



Joint Statement of the Global Express Association (GEA) and the World Customs Organization (WCO)

Brussels, 12 May 2015

WCO and Global Express Association meet to discuss global trade facilitation issues

The World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Global Express Association (GEA) held a high-level bilateral discussion on 12 May 2015 on matters of mutual interest. Early ratification and entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) as well as the growing importance of e-commerce for economic growth were among the topics discussed.

The GEA had earlier released its latest economic study on the role played by the express industry in supporting economic development and the impact that trade facilitation measures applied by Customs administrations can have on global trade.

A copy of the study, conducted by Frontier Economics, was presented to Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the WCO by Mr Carlos Grau Tanner, the Director General of the GEA.

“Customs administrations will play a pivotal role in the implementation of the TFA, for which the WCO provides the essential global standards and guidance on best practice. This study is additional evidence that the TFA can provide many benefits”, Mr. Mikuriya said.

In response, Mr Grau Tanner thanked Dr Mikuriya for the leadership shown by the WCO, in emphasizing the benefits of the TFA and supporting countries to implement it.

“The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement provides a great opportunity for economic growth and prosperity. Our study proves that the improvement of border efficiency through the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement can lead to significant growth in trade for any country”.

The new economic study comes at an important time when governments are engaged in their ratification processes. The GEA/Frontier study provides important economic data to generate the necessary political support for early and ambitious ratification of the Treaty in each WTO member country.

“Early adoption and entry into force of this agreement is of vital importance to both Customs and the global business community” they said. The momentum generated at the Bali Ministerial meeting in December 2013 must be maintained.

A key facilitator of economic growth, particularly for SME’s has been the increase in e-commerce which opens up global markets to small local businesses. Whilst this offers real opportunities for consumers and businesses, both organizations agreed that it was important to provide a regulatory environment that balances compliance with facilitation on the one hand and fair and open cross-border e-commerce service delivery on the other.