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ASSOCIATIONS' AFFAIRS

2018 FIATA HQ Meeting Kicked Off last Week

The 2018 FIATA HQ Meeting took place from March 15-17th in Zurich, Switzerland. The Headquarters meeting is mainly policy oriented and should not be compared with the World Congress or the Regional Meetings. Close to 300 participants had registered for the event from 72 countries.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

WTO - Azevêdo Calls on Members to Avoid Triggering an Escalation in Trade Barriers

Speaking at a meeting of the whole WTO membership on 5 March, Director-General Roberto Azevêdo responded to a series of announcements from WTO members in recent days, which suggested that a range of new, unilateral trade barriers could soon be put into force. DG Azevêdo warned of the risks posed by such measures, calling on members to reflect and avoid escalation.

For more details, please visit:

https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/dgra_05mar18_e.htm

WTO Chairpersons for 2018

The WTO General Council, on 7 March 2018, noted the consensus on a slate of names of chairpersons for WTO bodies. The outgoing General Council chair, Ambassador Xavier Carim of South Africa, informed members that consultations would continue on the selection of a new chair for the Committee on Agriculture in Special Session. The chairs of the other negotiating bodies remain the same.

For more details, please visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres18_e/pr819_e.htm

WTO - Symposium Highlights Role of Innovative Technologies in Advancing the SDGs

Innovative medical technologies must be developed and promoted to reach those in greatest need and to realize the health-related United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), participants noted at an inter-agency symposium held on 26 February at the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva.

This meeting is the seventh in a series of joint technical symposia convened by the three agencies. It builds on the collaborative work undertaken to enhance capacity, including the trilateral study on Promoting Access to Medical Technologies and Innovation.

For more details please visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/trip_02mar18_e.htm

WTO - Trade Facilitation Agreement Marks First Anniversary since Entry into Force

The Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) marked its first anniversary since its entry into force on 22 February 2017 with WTO members making significant strides towards its implementation. WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo said members continue to work to fully implement the Agreement, which will benefit particularly developing and least developed countries.

Negotiations for the TFA, the first multilateral deal concluded in the 23-year history of the WTO, were concluded at the ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali in 2013. The Agreement entered into force last year when the WTO obtained the two-thirds acceptance of the Agreement from its 164 members. One hundred and thirty-one or 80 per cent of WTO members have now ratified the Agreement. Namibia is the most recent, having submitted its instrument of acceptance on 9 February.

For more details, please visit: https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/fac_22feb18_e.htm

WCO Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with OSJD

On 6 March 2018, the WCO Secretary General, Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, and the Chairman of the Organisation for Co-operation between Railways (OSJD) Committee, Mr. Tadeusz Szozda, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance the cooperation between the two organizations.

This is the second formal arrangement on cooperation between the WCO and an international railway organization, after the signing of a MoU with the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) in July 2017.

For more details please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/march/wco-signs-a-memorandum-of-understanding-with-osjd.aspx>

WCO and SACU Sign a Cooperation Agreement for implementing WCO-SACU Project

The Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO), Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, and the Executive Secretary of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Ms. Paulina M. Elago, signed on Monday 05 March 2018 a Cooperation Framework Agreement for the Implementation of the WCO-SACU Connect Project at the WCO Headquarters in Brussels to enhance cooperation based on mutual support.

The signature of the Cooperation Framework Agreement builds on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concluded between the WCO and SACU on 27 September 2010 to promote close cooperation and consultation on matters of common interest; and on the fruitful relationship established in the framework of the WCO-SACU Connect Project financed by Sweden.

For more details please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/march/wco-sacu-connect-project.aspx>

WCO - 19th Meeting of the SAFE Working Group Finalized the 2018 Edition

The 19th meeting of the SAFE Working Group (SWG), held from 21 to 23 February 2018 at the WCO headquarters in Brussels, brought together over 100 delegates from Customs administrations, partner government agencies, the Private Sector Consultative Group (PSCG), international organizations and academia.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Ana B. Hinojosa, WCO Director Compliance and Facilitation, welcomed the new Customs Co-Chairperson Ms. Suzanne Stauffer (the EU) and all the SWG

delegates, appreciating their commitment and hard work towards updating the SAFE Framework of Standards and developing new tools over the last two years.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/february/19th-meeting-of-the-safe-working-group-finalized-the-2018-edition-of-the-safe-framework-of-standards.aspx>

New WCO Counter-Terrorism Initiative for West and Central Africa Funded by Japan

The Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO), Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, met the Japanese Ambassador to Belgium, H.E. Mr. Hajime Hayashi, at WCO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium, on Tuesday 20 February 2018 to exchange a Note Verbale on the contribution of the Government of Japan to fund the implementation of the 'WCO Security Project' in the West and Central Africa region.

Global terrorism poses a variety of threats, not only to the security and safety of people, but also to economic development and political stability, making it imperative for Customs administrations to further strengthen their efforts to secure borders and protect international supply chains.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/february/new-wco-counter-terrorism-initiative-for-west-and-central-africa-to-be-funded-by-japan.aspx>

Tea and Potatoes Show Potential of Intra-Africa Agricultural Trade

Basic crops grown in Africa can be made into higher-value products, whether it is by bagging tea or turning potatoes into frozen French fries, creating jobs and fuelling growth in the continent, according to a recent UNCTAD assessment of the continent's food trade.

The findings provide useful insight for trade negotiators ironing out agricultural policies for Africa's Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) ahead of a March 2018 summit of African leaders in Kigali, Rwanda, where the deal is due to be signed.

