



RAP21-10a

**REPORT
OF THE 24th MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF
EXPERTS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE CUSTOMS
DIRECTORS GENERAL FOR THE WEST AND
CENTRAL AFRICA REGION OF THE WORLD
CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION**

Brazzaville, on 15 April 2021

CONTEXT:

1. The 24th meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Conference of the Customs Directors General of the World Customs Organization for West and Central Africa Region was held through visio-conference on 14 and 15 April 2021.
2. This important meeting inscribed on the Agenda of the activities of the WCO – WCA Region, was aimed at preparing the files pending in the Region as well as the emerging topics in order to bring them at the attention of the Directors General of Customs during their 26th Conference which will take place through visio – conference on 28 – 29 April 2021.
3. The meeting recorded the participation of fifteen (15) member administrations of the WCA Region out of a total of twenty – three; the WCO Secretariat, the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB) the Regional training Centres (RTC) of Ouagadougou, Brazzaville and Abuja, the Regional Office of Liaison in charge of Intelligence of West and Central Africa (RILo WA – CA).
4. The list of participants is enclosed in annex [2](#).

I. OPENING CEREMONY

5. In his opening words, the Vice chair wished to welcome, first and foremost, the different Experts and thanked the member countries of the Region for having massively come to the present session.
6. After having mentioned the challenges of this important meeting, he emphasized that this one is taking place through visio – conference because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, he reminded the irreversible site of the reforms and the modernization engaged by the customs administrations of the WCA Region is justified today by the global context of commercial exchanges more and more complex.

7. Faced with many challenges, the Vice chair urged the customs administrations of the WCA region to implement the reforms aimed at enhancing the resilience and guaranteeing to the users a sustainable supply chain.
8. Before closing his words, he thanked, on the one hand, the Regional Coordinator for his constant support to the WCA Region. On the other, he thanked all the Experts for their presence in the reflection, the elaboration and the preparation of the big files of the Conference of the Directors General of Customs.

II. PRESENTATION OF THE BUREAU

9. Following the opening of the session, the Head of the Vice chair's Office co – chaired the meeting according to the rules established with the WCO Secretariat assisted with the Director of the Regional Office for Capacity Building;
10. The secretariat of the meeting is ensured by :
 - The office of the Vice chair;
 - ROCB - WCA ;
 - DRC ;
 - Ghana.
11. The committee adopted after amendments, the agenda with the following items ([see annex 3](#)) :
 - Presentation of the activity report;
 - Issues of general policy;
 - Technical issues;
 - Budget and financial Issues;
 - Any other business

III. RUNNING OF THE SESSION

PRESENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY REPORTS

Report of the Vice chair:

12. Taking the floor, Mrs **Colombe Malhaby**, Assistant of the Vice chair presented the activity of the Vice chair in the context of the health crisis by highlighting the priority actions of the Roadmap namely, the elaboration of the regional structures status, the membership of Equatorial Guinea, the smooth running and the efficient management of the regional Fund, the promotion to the donors of the projects from the Customs – partners to development Conference as well as the advocacy to the Governments and the stakeholders to development for the investment in the Customs reforms and the modernization.
13. She, then, presented the statutory meetings organized by the Vice Chair and the activities of WCO as well as other institutions to which the Vice presidency took part.
14. Concerning the organization of the statutory meetings, she mentioned the 11th meeting of CPs for the capacity building, the extraordinary meeting of DGs of the WCO – WCA Region and the 11th meeting of the NCs of RILO.
15. As for the participation to the WCO activities and other institutions, the Vice chair took part in the workshop about the use of the strategic prospective method, the commission of general policy, the 137th session of the customs cooperation Council, and the HR webinar. One notes also his participation to the Vice chairs' meeting, the President of the Council and the WCO General Secretariat as well as the 12th meeting of the sub – committee of the AU Customs Directors General.
16. Following her intervention, the Assistant of the Vice-chair shared the perspectives in the continuity of the reforms in order to improve the governance within the WCO – WCA Region, to enhance the resilience of the customs administrations and to support the regional structures activities.

Finally, it should be noted that the Vice chair envisages to also to make an advocacy to the governments/institutions in order to promote the initiatives engaged by the WCO – WCA Region.

