



HARMONIZED SYSTEM
COMMITTEE

-
26th Session
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(+ Annex)
O. Eng.

Brussels, 3 November 2000.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES OF THE NOMENCLATURE
AND CLASSIFICATION SUB-DIRECTORATE

(Item II.4 on Agenda)

1. The Secretariat is continuing to provide technical assistance to developing countries in the form of seminars and expert missions with respect to the implementation and uniform application of the Harmonized System, establishment or improvement of Customs laboratories, improvement of tariff classification work infrastructure and explanation of the 2002 amendments to the Harmonized System.
2. The Secretariat, once again, would like to thank the **Japanese Administration** for its continuing assistance and support for the WCO's technical assistance activities.
3. A summary of the technical assistance activities of the Nomenclature and Classification Sub-Directorate for financial year 1999/2000 is set out in the Annex to this document. The following information concerns the seminars and missions undertaken by the Nomenclature and Classification Sub-Directorate since the Committee's 25th Session.

I. HS SEMINARS

FINANCIAL YEAR 1999/2000

CCF/Donors (Japan) Fund

4. A regional multipurpose seminar on the Harmonized System was organized by the Secretariat in the Caribbean Region in Havana, Cuba, from 8 to 12 May 2000. Two Secretariat officers gave lectures on the HS, including HS 2002 amendments, and facilitated discussions on various HS classification questions prepared by the participants. An officer from the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) highlighted the importance of the HS in respect of compiling trade statistics. Thirty participants from the Customs administrations of fourteen countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Cayman Islands (4 participants), Costa Rica, Cuba (14 participants), Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago) attended the seminar.

File No. 2008

5. Another multipurpose regional seminar on the HS was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 15 to 19 May 2000, for administrations in the West and Central Africa Region. Two Secretariat officers gave lectures to the participants on the HS and facilitated discussions on certain classification questions encountered by the participants in their countries. An officer from the UNSD discussed the importance of the HS as regards trade statistics. Twenty-six officers from thirteen countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Rep. of the Congo, Dem. Rep. of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire (including 13 Observers), Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal) and a representative from the Secretariat of the Economic Community of the Western African States (ECOWAS) attended the seminar.
6. A third multipurpose regional seminar on the HS for administrations in the Asia/Pacific Region was held in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, from 5 to 9 June 2000. The Director and two Secretariat officers and a Japanese officer provided lectures to the participants to further improve their awareness of the latest developments in the area of HS, particularly on the HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure, and facilitated discussions to solve specific classification questions prepared by the participants. Further discussions were held on the problems faced with the participant administrations in the application of the HS. A representative of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) also made a presentation on classification challenges for Customs administrations in respect of the new products introduced in international trade as a result of the continued changes in technology. Nineteen participants from 19 countries (People's Republic of China, Fiji, Hong Kong (China), India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Japan, Kiribati, Korea (Rep. of), Macao (China), Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam) participated in the seminar. Ten Observers and 10 additional officers from the Chinese Administration also attended the seminar.
7. The Secretariat also organized national multipurpose HS seminars in the following countries for the benefit of their Customs officers :
 - (1) Windhoek, Namibia, from 17 to 21 April 2000, 28 participants (HS in general, General Interpretative Rules, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (2) Malé, the Maldives, from 23 to 27 April 2000, 15 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 Amendments and classification infrastructure). **(Soon after the mission, the Maldives became a Contracting Party to the HS Convention)**;
 - (3) Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 1 to 5 May 2000, 25 participants (HS in general, General Interpretative Rules, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (4) Libreville, Gabon, from 8 to 12 May 2000, 24 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure). **(Soon after the mission, Gabon became a Contracting Party to the HS Convention)**;
 - (5) Beirut, Lebanon, from 22 to 26 May 2000, 20 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (6) Brasilia, Brazil, from 12 to 15 June 2000, 30 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);

- (7) Jakarta, Indonesia, from 12 to 16 June 2000, 40 participants (HS in general, recent developments in the area of the HS, 2002 version of the HS and classification infrastructure);
 - (8) Managua, Nicaragua, from 19 to 23 June 2000, 32 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
8. Finally, one Secretariat officer visited Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad in Pakistan, from 28 February to 3 March 2000 to discuss questions related to the classification infrastructure of Pakistan.

