

PRESS RELEASE

Dated: 14th July 2018

**Assumption Ceremony of the Vice Chair of the Asia Pacific Region
of World Customs Organisation (WCO)**

India has become the Vice Chair (Regional Head) of Asia Pacific region of World Customs Organisation (WCO) for a period of two years, from July, 2018 to June, 2020. The WCO has divided its membership into six regions. Each of the six regions is represented by a regionally elected Vice-Chairperson to the WCO Council.

WCO represents **182 Customs administrations** across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community.

Being the Vice Chair of AP region of WCO will enable India to take on leadership role. India has a wealth of experience in promoting security and facilitation of cross border trade. To mark the assumption of Vice Chair, an event is being organised on July 16th, 2018 at New Delhi by Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The event will be attended by Customs delegations of 33 countries of the Asia-Pacific region, Customs officers from different ports in India, Partner Government Agencies and representatives from the trade. The Secretary General of WCO, Mr Kuniyoshi Mikuriya will deliver the key note address, while Heads of Customs from Japan and Fiji, and senior officials from Korea, Singapore, China among others, shall participate in the occasion. The underlying theme of the inaugural ceremony is “Customs – Fostering Trade Facilitation”

The ceremony shall be followed by a seminar on cross border trade through e-commerce and the role of Customs administrations. The seminar would focus on the framework of standards spearheaded by WCO to cope with the exponential growth in e-commerce shipments and the tsunami of parcels that cross borders every day. Recognizing that e-commerce has become a game changer in the international trade arena, bringing in efficiency of clearance and delivery of low value and high volume shipments has become a matter of critical interest for every Customs administration.
