



E-Flash 145 – February 27th 2017

ASSOCIATIONS' AFFAIRS

1. FIATA's Membership Continues Strong in Early Part of 2017

Looking at January 2017, FIATA welcomed 22 new members. We wish all these new FIATA members, as well as the thousands of others who make up the large FIATA membership base prosperity and much success in business. We look forward to working with them throughout this year and having them be an active part of FIATA's work. For more details on our new members please visit: <http://fiata.com/media/press-releases/2017/08-february.html>

2. 2017 RAME Field Meeting Registration Open - May 4-6th Casablanca, Morocco

RAME's 17th annual conference will be held between 4th - 6th of May 2017, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Casablanca, Morocco - organised by The Association of Freight Forwarders of Morocco (AFFM). This meeting will enable freight forwarders to establish contacts and develop regional business relationships. This edition will be under the theme "Connect and Achieve with Efficiency and Sustainability".

For more details on the conference and to registration please visit the meeting's website at: <http://rame2017.com/>

3. FIATA Participates in UNCTAD's 1st International Forum for Trade Facilitation Committee

More than 300 participants from some 70 countries attended the week-long meeting. The participants represented public sector agencies such as the Ministry of Trade and the Customs Authority as well as the private sector. Women represented one third of participants. FIATA's Customs Affairs Chair, Mr. Stephen Morris participated on a panel underlining that a change of mind-set is needed on who to involve in trade facilitation discussions. He also stressed that NTFC-members need further training on the TFA and its benefits for driving economic growth.

To read the final report of the meeting can be accessed at:

http://unctad.org/meetings/en/SessionalDocuments/Report_NTFCForum_Geneva_en.pdf

4. FIATA Public Statement Advocating Free Trade

FIATA has responded to the recent rise of protectionism by highlighting the value of free trade, trade facilitation, and trade development – which will be the themes at this coming annual [2017 FIATA World Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia](#). Stressing that the forwarding industry's services are "the backbone of international trade" FIATA's newly published position paper emphasises that losing faith in international cooperation leads to futile contemplation and sterile fire-fighting from one insurgence to another.

To read the paper please visit:

http://fiata.com/fileadmin/user_upload/The_Building_Blocks_of_Free_Trade.pdf

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

5. WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement Enters into Force

A major milestone for the global trading system was reached on 22nd of February 2017 when the first multilateral deal concluded in the 21-year history of the World Trade Organization entered into force. In receiving four more ratifications for the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), the WTO has obtained the two-thirds acceptance of the agreement from its 164 members needed to bring the TFA into force. To read more please visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news17_e/fac_31jan17_e.htm

6. WTO - DG Azevêdo: Work to Cut Trade Costs in Africa

Director-General Roberto Azevêdo was in Dakar, Senegal, on February 16th 2017, for meetings with President Macky Sall, Trade Minister Alioune Sarr and other high-level government representatives. As part of his visit, the Director-General also spoke at the "*Forum des Ports Africains*", where he highlighted the importance of modernising and harmonising port procedures in Africa to support the process of economic integration across the continent. To read more please visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news17_e/dgra_16feb17_e.htm

7. WCO Partners with WTO to Help National Committees on Trade Facilitation

The French session of the WTO Advanced Course for Chairs of National Committees on Trade Facilitation (NCTFs) was held from 30th of January to 10th of February 2017 at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, Switzerland. The course benefitted over 23 government officials from 20 French-Speaking countries and from the secretariat of the Central Africa Monetary and Economic Community. The WTO invited

the WCO to co-facilitate this workshop in partnership with the World Bank Group, World Economic Forum, UNECE, UNCTAD, ITC and IATA.

To read more please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2017/february/wco-partners-with-the-wto-in-building-capacities-of-chairs-of-national-committees.aspx>

8. WCO Explores Further Cooperation with COMESA and Examines Zambia's Progress

At the invitation of Commissioner General Kingsley Chanda of the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA), WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya visited Lusaka, Zambia on 8-9th of February 2017 to discuss the progress of Customs reform in Zambia and seek more cooperation with COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa). Secretary General Mikuriya visited the COMESA headquarters to explore further cooperation, using the political impetus of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and ongoing economic integration initiatives in Africa.

To read more please visit: http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2017/february/wco-acknowledges-zambia-progress-in-customs-modernization_explores-further-cooperation-with-comesa.aspx

9. UNECA - African Corridor Management Alliance to Strengthen Economic Corridors

The Economic Commission for Africa, through the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) is holding a meeting in collaboration with the Walvis Bay Corridor Group and other Corridor Management Institutions (CMI) to establish the African Corridor Management Alliance.

Read more at: <http://www.uneca.org/stories/african-corridor-management-alliance-strengthen-economic-corridors>

10. Japan and EU Confirm Commitment to Conclude EU-Japan FTA Negotiations

Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Fumio Kishida met last week in Bonn to discuss the way forward for the negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Japan. Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to reach a highly comprehensive and ambitious agreement as early as possible. Both parties also confirmed their commitment to concluding in parallel a Strategic Partnership Agreement, to ensure that the whole EU-Japan relationship is consolidated and made fit for current challenges.

To read more please visit: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=162511>

11. European Commission Welcomes Parliament's Support of Trade Deal with Canada

Last week the European Parliament voted in favour of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada, concluding the ratification process of this deal at the EU level. CETA creates new opportunities for EU companies. It will save EU businesses over €500 million a year currently paid in tariffs on goods that are exported to Canada. Almost 99% of these savings start from day one.

To read more please visit: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1624>

12. UN Regional Commissions Launch Second Global Survey on Trade Facilitation

The second Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade Implementation will be carried out until the end of March 2017. It is jointly conducted by the United Nations Regional Commissions (UNRCs) - ECA, UNECE, ECLAC, ESCAP and ESCWA. To provide your input to the survey by 31st of March 2017: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UNRCs_Global_Survey_2017

Detailed information on the survey is available at: <https://www.unece.org/tradewelcome/outreach-and-support-for-trade-facilitation/joint-unrcs-approach-to-trade-facilitation.html>

SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS & CONNECTIVITY

13. UNESCAP - Business Sector Essential Partner in Achieving Sustainable Development

Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development counts on the Asia-Pacific region developing new forms of partnerships with businesses that go beyond the delivery of traditional government-to-government official development assistance and technical support, according to the head of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) at the thirteenth Asia-Pacific Business Forum (ABPF).

Read more at: <http://www.unescap.org/news/business-sector-essential-partner-achieving-sustainable-development-un-forum-concludes>

14. UNFCCC - COP 23 Website Launched

The 2017 UN Climate Change Conference will take place from 6th to 17th November at the World Conference Centre in Bonn, Germany, the seat of the Climate Change Secretariat. The Conference will be convened under the Presidency of Fiji. The event website has been launched and information will be continuously updated. To reach the website please visit: <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/cop-23-bonn/>

15. UNFCCC - Countries Show How They Are Implementing Climate Policies

In a fifth round of transparent sharing of updates on achieving their 2020 emission reduction targets, 18 developed countries will present their achievements in implementing climate policies in May. Among the 18 countries that will present updates are the United States of America, France and the Russian Federation are (full list of countries can be found [here](#)). Additionally, a number of Parties like the EU and Australia stated that they are on track to exceed their 2020 targets.