Report of the regional structures :

ROCB - WCA

17. The ROCB Director, Mr **Abdel Kader SANGHO** presented the general situation of the ROCB for the 2019 – 2020 period

18. To the chapter of actions initiated during that period, he reminded the following items:

- The organization of the 9th workshop of the Training and the Human Resources Managers of Customs in the WCO – WCA Region.;
- The self evaluation of the 2019 Roadmap and the design of reports;
- The holding of the missions of Technical Assistance to the Customs of Cameroon, and Sao Tome and Principe;
- The realization of the investigation on the priorities of the customs administrations of the WCO – WCA Region in the matter of Technical and Financial Assistance to address the crisis related to the COVID19 ;
- The publication of the First Regional Newsletter (RN) ;
- The organization of the 11th (virtual) meeting of the Contact Points for the capacity building of the customs administrations of the WCO – WCA Region and
- The participation in the activities organized by other structures.

19. From the presentation, some major challenges were noticed undermining the functioning of the office, namely, the shortage of the personnel, the low motivation of the staff at the workplace, the lack of representativity regarding the three official languages of the Region, the lack of internal expertise in some areas, the low rate of the participation of administrations in the exercises of self evaluation..

20. The ROCB Director mentioned some future activities, namely, the implementation of the AfCFTA and AFE, the updating of the 2018 – 2022 Regional Strategic Plan, the organization of the next statutory meetings, the promotion of the A – CPI programme of the WCO, in the Region, and the design of the next Regional Strategic Plan.

21. At the end of the presentation, he formulated some recommendations to the Vice chair, and the customs administrations of the Region to be found in annex 1.

RTC Abuja

22. Mr **Adeniyi Adewale**, representing the Abuja RTC, presented the activities of the said structure, by saying that following the health crisis due to the COVID 19 pandemic the number of persons trained was lowered.

23. He mentioned the absence of the Director of the RTC wishing the Vice chair to make an advocacy to the Nigerian authorities to appoint a new Director of the RTC.

RTC Brazzaville

24. The RTC Director, Mr **Gomez TSEKET** in his introductory remarks reminded the role of his structure, its missions and its organization. He then, mentioned activities in which its structure participated at the national level from 2018 to 2020 mainly the meeting with IMF, AFRITAC Centre and the ADF as well as the 15th global meeting of the regional structures.

25. As for the meetings organized at the international level, the RTC of Brazzaville participated in the statutory meetings of the Region and those of the WCO namely the Customs DGs Conference of the WCO – WCA Region , the Customs Conference of the Region, with its stakeholders to development, the global meeting of the regional structures, the 133/134th sessions of the customs cooperation council, and the 10th meeting of the Contact Points for the capacity building of the customs administrations of the WCO – WCA Region.

26. After presenting the financial statement of the activities quoted above, the RTC Director of Brazzaville indicated that the Customs Director of Congo got from the Government the guarantee of starting survey prior to the creation of the National School of Customs which would host the RTC.
27. He then announced that in the framework of the rotation system of activities organization of RTCs decided by the DGs Conference, it is the turn of his structure to organize one activity which will be funded by the regional Fund, after Ouagadougou.
28. To conclude, he mentioned that in the framework of the organizational reforms of Customs in Congo, the RTC has been taken into account in the draft decree about the assignation and organization of the General Directorate of Customs and Excise (Customs and Excise).

RTC Ouagadougou

29. Mr **Casimir Sawadogo**, Director of the RTC Ouagadougou indicated that its structure participated in the virtual statutory meetins of the region in 2020. Concerning the organization of the personal activities of its structure, these ones were not organized because of the COVID-19.
30. However, the RTC Ouagadougou updates its strategic Plan in order to be adapted to the global health crisis situation.
31. The RTC Director presented some difficulties in the achievement of his mission. A part from the pandemic the shortage of funding was noticed with the lack of the status of the structure.
32. To conclude, the RTC Ouagadougou would like to design a training plan and to implement training modules aimed at all the customs administrations of the Region.

RILO - CA

33. Mr **Etienne SAMA II**, Director of the Regional Office of Liaison in charge of Intelligence for Central Africa presented his activity report by

mentioning the difficulties on the deficit of skilled personnel, on the low supply of seizures by the national correspondents and on the low request of the RILO – CA by some administrations.

34. He invited the administrations to improve the number and the quality of warning issued, to produce periodically Newsletters, and to analyze in order to reveal the trends of the frauds at the regional level.
35. He reminded to the customs administrations to appoint national correspondents formally but to have the nCEN application.
36. He required the support of the WCO Secretariat and that of the WCO – WCA Region Vice chair in the organization of the regional operations and workshops.