For more details, please visit:

[http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1670&Sitemap_x0020_Taxonomy=UNCTAD%20Home;#1390;#Economic Development of Africa;#1644;#Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries](http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1670&Sitemap_x0020_Taxonomy=UNCTAD%20Home;#1390;#Economic%20Development%20of%20Africa;#1644;#Economic%20Cooperation%20and%20Integration%20among%20Developing%20Countries)

UNECA - ECOWAS Quality Policy Workshop Advances Trade Facilitation

The African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in partnership with the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO) organized a capacity-building workshop on National Quality Policy Implementation in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) from March 6 to 7, 2018 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The main resolution of the workshop was the decision for Member States to facilitate the free movement of products through Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) of certified products. The workshop agreed to establish a Champions Pilot Project, to first establish good practices, which could then be rolled out across the ECOWAS region. Eight Member States were selected as Champions - Nigeria (Chair), Ghana (Vice Chair), Niger (Secretary), Benin, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Mali. These States agreed to develop or adapt a Mutual Recognition Protocol on products for which they have exclusive jurisdiction.

For more details, please visit: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/ecowas-quality-policy-workshop-agrees-champion-mutual-recognition-agreements-facilitate>

UNECA - Uganda Urgently Needs Policy to Achieve Road Safety - UN report

The number of road traffic fatalities reported in Uganda has increased seven-fold over the past 25 years and 10 people die every day due to road traffic injuries, according to the report of the first United Nations Road Safety Performance Review launched in Kampala.

According to the report, unless effective interventions are implemented, road crashes are likely to increase and even double within the next ten years. In the last decade alone, recorded road crash fatalities rose from 2,597 to 3,503 in 2016 representing a growth of 25.9%. The accident severity index is 24 people killed per 100 road crashes. The overall annual cost of road crashes is currently estimated at approximately UGX 4.4 trillion (\$1.2 billion), representing 5% of Uganda's gross domestic product (GDP).

For more details, please visit: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/uganda-urgently-needs-move-policy-action-achieve-road-safety-%E2%80%93-un-report>

UNECA - Niger's President Commends ECA's in ECOWAS Single Currency

The President of the Republic of Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou, Co-Chair of the Presidential Task Force on the Single Currency within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has highly commended the quality technical contribution of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in ECOWAS' march towards the single currency.

Mr. Issoufou was speaking during the opening of the fifth meeting of the Presidential Task Force on the ECOWAS Single Currency Program held in Accra, Ghana, where the West African leaders reaffirmed their political will to meet the ECOWAS single currency programme deadline by 2020.

For more details, please visit: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/niger%E2%80%99s-president-commends-eca%E2%80%99s-quality-contribution-ecowas-march-towards-single-currency>

AIR CARGO

IATA - Air Cargo Off to a Robust Start in 2018

(IATA) released data for global airfreight markets showing that demand, measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTKs), and rose 8.0% in January 2018 compared to the year-earlier period. This was up from the 5.8% annual growth recorded in December 2017.

Freight capacity, measured in available freight tonne kilometres (AFTKs), rose by 4.2% year-on-year in January 2018. The continued positive momentum in freight growth into 2018 reflects the fact that demand drivers for air cargo remain supportive.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-03-07-01.aspx> \$

SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS & CONNECTIVITY

UNECA - UN and Development Partners Coordinate Actions for SDG in North Africa

Twenty-four UN organizations, international and funding institutions operating in North Africa agreed on a draft, joint road map to follow-up and support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region.

The 2030 Development Agenda came into force on January 1st, 2016 as the global reference framework for development policies and actions at the national, regional and international level. The agenda has 17 key objectives known as the Sustainable Development Goals. For African countries, these goals coincide by more than 90% with the African Union's Agenda 2063. Read more at: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/un-and-development-partners-coordinate-actions-sdg-implementation-north-africa>

ECA Initiative for Integrating Agenda 2063 and SDGs Taking Root in Cameroon

Several mid and senior level officials serving across a broad range of ministerial departments in Cameroon have been reviewing their approach in domesticating the UN's Agenda 2030 and the African Union's Agenda 2063 - two complementary international development frameworks, thanks to new knowledge and perspectives acquired from a recent workshop co-organized by the Government of Cameroon and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The Cameroonian planners say they are also taking away much from a policy modelling session part of the workshop, which focused on assessing various policy options to identify the impact of investing in different sectors on their country's overall economic fabric, using causal loop diagrams.

Read more at: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-initiative-integrating-agenda-2063-and-sdgs-taking-root-cameroon>

UNFCCC - Banks Steer European Shipping towards Low Carbon

Efforts to green the European shipping industry have received a boost, with two major banks pledging to fund €300 million worth of clean tech investments in ships over the next three years.

Such steps are important to reach the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement, given that maritime transport is responsible for around 2.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions and carbon emissions from shipping and aviation are growing at a combined rate of 3-5% annually.

Read more at: <https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/banks-steer-european-shipping-towards-low-carbon> and

https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/transport/shipping_en

UNFCCC - 10th Africa Carbon Forum Headlines First Africa Climate Week

Africa Carbon Forum (ACF 2018), this year part of the first Africa Climate Week, is the best place for business people, policymakers and public sector representatives to learn the latest about the international response to climate change.

Africa Carbon Forum connects project developers with foreign investors, carbon market representatives and government representatives, engaging Africa in the global climate finance process.

Read more at: <https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/10th-africa-carbon-forum-headlines-first-africa-climate-week> and

<https://cop23.unfccc.int/news/africa-climate-week-to-shape-drive-climate-action>