

Hong Kong Customs attends 6th WCO Global AEO Conference and enhances co-operation with customs administrations around world (with photos)

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, today (May 8) led a Hong Kong Customs delegation to attend the 6th WCO Global AEO Conference co-hosted by the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC). The three-day Conference is being held in Shenzhen from May 8 to 10.

Under the theme "Harnessing the Power of AEO Programmes for Inclusive and Sustainable Global Trade", the Global Conference focuses on discussions about how the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Programme and Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs) can secure global trade and enhance economic development, and at the same time provide a platform for about 1 200 representatives from customs administrations, international organisations, AEO enterprises and other key stakeholders around the world to explore the transformative potential of the AEO Programme.

During the Conference, the Assistant Commissioner (Excise and Strategic Support) of Customs and Excise, Mr Rudy Hui, and the Head of the AEO of the South African Revenue Service (SARS), Ms Rae Vivier, signed the Action Plan for the AEO MRA, witnessed by Ms Ho and the Commissioner of the SARS and the Council Chairperson of the WCO, Mr Edward Kieswetter, marking a significant step by Hong Kong Customs to extend the MRA network to Africa.

Also, Ms Ho met with the Vice-Minister of the GACC, Mr Sun Yuning, to discuss multiple co-operation issues, including Smart Customs development, AEO mutual recognition arrangements, risk management and law enforcement collaboration. In addition, Ms Ho held bilateral meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive of the New Zealand Customs Service, Mr Richard Bargh; the Deputy Director General of the General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia, Mr Pha Eng Veng; and the Director General of the Royal Malaysian Customs Department, Ms Dato' Anis Rizana Mohd Zainudin, respectively to strengthen mutual collaboration and explore more partnership opportunities.

The Hong Kong AEO Programme was launched in 2012. Hong Kong Customs at present has ratified MRAs with 15 Customs administrations including the Mainland China, India, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Canada, Mexico, Indonesia, Macao China and Bahrain. Under the MRAs, AEOs from the signatory countries or regions can enjoy reciprocal trade facilitation measures including reduced inspection rates and prioritised clearance. Hong Kong Customs will continue to take steps to expand the AEO network so as to promote a more favourable business environment and foster mutual benefits.