RILO - WA

37. The report presented by Mr **Birame Sidy KANE**, Director of the RILO – WA was about four (4) pillars namely: the participations in meetings ; the other initiatives and activities, the CEN statistics and the difficulties and perspectives.
38. As for the meetings, he indicated the participation at the 24th Committee of Experts of the DG Conference, at the Conference of the DGs in Brazzaville, at the 25th and 26th extraordinary Conference (virtually) of the Directors General of Customs , at the 10th of national correspondents of the RILO WW
39. A and CA at Yaoundé and at the 11th joint virtual meeting of the national correspondents of the RILO – WA and CA. He also mentioned his participation in some statutory activities of the WCO.
40. Concerning the other initiatives and activities, one noted the joint holding with the RILO – CA of a webinar on intelligence, the CEN and its application. The objective of the webinar was to build the capacity of agents from the member customs administrations f the Region in the mastery of the role and the place of intelligence in the strategy of fighting customs fraud and the organized transnational criminality. He targeted also to sensitize the customs personnel in the CEN usage and its applications.

41. The Director of RILO – WA mentioned also that from 24 January to 22 February 2020, his structure, in coordination with the RILO – CA organized the fifth edition of the Operation to fight the pharmaceutical criminality known as « CRIPHARM 5 ». During this operation, 314 seizures were recorded in the CENComm.
42. Besides, the RILO – WA supported some regional or inter regional operations for the fight against fraud among which DEMETER V: fight against substances distorting the ozone layer, from 16 August to 11 November ; THUNDERBIRD : fight against the smuggling of protected wildlife species from 04 to 30 June 2019 ; AILES AFRICAINE VI et VII : surveillance of light flight in West and Central Africa and THUNDER 2020.
43. As for the statistics of the CEN, he indicated that the seizures carried out by the member countries of RILO – WA from January 2020 to- March 2021 are to the tune of 700.
44. As for the difficulties, there is the crucial problem of personnel, the poor supply of CEN by the national correspondents (NC) the low request of RILO by the Administrations and a lack of financial, human and material resources.

WCO Secretariat

45. Mr **Bernard ZBIDEN**, regional coordinator of WCA presented the activity report of the WCO Secretariat.
46. In his presentation, he mentioned strategic environment/perspectives in the period of COVID 19, the new platforms of WCO, the WCO projects, the Operations (STOP II, Ailes africaines, CRIPHARM V and VI), and the statistics on the activities of capacity building for the WCA Region as well as the list of WCA experts accredited or recognized.
47. He also reminded the particular challenges of the Region mainly the implementation of the AfCFTA and the work on line.
48. To conclude his intervention, he shared some good news:
 - The funding of many projects and operations by the donors;

- The possibility to organize more activities on line with less budget and more support from WCO;
- The stronger participation rate to the virtual activities;
- The break of contract between Senegal and the Inspection Firm.

GENERAL POLICY ISSUES

Analysis of the recommendations evaluation Results of the 24th Conference of the DGs

49. Taking the floor, Mr **TSEKET Gomez**, Head of the Vice chair's Office talked about the countries which participated in the evaluation. He deplored the low rate of participation by saying that 7 customs administrations only out of 23 in the Region sent their report in due time.
50. A discussion followed then between the experts to determine together a solution for a more active participation of the administrations at the evaluation of the recommendations.

2018-2022 Regional Strategic Plan

51. The representative of the ROCB Mr **GNANAGO Harding**, Technical Attaché presented the results of the self evaluation of the 2929 Roadmap.
52. He presented first, the logical framework which includes the five strategic pillars of the reform evaluated during that period namely the Leadership, strategic Management, the HR management, the Partnership, and the Customs Procedures.
53. He presented the great Parts of the annual Roadmap implemented by the administrations before enumerating the different stages of the self – evaluation process mainly the starting of the process, the consolidation of

results and the data analysis and finally the production of regional and national trends.

54. In his intervention, the ROCB representative stressed that the Leadership pillar obtained the best level of implementation and result, and the HR Management pillar remained the last.
55. After having presented the strengths and the weaknesses of every strategic pillar for the 2020 period, he noticed the gradual evaluation in the implementation of the strategic plan from 2018. However, he mentioned the low participation at the processes of self – evaluation of the customs administrations of the Region.
56. In terms of perspectives, Mr Gnanago Harding helped people to know the next actions to conduct in the framework of capacity building for the customs administrations to address the challenges identified and the elaboration of the 2023 – 2027 Regional Strategic Plan.

Situation Analysis of the implementation of the competence – based HR Strategy.

