Control Law adopted in October 2020 and cited it as a hallmark for China's strategic trade management and provided an opportunity to further advance the governing system of export control. In her remarks, she emphasised that the region was confronted with regional proliferation problems and the challenge of striking a balance between facilitating trade and trade controls. In this context, it was important to conduct capacity building programmes and strengthening the role of customs in the fight against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Mr Adams Vas, WCO STCE Programme Coordinator also spoke at the opening session. He introduced STCE national training as a signature event and corner stone of the STCE programme. The programme had been running for 5 years since 2016 and had trained over 2,000 custom officials in Latin America, Africa, Central Asia, and other regions. This was the first time that the training was conducted in China.

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

The 5-day training brought around 60 customs officials from China municipal customs and speakers from WCO, 1540 Committee, UNODA-BWC ISU, IAEA, OPCW, US Department of Energy and Royal Thai Customs. They discussed the definition and importance of STCE, components of a national STC system, controls of chemical and biological weapons related materials, IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB), dual-use materials and equipment, Strategic Trade Atlas, STCE risk management and Post-Clearance Audit. Representatives from China GAAC and Royal Thai Customs also shared their national experiences on strategic trade control.

The participating 1540 Committee Expert gave a presentation on the basics of UNSC resolution 1540 (2004), including its background, significance in filling in the gaps of international non-proliferation system, basic obligations of UN member states, particularly the obligations stipulated by Operative Paragraph 3 (c) and (d) regarding border and export control over WMD related materials. The Expert also discussed the Committee tool kit to facilitate the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) including national report, matrix, assistance mechanisms and national action plan. The Expert updated the participants briefly on the status of the Comprehensive Review.

Additional Comments

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org