



AOC/CE5E

**Recommendations of the 21st Conference of
Directors-General of Customs West and Central
Africa Region**

The 21st Conference of Directors-General of Customs of the WCO region of West and Central Africa was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 27 to 29 April 2016.

This important meeting, which is part of the agenda of activities of the WCO-WCA Region, achieved a record participation of twenty-one (21) out of twenty-three (23) Administrations, members of the West and Central Africa Region, of the Regional Capacity Building Office, the Regional Training Centers from Ouagadougou, Brazzaville and Abuja, the Liaison Regional Offices, responsible for the Intelligence of West Africa and Central Africa, as well as Including the African Union, ECOWAS and UNCTAD.

At the end of the meeting, the Directors-General made the following recommendations:

I- Regarding actions relating to Intelligence

WCO Secretary

- Perpetuate the CRIPHARM operation;

Customs Administrations

- Incorporate in their national regulations the customs management of humanitarian aid in situations of disaster or cross-border insecurity in the WCA Region;
- Capitalize on the experiences of Chad, Mali and Nigeria in the fight against cross-border crime;

- Develop cooperation policies through an exchange of information to fight cross-border insecurity;
- Allocate substantial funding to fight cross-border insecurity;
- Encouraging collaboration with military and other governmental security forces to fight cross-border insecurity;
- Strengthen border controls through the increased use of intelligence, risk management and advanced technologies in order to contribute more effectively to the fight against insecurity and terrorism;
- Allocate to the intelligence service a substantial fund for its operation;
- Provide working equipment to the National Correspondent in accordance with the recommendation of the 15th Directors-General of Customs Conference;
- Develop and sign a framework instruction on intelligence in accordance with the model adopted by the 15th Directors-General of Customs Conference;
- Set up targeting cells at airports and ports.

II- Regarding information and communication technology

ECOWAS Commission

- Accelerate work on the regional interconnection project on transit;

Customs Administrations

- Give a strategic position to the services in charge of information systems and to be more committed to IT governance;
- Set mechanisms to ensure the continuity of the service (Data Center, Emergency Sites, Disaster Recovery Plans, etc.);
- Adopt the standard developed within the framework of PACIR for the implementation of interconnection projects for information systems relating to transit;
- Provide the structures in charge of the management of Information Systems (IS) with flexible mechanisms for financing and acquisition of equipment in order to enable them to provide services on time;
- Take all necessary steps to ensure the effective participation of their IT departments in regional and international ICT activities;
- Ensure that computer systems comply with regional and international standards;
- Promote a better integration of computer scientists in customs administrations.

III. Regarding capacity building

Vice Chair

- Continue with the publication of the monthly information bulletin and, if necessary, to examine the possibility of reviewing its periodicity and the means of its financing in order to ensure its sustainability;

WCO Secretary

- Provide assistance in setting up an E-learning platform in administrations with a human resource management and a training strategy;
- Extend the training component of the MADA Project to the entire region;

Regional Capacity Building Office

- Drawing up instruments for assessing the relevance and impact of capacity-building initiatives of the WCO Secretariat in the Region;
- Take the necessary steps to make the regional website available in English;

Customs administrations and Regional Capacity Building Office

- Appropriating the synthesis document on the challenges of the region by integrating it into the national strategic plans and the current regional strategic plan;

Customs administrations and regional structures

- Appropriating the synthesis document on the priority areas of the WCO-WCA region relating to new challenges;

Customs administrations

- encouraging specialization in Human Resources Management and allowing non-customs officers to occupy the positions of Human Resources Managers with a view to better management of careers and skills;
- to participate more fully in the work of the WCO, including:

The CKR Management Committee, the Data Model, the Working Group on AFE, Technology and Non-intrusive Control, the IT Subcommittee and the Air Cargo Security Working Group.

- involving training and human resources managers in the self-assessment exercise of the strategic plan;
- Appropriating the various programs for modernizing training in human resources management initiated in the region by the WCO or the BRRC-WCA;
- Request from the WCO Secretariat more sessions on the LMD program;

Regional Training Centers

- Set up training programs in human resources management initiated by themselves on the basis of the current resources made available to them by the regional fund pending a possible increase in their budget allocation;

DECISIONS

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1. The Conference of Directors-General noted the need for closer collaboration among members for more effective management of cross-border security challenges and endorsed the pilot project COLLABORATION SAFETY (SPG++) with the initial involvement of Customs administrations of the following countries:

- Benin;
- Cameroon;
- Central African Republic;
- Chad;

- Niger;
- Nigeria

Nigeria is designated as a leading country and is mandated to work with the Office of the Vice President in the development of a concept paper for the implementation of the Project.

2- The Directors-General endorsed the Vice-Presidency's communication to the WCO Working Group on Governance Issues and requested that the guidelines articulated in the Communication be further advocated by the Policy Committee and the WCO Council.

3- The Conference of Directors-General adopted a draft budget for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

4- On the occasion of the election of the Vice-President of the WCO for the WCA Region, the Directors-General chose Mr. ISSA COULIBALY, Comptroller-General of Customs of Côte d'Ivoire, for a mandate of two (2) years;

5- The schedule of regional meetings was adopted as follows:

- The 7th Meeting of Contact Points will be held in Mali in September 2016;
- The 7th Workshop of Human Resources and Training Managers at the RTC in Brazzaville, between September and October 2016;
- The 17th Meeting of the Committee of Experts in Guinea in November 2016;
- The 2nd Donor Conference of the WCO-WCA Region in Benin between July and August 2016;
- and the 22nd Conference of Directors-General of Customs, in Senegal between March and April 2017.

Abidjan, April 29th, 2016