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# E-Flash

**e-Flash No. 177 – 14. June 2018**

## **ASSOCIATIONS' AFFAIRS**

### **FIATA Present at WTO Trade Dialogues on June 7th**

Senior business representatives meeting at the WTO headquarters discussed how the WTO could help them address the challenges they face in conducting global trade. FIATA, represented by Director General Hans Günther Kersten, and other private sector representatives sent a strong message of support for the WTO and the rules-based multilateral trading system, stressing its role in creating economic stability and supporting growth, development and job creation.

The event brought together over 60 senior business representatives to discuss the challenges they face in global trade. The main topics of discussion - sustainable development, e-commerce, facilitating investment, and small businesses - stemmed from the trade priorities identified at the Business Forum held in December 2017 alongside the WTO's 11th Ministerial Conference (MC11) in Buenos Aires.

For more details, please visit: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/trdia\\_07jun18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/trdia_07jun18_e.htm)

## **INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

### **Mexico Initiates WTO Dispute Complaint against US Steel, Aluminium Duties**

Mexico has requested WTO dispute consultations with the United States regarding US duties on certain imported steel and aluminium products. The request was circulated to WTO members on 7 June.

The request for consultations formally initiates a dispute in the WTO. Consultations give the parties an opportunity to discuss the matter and to find a satisfactory solution without proceeding further with litigation. After 60 days, if consultations have failed to resolve the dispute, the complainant may request adjudication by a panel.

For more details, please visit: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/ds551rfc\\_07jun18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/ds551rfc_07jun18_e.htm)

### **EU, Canada Initiate WTO Dispute Complaints Against US Steel and Aluminium duties**

The European Union and Canada have requested WTO dispute consultations with the United States regarding US duties on certain imported steel and aluminium products. The requests were circulated to WTO members on 6 June.

The EU and Canada claim in their separate filings that the US duties of 25% and 10% on imports of steel and aluminium products respectively are inconsistent with provisions of the WTO's General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994 and the Agreement on Safeguards.

For more details please visit:

[https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/ds548\\_550rfc\\_06jun18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/ds548_550rfc_06jun18_e.htm)

## WTO Issues 2018 Annual Report

The WTO's Annual Report provides a comprehensive account of the organization's activities in 2017 and early 2018. The Report opens with a message from Director General Roberto Azevêdo and a brief overview of the year.

This is followed by more in-depth accounts of the WTO's various areas of activity over the past 12 months. The Report also includes "spotlights" highlighting major WTO events and activities, including the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference held in Buenos Aires.

For more details, please visit: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/anrp\\_30may18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/anrp_30may18_e.htm)

## Symposium Highlights Role of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

A joint G20-OECD-WTO event held on 30 May 2018 at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris discussed how the international community can join efforts to further ease the flow of goods among WTO members.

The WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) was cited as a model for future trade cooperation initiatives aiming to promote productivity and economic development.

For more details, please visit: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/fac\\_04jun18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/fac_04jun18_e.htm)

## UNCTAD - Rapid Technological Change Threatens to Outpace Public Policy

The dizzying speed of technological change - from Big Data to gene editing - risks leaving governments behind, unleashing both positive and negative unknown social and economic effects, participants at a meeting of the [United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development](#), hosted by UNCTAD in Geneva, Switzerland, heard on the opening day of its [21st session](#) on 14 May.

"The pace of political decision-making - and its implementation - is inversely proportional to that of technological change," UNCTAD Deputy Secretary-General Isabelle Durant said in opening remarks.

For more details, please visit:

[http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1754&Sitemap\\_x0020\\_Taxonomy=Commission%20on%20Science%20and%20Technology%20for%20Development;#1570;#Science,%20Technology%20and%20Innovation;#20;#UNCTAD%20Home](http://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=1754&Sitemap_x0020_Taxonomy=Commission%20on%20Science%20and%20Technology%20for%20Development;#1570;#Science,%20Technology%20and%20Innovation;#20;#UNCTAD%20Home)

## EPRDF Decides to Fully Implement the Algiers Accord

The Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has decided to fully implement the Algiers accord and the decision of the boundary commission established to demarcate the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. This was announced in a communique the party issued after its Executive Committee meeting.

The Committee announced that minority shares in parastatals like Ethio Telecom, Ethiopian Airlines, electric power generation plants, Shipping Lines and Logistics Services Enterprises be transferred both to local and foreign investors with the government retaining a majority stake in all.

For more details, please visit: <https://www.thereporterethiopia.com/article/eprdf-decides-fully-implement-algiers-accord>

## **South Sudan to Start Issuing of EAC Digital Passport: Official**

In a bid to enhance cross-border movement of people and goods, South Sudan has said it is ready to begin processing and issuing East African Community (EAC) electronic passport. According to Mou Mou Athian, the under-secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and East African Affairs, the e-passport is expected to unleash benefits linked to regional integration.

