

*Chaikova K. A. The World Customs Organization and its Role  
in the Improvement of Customs Law*

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Nowadays, the World Customs Organization is considered to be the central pillar of customs sphere, the base for customs integrity and cooperation, but are there any reasons to believe?

The World Customs Organization (The WCO) is an autonomous intergovernmental agency, the main function of each is providing observation of society's protection, international trade adjustments, revenue collection, thereby contributing to the economic and social stability of nation.

It started out as a regional organization in 1947 by the decision of the thirteen European Governments to base a Study Group, founded on the main provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). After years of membership growth, in 1994, the working name World Customs Organization was accepted.

Nowadays as the central pillar the WCO offers its 181 Members a variety of different international instruments, including Conventions, likewise training services and technical assistance, which are ensured by the WCO or with its participation.

Concerning international environment, which is characterized by political and economic instability, drug trafficking and terroristic threats increase, proliferation of nuclear weapon and armed conflicts the WCO's mission is not only to secure and facilitate international trade but also to enhance the protection of society and the national territories.

To bring to completion its missions the World Customs Organization authorizes, cultivates and elevates global mechanisms for the harmonization and systematic applying of simplified and effective customs regulations and procedures. Besides, the WCO stimulates its participants' efforts to protect conformity with their legislation trying to increase the level and effectiveness of Member's cooperation in order to oppose customs offences.

The WCO activities are directed to improve the functioning of diverse areas to by cooperating with numerous institutions.

To enforce the customs tariffs basis and international trade statistics accommodation, the WCO signed The International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System. Also, the convention manages rules of origin, freight tariffs, controls quotas, monitors prices and provides economic research and analysis.

Being a multipurpose tool the WCO established The International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs procedures (Kyoto Convention) to comprise key governing customs bases such as transparency and predictability of customs controls; unification and simplifying of the goods declaration; maximum use of modern technologies; use of risk management and audit based controls and a partnership with the trade.

Actually the strong need in providing the main principles of integrity and corruption repulsing among customs authorities is provided by the accepting of The Arusha Declaration on Customs Integrity in 1967.

To its participants supporting and magnification of different countries chance to wade in the WCO, The Columbus Program was provided to update customs authorities and accept the standards of world trade facilitation.

It is unreal for such organization to function without strong global partnership to provide following its priorities and achieving setted goals. So that, the mutual beneficial communication with numerous governments and organizations, as well as with private sector, is an essential for The World Customs Organization .

The WCO has been cooperating closely with IATA (International Air Transport Association) on some aspects, including Advanced Passenger Information (API), Advanced Cargo Information (ACI) and IATA E-freight project, which are created for the paperless environment creating.

Besides, the WCO and the World Health Organization cooperate on such front as combating counterfeiting pharmaceuticals. It is realized through the active WCO`s membership in the International Medical Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce (IMPACT) project.

To oppose illicit traffic in cultural property, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed under the WCO and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) direction. A Memorandum controls the movement of information between customs institutions and the competent authorities for the protection of cultural heritage.

The Memorandum of Understanding is the result of the WCO`s and The Organization for the Prohibition for Chemical Weapons (OPCW) partnership. It leads to the tighten cooperation and more effective control of toxic chemicals trade through discussions, information and documents exchanges, technical assistance.

Having been working together very closely the WCO and INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization) agreed a variety of fronts, including combating cross-border criminal activities.

The World Trade Organization and the WCO collaborate on a number of areas, including the Harmonized System, Customs valuation, rules of origin and trade facilitation. Common activities are likely to increase the effectiveness of both organization functioning .

But not only customs issues are modernized by the WCO. THE WCO`s activity is reflected in partnership with The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support its activities around the world by relieving goods, transported by IFRC from duties and taxes.

The WCO organization takes into account its Members` developments and supposals, that is why each year the Technology & Innovation Forum is organized. During the Forum, the newest insights, latest developments and most recent trends are demonstrated and discussed by the leading experts.

Being the 72nd the WCO member the Republic of Belarus has adopted the majority of the WCO`s organization agreements and conventions that facilitate trade, protect society and provide practical tools to achieve connectivity and uniformity of customs systems.

All stages of customs developments in the modern Belarus are performed taking into account international experience in customs administration. As a result of participation in the WCO activities Belarus has the opportunity to study and use in its practice information about international customs cooperation, technical issues, proposal of the WCO regarding practical tool.

Due to the WCO`s recommendation, the subprogram “Electronic Customs” has been adopted to create conditions for comprehensive electronic declaration of goods. As a result, about 82% of export and 50% of import consignments are performed today using electronic customs declaration.

Finally, one of the main achievements of the Belarusian Customs Service is a reliable cooperation between the business and customs authorities through the institute of authorized economic operators. This status gives a number of specific benefits related to movement of goods across the customs border.

Summing up all the statements mentioned above it becomes clear that Customs Service all over the world has transformed its “bag-opening gate-keeper” image into one of “the facilitator and protector of society”. It`s fully justified that the World Customs

Organization operates as a global center of customs integrity and cooperation that boosts the effectiveness of Customs administrations, and facilitates the national economic wealth and social protection of its participants by promoting an honest, transparent and predictable Customs environment.

*Чайкова К. А. Всемирная Таможенная Организация и ее роль в совершенствовании таможенного права*

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Всемирная Таможенная Организация сегодня считается центральной опорой таможенной сферы, основой для обеспечения целостности и сотрудничества таможенных органов, но есть ли для этого основания?

Всемирная Таможенная Организация (ВТамО) является независимым межправительственным органом, обеспечивающим соблюдение правил международной торговли, защиты общества и сбора доходов, способствуя тем самым экономическому и социальному благосостоянию нации.

ВТамО начала свое функционирование в качестве региональной организации в 1947 году по решению 13 европейских правительств создать исследовательскую комиссию, базирующуюся на основных положениях Генерального соглашения по тарифам и торговле (ГАТТ). После продолжительного увеличения количества участников в 1994 году было принято рабочее название «Всемирная Таможенная Организация».

В настоящее время в качестве основы ВТО предлагает своим 181 членом множество различных международных документов, включая конвенции, а также возможность обучения и технической помощи, которые обеспечиваются Организацией или с ее участием.

Что касается международной обстановки, которая характеризуется политической и экономической нестабильностью, незаконным оборотом наркотиков и террористическими угрозами, распространением ядерного оружия и вооруженными конфликтами, то миссия ВТамО заключается не только в обеспечении и облегчении международной торговли, но и в усилении защиты общества и национальных территорий.