57. In his intervention, Mr **Abdel Kader SANGHO**, ROCB Director made the situation analysis on the implementation of the competence based HR strategy in the Region and that of ROCB.
58. In this respect, he diagnosed a lot of difficulties and weaknesses in the HR Management and consequently defined the preliminaries at the adoption of the competence approach and the competence based HR strategy.
59. He presented next the strategic basics and the tools of the HR strategy of the ROCB namely the reference system of employments, the reference system of competences, the dictionary of competences and the job descriptions.
60. Finally, he reminded the timeframe needed and he then defined the perspectives to achieve the HR Modernization.
61. On this note, Bernard **ZBINDEN** reminded the committee that Sweden no longer funds MADAQ project but the WCO Secretariat is always looking

for funds. Nevertheless, with the current health situation a lot of activities are virtually carried out.

62. Mr **Etienne SAMA II**, RILO – CA Director appreciated the process of the reorganization of the personnel presented by the ROCB Director and was interested in the process which led to detecting the weaknesses in order to improve the organization chart of his structure.

Reflection on the establishment of an information exchange Platform.

63. Taking the floor, Mr **TSEKET Gomez**, presented the context of this reflection before giving the floor to the Director of ROCB – WCA.

64. The ROCB Director raised two issues namely, the increase of the financial contributions of member countries of WCO and the establishment of a commercial platform enabling an information exchange among the administrations for a small remuneration in favour of the host country. At the end of his intervention he asked the committee of Experts to think over the question and to propose solutions for the Conference of the Customs Directors General of the WCA Region.

Reflection on the regional structures status

65. About this issue, Mr **Birame Sidy KANE** and Mr **Etienne SAMA II**, in their capacity as Advisors to the Vice chair of the Region took the floor by turn.

66. Mr **Birame Sidy KANE** presented the draft template of the Host Country Agreement for the regional structures of the WCO – WCA. The document presented was inspired by the Headquarters Agreement at the opening of ROCB between the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire and the WCO Secretariat.

67. Mr **Etienne SAMA II** presented the document bearing the mission and functioning of the regional structures. Reacting after this presentation, Mr **Bernard ZBIDEN**, regional coordinator found this initiative interesting. However, he invited the work group to contact the legal service of WCO so that the latter brings his contribution.

68. **Mr Ferdinand DEZAI** of ivorian customs wished to see adopted the regional guide by decision and to include the mission and the functioning of the regional structures.

69. Focussing on the context of the headquarters Agreement between WCO and the Belgium Kingdom; **Mr Khadim FALL** of Senegal customs proposed to settle first the issue of a permanent Head Office of the WCO – WCA Region.

70. On this issue, **Mr Bernard ZBIDEN** estimated that it is up to the country hosting the structure to grant a legal status and that have to be discussed at the DGs Conference.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Initiative of fighting against the crossborder criminality.

71. **Mr Adeniyi Adewale**, representing the customs administration of Nigeria shared the experience of his administration in the fight against terrorism and the organized crossborder criminality. He drew the attention of the other administrations on the security threats of BOKO HARAM and the terrorism impact on the customs administrations activities

72. Besides, he announced the regional initiative of the SPC ++ coordinated by Nigeria with the participation of the other administrations of the Region.

Results of the operations

73. **Mr Etienne SAMA II**, RILO – CA Director presented the operation SENGHOR, aiming to the fight against the illicit trade of cultural Goods.

74. He, first, presented the context and the history of the project, then, the different stages of the implementation of the said project, namely, the collection and the sharing of information, the profiling and the risk analysis, the exploitation of the RCPV and PNR data, and the implication of all the

administrations of the member countries of the WCA in the operation coordination.

75. Furthermore, he proposed also the continuation of the sensitization on the stakes and the challenges related to the implementation of the said project as well as the request of the support from the WCO Secretariat and the WCA Vice chair.
76. Finally he suggested the cultural and natural heritage; being the valuable and irreplaceable goods, not only for every nation but of the mankind as a whole, be protected against the growing dangers which threaten them.
77. Mr **Birame Sidy KANE**, RILO – WA responsible, presented the operation ALAMBA 2020 the last stage of the security project for the WCO for WCA.
78. In his presentation, he mentioned the very positive impact of the said operation in the WCA Region, namely, of the best care of the security mandate by the customs regarding the resolution PUNTA CANA, of the best security programme knowledge of WCO, in general and the monitored products in the framework of a PGS in particular, of the establishment of a sharing network of information and intelligence dedicated to security and the increase of the equipment level for the customs of the WCA Region.
79. In the perspectives, the RILO – WA Director suggested the maintaining of a monitoring device in every country of the Region, the sustainability of the operation ALAMBA, the diversification of partners in the fight against the EEI, the reinforcement of the equipments given to the countries, and finally, the sensitization of the authorities on the security challenges of the Region.
80. Furthermore, Mr **Birame Sidy KANE** presented the operation CRIPHARM V, born from a report related to the development of pharmaceutical criminality in the Region.
81. He also focussed on the selling of substandard medicine of bad quality giving way to dramatic consequences for the african populations.