In 2017, the EAC's six partner states including South Sudan were directed to start issuing the new East Africa machine readable electronic passports by January but the preparedness of each member state had to be considered.

For more details, please visit: <https://africa.cgtn.com/south-sudan-to-start-issuing-of-eac-digital-passport-official/>

## **WCO - Workshop to Develop Expert Trainers in Customs Valuation in Europe Region**

A WCO Accreditation Workshop for Expert Trainers on Customs Valuation was held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 4 to 8 June 2018, for English-speaking Customs administrations in the WCO's Europe Region.

The workshop, hosted by the Regional Office for Capacity Building (ROCB), was designed to develop and identify facilitators capable of conducting technical workshops for the WCO on the topic of Customs valuation. 11 Customs officials from 10 WCO Member administrations were selected to take part in the event.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/june/workshop-to-develop-expert-trainers-in-customs-valuation-in-europe-region.aspx>

## **17th WCO IT Conference & Exhibition Touches on the Use of Blockchain by Customs**

The 2018 WCO IT Conference & Exhibition drew to a close on 8 June 2018, with a summary of the outcomes of the preceding two-and-a-half days of discussions on the latest IT developments in Customs and border management. The Conference welcomed 600 delegates from 75 countries, was supported by 32 sponsors and exhibitors and brought together 70 speakers who took the floor for 11 keynote addresses and 18 plenary and TechTalk sessions.

Finally, the delegates had an opportunity to hear more about how Blockchain technology is being used by Customs, including a number of pilot projects, as well as plans for the future.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/june/the-17th-wco-it-conference-exhibition-closes-with-discussions-on-the-use-of-blockchain-by-customs.aspx>

## **WCO - Singapore and Australia Sign an AEO-Mutual Recognition Arrangement**

Singapore Customs and Australian Border Force (ABF) signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) of Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) programmes on 31 May 2018. Through this arrangement, Singapore companies certified as having lower risks will enjoy faster Customs clearance with reduced documentary and cargo inspections with respect to their goods exported to Australia. Likewise, Australian companies that are certified by Australian Border Force will enjoy similar facilitation for their goods exported to Singapore.

As an initiative under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a pact signed by Singapore and Australia in 2015 to deepen existing areas of cooperation and catalyse new ones, the MRA is set to foster closer Customs collaboration and elevate bilateral trade ties.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/june/singapore-and-australia-sign-an-aeo-mutual-recognition-arrangement.aspx>

### **WCO - East African Customs Administrations Work Towards Enhanced Border Control**

Five Revenue Authorities of East Africa, namely Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, gathered in Zanzibar, Tanzania on 29 May 2018 for the first Regional Joint Coordinating Committee (RJCC) meeting of their newly launched "Project on Capacity Development for Trade Facilitation and Border Control in East Africa".

This project was launched by the five East African Community (EAC) Partner States with the support jointly extended by the WCO and JICA and aims at improving the efficiency of border procedures and enhancing border control in East Africa. Through this new Project, the five East African Revenue Authorities will work together on (1) effective One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) operation, and (2) Customs capacity building on three areas, namely (i) risk management (RM), (ii) post clearance audit (PCA), and (iii) Program Global Shield (PGS).

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/june/east-african-customs-administrations-work-together-for-more-trade-facilitation.aspx>

### **WCO and SADC Secretariat Deepen Cooperation in the Area of Trade Facilitation**

At the invitation of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Secretariat, the WCO attended the joint meeting of the SADC Sub-Committees on Customs and Trade Facilitation from 21 to 23 May 2018 in Gaborone, Botswana.

At this occasion, the WCO made a presentation on the Mercator Programme as well as its support to WCO Members in Africa and in particular the SADC region. The WCO took this opportunity to also highlight its support to Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the WCO tools that have been developed to support both RECs and their members in their regional integration agendas particularly in areas of Customs and border procedures.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2018/may/wco-and-sadc-secretariat-deepen-cooperation-in-the-area-of-trade-facilitation.aspx>

### **Africa's Railway Renaissance needs Public Private Partnerships**

Experts from Africa's rail sector gathered in Johannesburg to discuss rail transport and how it can be developed to support the grand design for growth on the continent.

Addressing the gathering, Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), said that economic development in Africa needs an efficient, expanded, rail network and described the current condition of existing railway infrastructure and rolling stock in many countries as "sub-optimal."

For more details, please visit: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/africa%E2%80%99s-railway-renaissance-needs-public-private-partnerships>

### **Ministers of Trade Chart the Next Two Phases of the African Trade Area negotiations**

The 6th Meeting of African Union Ministers of Trade (AMOT) concluded in Dakar, Senegal after two days of deliberation. The meeting was preceded by the 11th meeting of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Negotiating Forum and the 6th meeting of the Committee of Senior Trade Officials (STO).

In delivering his welcome address, Albert Muchanga, AU Commissioner of Trade and Industry congratulated the members of the new Bureau of the African Union Ministers of Trade (Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritania, South Africa and Cote D'Ivoire), who will lead the AfCFTA process for the next twelve months. This includes completing the remaining tasks of the Phase 1 negotiations and starting the Phase 2 negotiations centered on investment, competition policy and intellectual property rights and possibly e-commerce.

