

## Press Release

Sri Lanka became the 62<sup>ed</sup> Country to accede to Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) which is a convention administered by World Custom Organization(WCO) for international trade facilitation.

The instrument of ratification was deposited by Mr.S.A.C. Sarath Jayathilake, Director General of Custom, Sri Lanka Custom in the presence of the Mr. K. Mikiriya, Secretary General of WCO at its 113<sup>TH</sup>/114<sup>TH</sup> Session of Council of which was held from 25 – 27<sup>th</sup> June at its Headquarters in Brussels.

The Revised Kyoto Convention which is widely recognized as the blueprint for modern and efficient Customs procedures in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was entered into force on February 3, 2006. Notwithstanding the fact that about only a third of 174 members of WCO had acceded to RKC, they accounted 90 percent of international trade.

Sri Lanka's accession to the RKC is a landmark event in the context of its ongoing efforts to promote predictable and efficient trade facilitation environment at the border in close coordination with other border management institutions. The private sector stand to benefit significantly from the implementation of commitments contained in the convention the architecture of which, on the one hand promote simplification, harmonization and modernization of Customs procedures, and on the other hand its key provisions (General Annex and Ten Special Annexes) are designed to meet the requirement of modern production and delivery system and the current demands and international trade. At the same time the principles of the convention ensure that statutory functions of Customs are not comprised.

Sri Lanka Customs has already implemented some important trade facilitation concepts contained in the Annexes such as audit based controls and Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) that referred to as 'Gold Card System' in Sri Lanka's context. Other underlying key trade facilitative elements of the RKC include application of simplified Custom procedures in a predictable and transparent environment; adoption of modern techniques such as pre-arrival information, risk management or audits; maximum use of ITC and implementation of international standards; cooperation with national agencies other custom administration; close partnership with trade a readily accessible system of appeals.

All countries that become signatory to the convention are required to implement nearly 600 standards, recommendations and practices. Although this is somewhat burdensome, when border measures and controls are based of such international standards and practices it facilitates conducting of international trade more transparent, predictable and trade-friendly environment.

The Council Sessions was attended by DG/Custom from Sri Lanka Custom and Dr. Dayaratna Silva, Minster (Economic and Commercial) of Sri Lanka Embassy in Brussels.

Sri Lanka Embassy

Brussels

29.06.2009