82. During this operation, many customs seizures were realized and introduced in the CEN.

83. To conclude, he made the following recommendations: the training of the users of the CENcomm, the implication of the Customs DGs in the agent mobilization, the investigation and the dismantling of networks after CRIPHARM, the design of other operations which will target other traffics which undermine the Region.

Initiative of the RILO of the WCA Region in the matter of capacity building.

84. Mr **Etienne SAMA II** in his presentation on the initiatives of the WCA in the matter of capacity building mentioned the difficulties encountered and perspectives to come.

85. As for the difficulties, he mentioned the lack of funds for the projects initiated, the low engagement of some customs administrations in the matter of intelligence and the relative participation of the NCs in the collection and the sharing of information and intelligence.

86. Concerning the perspectives, he proposed the continuation of the customs administrations sensitization on the role and the culture of the intelligence, the reinforcement of the cooperation between the RILO – WCA, and the NCs of the twenty – three member countries, the reinforcement of the cooperation between the regional structures with other institutions.

WCO Initiative about the fight against corruption and the promotion of Ethics (project A-CPI).

87. Mr **Abdel Kader SANGHO, Director of ROCB** presented the WCO Anti – Corruption and Integrity Programme which is aimed at fighting corruption and doing the promotion of integrity.

88. The programme is about two components namely: the bilateral component which consists in designing a pluriannual action Plan for every participating administration which will include clear references as well as

criteria of performance measurement and the multilateral component which is based on an incitative environment enabling selected WCO member countries to implement the A – CPI measures by benefitting from other regional and international initiatives.

89. In the programme presentation, he reminded that the latter benefit from a Norway Funding (NORAD) over a five-year period.
90. He also presented the WCO central instrument to prevent corruption and to increase integrity level in the customs, mainly, the WCO revised Arusha Declaration concerning the good governance and the customs integrity (2003).
91. Carrying on his presentation, Mr **Abdel Khader SANGHO** mentioned three principles of the programme A – CPI which constitutes action opportunities in order to achieve results. That are first, the Synergy with other initiatives, then, the collective Action and finally the performance measurement and the data Analysis.
92. This programme is based on result based management method to customs, namely a qualitative evaluation through the use of the WCO Ethics Development Guide (EDG) and a quantitative Analysis based on a survey on the perception of the customs Integrity (SPID)..
93. Mr **Peve TOURE** of the customs of Gulnea showed the interest of his country for this programme by focussing on a deficit of information on the programme.

BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

Report Presentation on the annual contributions, disbursement and situation of the Regional Bank Account.

94. Taking the floor Mrs **Linda MARK**, Regional Fund Manager, reminded that the account is located in Nigeria at ECOBANK, Abuja, the branch of Maina Court, zone 4 of Wusu near Sheraton. She, then, informed the experts that the said account was transferred to her in September 2020.
95. In her capacity as the Account Manager of the region, she proceeded in some operations mainly, the holding of accounting books for all the transactions related to the operations of the regional bank account in

Nigeria at ECOBANK, the updating and the reconciliation of the countries contributions with the annual invoices received, the disbursements of Funds to all the beneficiaries on the request of the Vice chair.

96. Among the challenges raised, Mrs Linda **MARK** recognized having recorded some operations carried out in the account having no country name, but only the name of the depositor, what makes things difficult although the Vice chair requested to any member state to forward the detailed proof of the payment for the last four years (2017 – 2020) but up to now, she received only 4 replies.

97. She concluded her report by the presentation of a summary table of the contributions of every member country of the WCO – WCA region, updated on 20 November 2020, deplored the absence of the contributions of some member states.

Report Presentation of the Finance and Audit Committee.

98. Taking the floor, Mr **Alhajie Saihou DENTON**, reminded in his presentation that it is on the basis of the virtual Extraordinary Conference recommendations of the Customs DGs held on 29 December 2020 that the Vice chair initiated a work mission of the Finance and audit Committee in order to provide a report on the regional Fund situation to be presented at the Conference of the Directors General.

99. The following are the items being concerned by the mission: the audit of financial operations related to the four last years, the review of the whole disbursement procedures, other operations not included in the letter of engagement in the framework of the diligence directly related to the mission of audit and finally to make proposals and recommendations.

