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PRESS RELEASE

USAID STRIVES TO SIMPLIFY CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

February 24-25, 2009, Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The USAID Regional Trade Liberalization and Customs Project (RTLTC) conducted a seminar for 30 customs executives and 30 private sector representatives on the Simplification of Customs Procedures.

Seminar participants learned about simplified customs procedures based on principles and standards of the Revised Kyoto Convention and how this convention works in the European Union.

The introduction of simplified customs procedures will make customs clearance procedures faster and easier while safeguarding vital national interests such as customs fees collection and product safety. A key part of the simplifications is traders themselves can do some of customs clearance activities if certain requirements are met to comply with regulations and competence.

In brief, these simplifications may include:

- Deferred payment of customs fees
- Introducing common customs guarantee and guarantee waivers;
- A simplified customs declaration and
- Allowing customs clearance at premises of traders

“Customs simplifications can be a powerful tool to reduce the time and number of documents needed to conduct trade and transit formalities. For traders, it would mean lower transaction costs and better access to international trade channels”, says Guntis Stammers, RTLTC seminar trainer.

“For the customs administration, simplifications allow cost savings and better allocation of resources to critical functions such as anti-smuggling activities”, he added.

The USAID Regional Trade Liberalization and Customs Project is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Tajikistan by USAID on behalf of the American people. Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided about \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems of Tajikistan.

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