

Editorial



In the last edition of the *World Customs Journal* I commented on the significant progress that had been made by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in relation to its trade facilitation agenda. Since that time, however, several hurdles have been struck and, as a result, the WTO membership has not yet seen its way clear to adopt the Protocol of Amendment that is a prerequisite to the Agreement on Trade Facilitation's entry into force.

Nevertheless, the principles of the Agreement are universally acknowledged, and continue to be addressed both nationally and internationally. The International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) has been particularly proactive in this regard, and I am pleased to report the success of the Inaugural INCU Global Conference, *Trade Facilitation Post-Bali: Putting Policy into Practice*, which was held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan in May this year.

The Special Reports in this edition of the *Journal* include the conference's opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Roberto Azevêdo, Director-General of the WTO, and the Resolution that was subsequently passed. In his address, Director-General Azevêdo publicly recognised the significance of the INCU's role in promoting the trade facilitation agenda and, in response, the INCU has undertaken to continue to support the work of the WTO. Achievement of the Agreement's principles is specifically addressed by Hans-Michael Wolffgang and Edward Kafeero in their article in which they compare the provisions of the Agreement with those of the Revised Kyoto Convention and other World Customs Organization instruments.

Other contributors in this edition focus on the importance of collaboration among border management agencies. In this regard, Chang-Ryung Han and Rachel McGauran examine the benefits of information exchange; David Dill and Deborah Kopsick address ways of improving cooperation between customs and environmental agencies; and, in the context of combating transnational smuggling, Gautam Basu identifies the need for appropriate coordination within and across various governmental institutions.

At the request of our readers, the next edition of the *Journal* will include further studies in the field of excise, which is emerging as a major source of government revenue for many economies around the world due, in part, to the proliferation of Free Trade Agreements. We will also be formally recognising the first ten years of the INCU. On behalf of the Editorial Board, I again wish to thank all of you, our readers, for your support for the *World Customs Journal* and trust that you continue to benefit from its academic and practitioner contributions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Widdowson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Widdowson
Editor-in-Chief