100. During his presentation, Mr **Alhajie Saihou DENTON** affirmed that the mission contributed to identify many key problems which have an impact, not only on the operations of the regional fund, but also on the global management of the financial affairs of the WCO – WCA

101. To conclude, the Finance and audit Committee produced a provisional report with the following recommendations:

- To the Customs administrations: to provide information related to the contributions and transfers of all their operations;
- To the Bank (Ecobank): to justify the operations carried out in the regional Fund bank account;;
- To the Account Manager: to detect all the transactions of the Fund through bank transfer;
- To the WCO – WCA Region: to design a financial procedure manual for an efficient management of the financial transactions etc...

102. Following the intervention of the President of Finance and audit committee, Mr **Peve TOURE** of the customs of Guinea, proposed to the Vice chair to give the mandate to the committee to carry on their mission up to the achievement with a final report in order to establish the responsibilities of each and everyone. He then wished the separation of the finance and audit committee.

Presentation of the draft budgetary and financial procedure manual

103. Mr **KIBA NGAPOULA**, Advisor in Logistics of the Vice chair presented the draft financial and budgetary procedure manual which is one of the recommendations of the provisional report of the finance and audit committee.

104. This procedural manual is aimed at:

- Defining the stages to follow in the discharge of one's duty ;
- Tracing the circuit of the movement of documents;
- Defining the roles entitled to the different actors at every stage of the execution of the operations;
- Knowing the tools and documents supposed to be available by any actor in charge of executing the operations;
- Identifying the main types of control to be carried out before and after;
- Indicating the different levels of control.

Consideration of the draft Agenda and practical provisions concerning the Conference of the Directors General of Customs

105. Taking the floor, The Chief of staff of the Vice chair of WCO – WCA presented the draft Agenda and the practical measures of the Conference of the Directors General of customs which was validated with amendment.

Draft Recommendations of the 24th meeting of the Expert Committee of the Conference of the Directors General of Customs for the WCO – WCA Region

106. Mr **Birame Sidy KANE** presented in his intervention the recommendations formulated by the experts at the end of the session of the 24th meeting of the Expert Committee. The said recommendations concern the regional structures status, the capacity building, the fight against fraud, the regional Fund, the implementation of the AfCFTA, the Conference of Donors, and the Information Communication Technology. (see annex)

Next Conference of Donors: Approach and Preparation

107. After having presented the objectives of the Conference consisting in creating a partner network who work in synergy and in favour of an integrated approach of reform and the customs modernization in the Region, Mr **Abdel Kader SANGHO** presented the results expected of the latter which is about the following items:

- Mutual reinforced understanding between the customs and the donors;
- Creation of a customs – donors network;
- Reinforcement of the political support

108. To conclude, he presented the project of regional and national aspect proposed to donors.

109. Concerning the programme of the statutory meetings, it was decided that this item will be considered at the closed door meeting of the Directors General as a side event of the 26th conference of Customs DGs of the WCA Region.

IV. CLOSING CEREMONY

110. Three high moments occurred in the closing ceremony of the 24th meeting of the committee of the Experts of the DGs Conference : the word of thanks of the delegations to the authorities of the Republic of Congo – the presentation of the recommendations of the meeting and – the closing address of the Vice Chair of the Region.

111. The word of thanks of the delegations to the authorities of the Republic of Congo was read by Mrs **OFFOUGA** Helvire, expert of Gabon.

112. After the reading of the recommendations (cf : annex 1) by Mr **BIRAME SIDY KANE**, RILO – WA Director, Dr **Guénolé MBONGO KOUMOU**, Vice-chair of the WCO – WCA Region took the floor to congratulate the participants for the quality of their works and he urged them to follow the implementation of these recommendations and to support the region in its process of reforms and modernization.

Done at Brazzaville, on 26 April 2021

The Committee of Experts



ANNEX 1 :

**RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE 24th MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE DIRECTORS
GENERAL OF CUSTOMS OF THE WCO -
WCA REGION**

The 24th meeting of the committee of experts of the conference of the Directors General of Customs of the WCO – WCA Region was held through visio conference on 14 and 15 April 2021.

On completion of the session, the experts formulated the following recommendations ::

ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE REGIONAL STRUCTURES (3)

To the Vice Chair:

1. To carry on and to consolidate the works related to the design of the texts about the status of the regional structures and to organize a virtual meeting for the validation of the texts;
2. To incite the member administrations to make available to the regional structures technical attaché ;
3. To advocate to the customs administrations of Nigeria to appoint a new Director of the RTC of Abuja.

