

EDITORIAL



This edition of the Journal provides us with insights from an exceptionally diverse group of authors and includes contributions from North and South America, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Africa.

Fortunately, many of this edition's contributors were able to present their papers at the World Customs Organization's (WCO) annual PICARD (Partnership in Customs Academic Research and Development) conference held in Costa Rica, and were particularly successful in generating active discussion and spirited debate.

This year's conference addressed the impact of three significant issues on Customs and international trade: the economic crisis; regional trade agreements and the proliferation of such agreements; and climate change and environmental protection. Conference speakers included Michael Haughton, Maureen Irish, Santiago Ibáñez Marsilla, Chiza Charles N Chiumya, Carsten Weerth, Cezary Sowiński, and Shujie Zhang. I wish to thank these and other authors whose articles feature in this edition.

The PICARD conference also marked a significant milestone in the partnership between the International Network of Customs Universities (INCUI) and the WCO with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organisations. The MOU, which formally recognises the INCUI as the single point of contact between the WCO and those universities and research institutes that are active in the field of customs education and research, serves to formalise our efforts to jointly promote the academic standing of the customs profession. Pleasingly, the MOU signing followed the recent WCO decision to endorse guidelines for formally recognising university customs curricula. The text of the Guidelines, endorsed at the June 2009 WCO Council Sessions, is reproduced in Section 3.

The Editorial Board invites papers for the next edition of the Journal, the theme of which is 'collaborative border management'. We look forward to receiving papers that address collaboration between government agencies and the commercial sector, as well as national, regional and international collaboration among government agencies. I trust that you enjoy the current series of articles and look forward to your ongoing suggestions, contributions and support for what has emerged over a relatively short period as a truly global journal.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'D. Widdowson'.

David Widdowson
Editor-in-Chief