Customs Co-operation Fund (CCF)

9. The Secretariat also organized, under the CCF, national multipurpose HS seminars in the following countries for the benefit of their Customs officers :
- (1) Zagreb, Croatia, from 8 to 15 April 2000, 23 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (2) Baku, Azerbaijan, from 1 to 5 May 2000, 18 participants (HS in general (including its legal aspects), HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure). (The Secretariat officer gave a speech in the Azerbaijan Parliament as regards the legal provisions of the HS Convention. **Soon after the mission, Azerbaijan became a Contracting Party to the HS Convention**);
 - (3) Nouakchott, Mauritania, from 3 to 8 June 2000, 42 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (4) Minsk, Belarus, from 5 to 9 June 2000, 18 participants (HS in general, General Interpretative Rules, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);
 - (5) Brazzaville, Congo (Rep. of the), from 20 to 24 June 2000, 33 participants (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure);

FINANCIAL YEAR 2000/2001

CCF/Donors (Japan) Fund

10. It should be noted that the HS multipurpose mission to Iran which had been postponed from the 1999/2000 CCF/Donors program was realized from 25 to 29 September 2000 under 2000/2001 CCF/Donors Fund, in the form of a regional seminar, with a significant financial contribution by Iran for the accommodation and meals of the participants (88 participants from Iran and Australia, Hong Kong China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Korea (Rep. of), Malaysia, Mongolia, Maldives, New Zealand, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Thailand). The Seminar concentrated on the HS 2002 amendments, classification infrastructure and classification questions.
11. The Secretariat would like to thank Iran for its contribution and the excellent organization of the seminar.

12. A national HS seminar was also held in Douala, Cameroon, from 28 August to 1 September 2000 with the participation of thirty-six officers (HS in general, HS 2002 amendments and classification infrastructure).

II. EXPERT MISSION

13. At a national HS seminar organized by the Chinese Customs Administration in Beijing, China, from 26 to 29 June 2000, two Secretariat officers gave lectures on the HS in general and on classification infrastructure. During discussions on classification questions, special emphasis was given to the classification principles regarding "parts" and GIR 2 (a). Fifty officers attended the seminar.

III. REQUESTS FROM ADMINISTRATIONS

14. On 25 July 2000, the Secretariat received a letter from the Ugandan Customs requesting technical assistance, to improve its tariff classification work. Chile, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia have also requested technical assistance from the Secretariat.
15. As these requests were received after the finalization of its technical assistance program for financial year 2000/2001, the Secretariat could be in a position to help the above-mentioned administrations only after any of the missions in its current program is cancelled or postponed, during this financial year. The Secretariat will, of course, give priority consideration to any unfulfilled requests during its next financial year.

IV. WCO WEB SITE

16. Information on the Secretariat's planned technical assistance activities for financial year 2000/2001 can now be found on the WCO's Web Site.

V. CONCLUSION

17. The Committee is invited to take note of the above information.
18. Developed country Contracting Parties are also invited to respond the requests made by Uganda, Chile, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

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ANNEX

1999/2000 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

CCF (NOMENCLATURE)

DESCRIPTION	COUNTRY	DATE	REMARKS
HS Multipurpose	ALGERIA	11-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)
HS Multipurpose	BELARUS	06-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	MOROCCO	11-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)
HS Multipurpose	AZERBAIJAN	05-00	Completed
HS Expert Mission	BERMUDA	11-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)
HS Multipurpose	MAURITANIA	06-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose Sub-Regional Seminar	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	11-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)
HS Multipurpose	CONGO (REP.OF THE)	06-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	CROATIA	04-00	Completed

CCF DONORS (NOMENCLATURE)

DESCRIPTION	COUNTRY	DATE	REMARKS
HS Regional Seminar	CHINA	06-00	Completed
HS Regional Seminar	CÔTE D'IVOIRE	05-00	Completed
HS Regional Seminar	CUBA	05-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	BRAZIL	06-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	GABON	05-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	INDONESIA	06-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	IRAN	05-00	Completed (September 2000)
HS Multipurpose	LEBANON	05-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	MALAYSIA	12-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)
Infrastructure	MALDIVES	04-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	NAMIBIA	04-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	NICARAGUA	06-00	Completed
Infrastructure	PAKISTAN	03-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	SRI LANKA	05-00	Completed
HS Multipurpose	VIETNAM	11-99	Completed (information provided at HSC/25)