ABOUT THE CAPACITY BUILDING (9)

To the Vice Chair:

1. To invite the customs administrations to proceed in the process of self – evaluation of the Roadmaps in order to appreciate their performances and to guide their needs in capacity building;
2. To develop initiatives in view of ensuring the motivation of the ROCB personnel

To the Customs Administrations:

3. To equip the relevant services with infrastructures, equipments and necessary licenses to enable them to communicate on line and to fully participate in the activities of the WCO – WCA Region and other partners.;

4. To enhance the use of e- learning and to improve its use for the initial and ongoing training ;
5. Through the CPs to enhance and to maintain a sustainable communication with the regional structures of WCA and with the WCO Secretariat, in view of ensuring the adequate implication of the administration in the many activities operations and projects , in favour of the WCA Region and its members.;
6. To make available the anglophone and lusophone personnel at the regional structures.
7. To enhance the dynamics engaged in the framework of the HR modernization of the customs administrations of the region by the establishment of a competence based HR strategy.

To the WCA regional structures :

8. To organize very often in a virtual way, with the support of the experts accredited or recognized by WCO some activities of sensitization and training on the priority themes of the Region.

To the Regional Economic Communities (REC) :

9. To enhance their contributions for the funding of projects in modernizing the customs administrations of the Region.

ABOUT THE FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD (13)

To the WCO Secretariat

1. To implicate more the RILO in the operations of fighting against the big illicit trafficking organized by WCO and its partners.

To the Vice Chair

2. To propose for the signing by the DGs of Customs a regional M.O.U on the exchange of information and intelligence between the countries of the Region.

To the Regional Office of Liaison in charge of Intelligence

3. To disseminate within the region the best practices in the matter of intelligence management during the period of disaster or the crisis such as COVID 19 ;
4. To reward the three National Correspondents who better illustrated themselves in the supply of the CEN ;
5. To validate and to implement the regional sectorial plan on the intelligence ;

6. To sustain the achievement of the operation ALAMBA and to organize an operation known as SENGHOR aiming to the fight against the traffic of cultural goods.

To the customs Administrations

7. To internalize the achievements of the operation ALAMBA ;
8. To put in place a special Fund for the intelligence and to put it in favour of the agents servicing in these units of the litigation fruit;
9. To introduce in the training of the personnel of Customs a module on intelligence, seccurity and the fight against terrorism.;
10. To require the expertise of both RILO in the implementation of the sessions of national training on intelligence and risk analysis. ;
11. To carry on the efforts for the acquisition and the establishment of the national data bases on the customs fraud such as the nCEN ;
To proceed to the adaptation, the popularization and the internalization of the framework instruction on intelligence ;
12. To enhance the collaboration and the cooperation in the fight against insecurity and terrorism.

ABOUT THE REGIONAL FUND (7)

To the Vice chair:

1. To keep up the implementation of the recommendations of the report of the finance and audit committee on the regional fund management ;
2. To present the draft financial procedure manual at the conference of the Director General and to look after its implementation after adoption.

To the customs administrations :

3. To look after communicating with the regional fund manager , the references of bank transfers carried out in order to facilitate the good holding of the financial statements.;
4. To regularize the arrears of contributions ;
5. To internalize the results of the report of the finance and audit committee on the regional Fund management.

To the Regional Fund Manager :

6. To internalize and to implement the results of the report of the financial and audit committee on the regional Fund management.

To the financial and audit committee:

7. To carry on the work of audit in order to detect the responsibility in the regional fund management.

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)

To the Customs Administrations :

1. To carry on the sensitization and the training of their high rank workers and the personnel on AfCFTA and to update their reform plans and the modernization by including the priority initiatives of this Agreement.

ABOUT THE DONOR CONFERENCE

To the Vice Chair :

1. To raise the consultation of projects complying with the requirements of the partners/donors published on the web regional site. ;

ABOUT THE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (3)

To the WCO Secretariat:

1. To bring a support to the computer RWG for the organization of a mission of benchmarking in the framework of the computer optimization of the care of goods. ;

To the Regional Economic Communities (REC):

2. To envisage in their agenda the activities forwarded by the Vice Chair of the WCO – WCA related to the training for the computer services of the region;

To the Computer RWG:

3. To ensure the follow up and the implementation of the recommendations from the WCO – UNCTAD workshop on ASYKUDA held on 29 and 30 November 2016 at Lomé in Togo.

