

# Hong Kong Customs signs Authorized Economic Operator Mutual Recognition Arrangement with Bahrain Customs Affairs (with photos)

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, led a delegation of Hong Kong Customs to visit the Bahrain Customs Affairs (BCA) to discuss matters on Customs co-operation and sign the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) with the President of the BCA, Mr Shaikh Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa, in Al Hidd today (April 22) to strengthen mutual trade relationship and foster greater security in the global supply chain. The Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, Mr Oscar Chow, and the Chairman of Asia, Africa and Middle East Committee of General Committee of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (HKGCC), Mr Jonathan Lamport, were present to witness the signing ceremony.

During the trip, Ms Ho and the delegation also visited the Khalifa bin Salman Port and joined the delegation of the HKGCC and the Hong Kong Bahrain Business Association to visit the Bahrain International Investment Park with an aim to enhancing the trade and cultural ties between Hong Kong and Bahrain.

The signing of the MRA is a milestone of fostering the connection and collaboration between Hong Kong and Bahrain. The MRA will reinforce international cargo security while facilitating legitimate cross-boundary cargo movements of the two places and bringing significant benefits to AEOs in both sides, as well as enhancing their competitiveness in the international market.

The Hong Kong AEO Programme was launched in 2012. The signing of the MRA with Bahrain brings the number of MRAs ratified between Hong Kong Customs and other Customs administrations to 15 in total. The other 14 Customs administrations which Hong Kong has signed MRAs with are the Mainland, India, Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Canada, Mexico, Indonesia and Macao, China. Under the MRA, AEOs from the signatory countries or regions can enjoy reciprocal trade facilitations including reduced inspection rate and prioritised clearance.

Hong Kong Customs is dedicated to extending the MRA networks, in particular with Belt and Road economies including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States in the Middle East region. The AEO MRA Action Plan with Saudi Arabia was signed last year, marking a significant step towards the conclusion of the MRA in the near future. Hong Kong Customs will continue to take active steps to reach MRAs with major trading partners so as to bring more trade facilitation

benefits to AEOs.



