



SCIENTIFIC SUB-COMMITTEE

NS0024E1

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16th Session
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O. Eng.

Brussels, 7 december 2000.

REGIONAL SEMINAR ON CUSTOMS LABORATORIES

(Item III.2 on Agenda)

Reference documents :

42.850 (Paragraph 5 and Annex B/2 (SSC/14 - Report))
NS0014E2 (Paragraph 6 (SSC/15 - Report))

I. SECRETARIAT COMMENTS

1. At the suggestion of Mr. M. Danet, the Secretary General, the Scientific Sub-Committee, at its 15th Session, held a session devoted to presentations regarding "the role of Customs Laboratories in Member Administrations" (paragraph 6 of Doc. NS0014E2 (SSC/15 - Report)). Nineteen delegations made presentations on the infrastructure and functions of their laboratories, including standard test methods. The presentations were made available on the WCO Website.
2. At the 16th Session, presentations regarding chemical analyses performed by Customs laboratories are scheduled. So far about 20 laboratories have expressed interest in making presentations. The presentations are intended to focus on HS classification issues at the international and national levels.
3. The presentations will cover contributions made by Customs laboratories to their administrations with regard to classification difficulties in relation to revenue collection, protection of domestic industry and other trade policy issues, environmental or social concerns, preferential rules of origin issues, etc.
4. The Secretariat feels strongly that these presentations, as well as the technical expertise, knowledge and skills in the Sub-Committee, Member laboratories and the Secretariat should be shared with all Member administrations.

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5. The Secretariat believes that it would be most appropriate to discuss such issues at the regional level since many countries in the same region share - more or less - the same Customs problems. Regional seminars will give an opportunity to administrations for further exchange views with regard to the role of Customs laboratories. We are also of the view that it is the right time to hold such regional seminars in view of the growing trend in the world to promote regional economic integration.
6. For the above reasons, the Secretariat is planning a first regional seminar with regard to Customs laboratories in Kenya in June 2001, thanks to the generous offer of the Kenyan Administration to host such a seminar and of the Japanese Administration to fund the endeavour. Thereafter, the Secretariat intends to continue this activity in other regions.

II. CONCLUSION

7. The Sub-Committee is invited to take note of the above developments and express its opinions with a view to improving the utility of this type of regional seminar.
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