Done at Brazzaville, on 15 April 2021

ANNEX 2 :

LIST OF THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE 24TH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CUSTOMS FOR THE WCO - WCA REGION

Burkina Faso
Central African republic
Republic of Congo
DRC
Gabon
Gambea
Côte d'Ivoire
Mali
Mauritania
Nigeria
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo
WCO Secretariat
ROCB - WCA
RILO - CA
RILO - WABRLR Afrique de l'Ouest
RTC - Brazzaville
RTC - Ouagadougou
RTC - Abuja

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ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE REGIONAL STRUCTURES (3)

To the Vice Chair:

4. To carry on and to consolidate the works related to the design of the texts about the status of the regional structures and to organize a virtual meeting for the validation of the texts;
5. To incite the member administrations to make available to the regional structures technical attaché ;
6. To advocate to the customs administrations of Nigeria to appoint a new Director of the RTC of Abuja.

ABOUT THE CAPACITY BUILDING (9)

To the Vice Chair:

10. To invite the customs administrations to proceed in the process of self – evaluation of the Roadmaps in order to appreciate their performances and to guide their needs in capacity building;
11. To develop initiatives in view of ensuring the motivation of the ROCB personnel

To the Customs Administrations:

12. To equip the relevant services with infrastructures, equipments and necessary licenses to enable them to communicate on line and to fully participate in the activities of the WCO – WCA Region and other partners.;
13. To enhance the use of e- learning and to improve its use for the initial and ongoing training;
14. Through the CPs to enhance and to maintain a sustainable communication with the regional structures of WCA and with the WCO Secretariat, in view of ensuring the adequate implication of the administration in the many activities , operations and projects , in favour of the WCA Region and its members.;
15. To make available the anglophone and lusophone personnel at the regional structures.
16. To enhance the dynamics engaged in the framework of the HR modernization of the customs administrations of the region by the establishment of a competence based HR strategy.

To the WCA regional structures :

17. To organize very often in a virtual way, with the support of the experts accredited or recognized by WCO some activities of sensitization and training on the priority themes of the Region.

To the Regional economic Communities (REC) :

18. To enhance their contributions for the funding of projects in modernizing the customs administrations of the Region.

ABOUT THE FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD (13)

To the WCO Secretariat

13. To implicate more the RILO in the operations of fighting against the big illicit trafficking organized by WCO and its partners.

To the Vice Chair

14. To propose for the signing by the DGs of Customs a regional M.O.U on the exchange of information and intelligence between the countries of the Region.

To the Regional Office of Liaison in charge of Intelligence

15. To disseminate within the region the best practices in the matter of intelligence management during the period of disaster or the crisis such as COVID 19 ;
16. To reward the three National Correspondents who better illustrated themselves in the supply of the CEN ;
17. To validate and to implement the regional sectorial plan on the intelligence ;
18. To sustain the achievement of the operation ALAMBA and to organize an operation known as SENGHOR aiming to the fight against the traffic of cultural goods..

To the customs Administrations

19. To internalize the achievements of the operation ALAMBA ;
20. To put in place a special Fund for the intelligence and to put it in favour of the agents servicing in these units of the litigation fruit.;
21. To introduce in the training of the personnel of Customs a module on intelligence, security and the fight against terrorism.;
22. To require the expertise of both RILO in the implementation of sessions of national training on intelligence and risk analysis. ;

23. To carry on the efforts for the acquisition and the establishment of the national data bases on the customs fraud such as the nCEN ;
To proceed to the adaptation, the popularization and the internalization of the framework instruction on intelligence ;
24. To enhance the collaboration and the cooperation in the fight against insecurity and terrorism.

ABOUT THE REGIONAL FUND (7)

To the Vice chair:

8. To keep up the implementation of the recommendations of the report of the finance and audit committee on the regional fund management ;
9. To present the draft financial procedure manual at the conference of the Director General and to look after its implementation after adoption.

To the customs administrations :

10. To look after communicating with the regional fund manager , the references of bank transfers carried out in order to facilitate the good holding of the financial statements.;
11. To regularize the arrears of contributions ;
12. To internalize the results of the report of the finance and audit committee on the regional Fund management.

To the Regional Fund Manager :

13. To internalize and to implement the results of the report of the financial and audit committee on the regional Fund management.

To the financial and audit committee:

14. To carry on the work of audit in order to situate the responsibility in the regional fund management.

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)

To the Customs Administrations :

2. To carry on the sensitization and the training of their high rank workers and the personnel on AfCFTA and to update their reform plans and the modernization by including the priority initiatives of this Agreement.

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To the Vice Chair :

2. To raise the consultation of projects complying with the requirements of the partners/donors published on the web regional site. ;

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5. To envisage in their agenda the activities forwarded by the Vice Chair of the WCO – WCA related to the training for the computer services of the region;

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6. To ensure the follow up and the implementation of the recommendations from the WCO – UNCTAD workshop on ASYKUDA held on 29 and 30 November 2016 at Lomé in Togo.