For more details, please visit: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/ministers-trade-chart-next-two-phases-african-continental-free-trade-area-negotiations>

## **AIR CARGO**

### **Akbar Al Baker New IATA Board Chairman**

IATA announced that Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker, has assumed his duties as Chairman of the IATA Board of Governors (BoG) for a one-year term effective from the conclusion of the 74th IATA Annual General Meeting in Sydney, Australia.

Al Baker is the 77th chair of the IATA BoG and the first CEO from Qatar Airways to hold the position. He has served on the BoG since 2012. He succeeds Goh Choon Phong, CEO of Singapore Airlines.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-06-05-06.aspx>

### **Airlines Urge Caution on Airport Privatization**

IATA's 74th Annual General Meeting (AGM) urged governments to take a cautious approach when considering airport privatization. In a unanimously passed resolution, IATA members called on governments to prioritize the long-term economic and social benefits delivered by an effective airport ahead of the short-term financial gains provided by a poorly thought-out privatization.

Currently about 14% of airports globally have some level of privatization. As they tend to be large hubs, they handle about 40% of global traffic.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-06-05-04.aspx>

### **IATA, AFRAA Sign MoU to Advance Aviation in Africa**

(IATA) and The African Airline Association (AFRAA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deepen their cooperation. The MoU was signed by Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director General and CEO and AFRAA's Secretary General, Abderahmane Berthé on the sidelines of the 74th IATA Annual General Meeting in Sydney.

The MoU paves the way for further development in African aviation. Air transport already supports 6.8 million jobs and generates \$72.5 billion of economic activity on the continent.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-06-03-01.aspx>

### **IATA - Air Freight Growth Recovers Slightly in April, Up 4.1%**

IATA released data for global air freight markets showing that demand, measured in freight tonne kilometres (FTKs), rose 4.1% in April 2018, compared to the same period the year before. This was up from the 1.8% growth in annual demand recorded in March 2018.

Freight capacity, measured in available freight tonne kilometres (AFTKs), grew by 5.1% year-on-year in April 2018. This was the second time in 21 months that capacity growth outstripped demand growth.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-05-30-01.aspx>

### **IATA Open Borders Strategy**

IATA called on governments to intensify efforts to spread the economic and social benefits of aviation by removing barriers to the free movement of people across borders. There are many barriers to travel, ranging from visa restrictions and government information requirements to the capacity of current facilitation processes to absorb growing numbers of air travellers.

IATA has evolved a comprehensive Open Borders Strategy to help governments work with industry to maintain the integrity of national borders while removing inefficiencies that prevent the industry from satisfying travel demand.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/Pages/2018-06-05-01.aspx>

## **SUSTAINABLE LOGISTICS & CONNECTIVITY**

### **Azevêdo on World Environment Day: 'Trade Has Important Role in Protecting the Planet'**

On the occasion of World Environment Day on 5 June, WTO Director-General Roberto Azevêdo highlighted the important role of trade in fostering a sustainable world economy. An open and transparent trading system aligned with sound environmental policies acts as a catalyst for enhancing the protection and well-being of the planet, DG Azevêdo said.

The WTO's founding document, the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO, recognizes the objective of sustainable development and the legitimacy of environmental protection as national and international goals.

Read more at: [https://www.wto.org/english/news\\_e/news18\\_e/envir\\_05jun18\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news18_e/envir_05jun18_e.htm)

### **ICAO - Promoting Aviation and Airport Sustainability for World Environment Day**

Since 1972 and the opening of the Stockholm Convention on the Human Environment, World Environment Day (WED) has been celebrated every 5th of June as an initiative to stimulate global awareness of environmental issues and encourage action.

To mark the celebration of **WED2018**, the ICAO Committee for Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) has launched a [new publication](#) under ICAO's [Eco-Airport e-collection](#). It provides practical guidance on how to design and implement effective waste management policies at airports, while at the same time creating social and economic value.

Read more at: <https://www.icao.int/Newsroom/Pages/Promoting-aviation-and-airport-sustainability-for-World-Environment-Day.aspx>

### **UN and Partners Urge Businesses, Cities and Regions to Disclose Carbon Pollution**

California Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., United Nations Climate Change Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa and Mahindra Group CEO Anand Mahindra have joined forces to spur more businesses, cities, states and regions to transparently report carbon emissions and progress toward meeting verifiable emissions reduction goals.

More than 570 cities with a combined population of 608 million people, 100 states and regions across 88 countries and 6,300 companies with 55 percent of global market capitalization have already taken urgent action by measuring and reporting their climate impact through [CDP](#), formerly known as the Carbon Disclosure Project.

Read more at: <https://unfccc.int/news/un-and-partners-urge-businesses-cities-and-regions-to-disclose-their-carbon-pollution>