

# International Customs Day - 2024



The Zambia Revenue Authority today joins other revenue administrations worldwide to commemorate the International Customs Day (ICD) under the theme:

**"Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose."**

ICD is an annual event held on 26 January.

Join us as we take you on this journey to highlight how this theme applies to our Zambian Customs officers.

# International Customs Day

## 2024 Newsletter

Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024

## TRADE FACILITATION WITH PURPOSE



By Moses Tembo

Customs is uniquely placed among border agencies to regulate cross-border transactions and control illegitimate ones. Traditionally, most customs administrations are concerned with collecting duties and taxes at the border, controlling goods entering and leaving national territories, and imposing penalties on unlawful actions. In the face of such regulatory mandates, business often feels frustrated with customs officers when doing business. In addition, business perception indexes frequently consider Customs to be among the most corrupt public institutions and complicated border procedures are considered to be a major non-tariff barrier that hinders business activities.

However, customs authorities have adopted client-centric policies whose aim is to make customs more responsive to stakeholders by guaranteeing specific standards for service delivery, providing a substitute for competition and a benchmark for measuring service quality. The roles and functions of customs have

evolved with the ever-changing domestic and international environment. Therefore, trade facilitation is now one of the key challenges for many customs administrations. Effective and efficient customs administrations contribute to facilitating legitimate trade, which is an engine of sustainable economic development. Accordingly, experiences to date suggest that many customs authorities in both developed and developing countries have recognized that productive interaction with business is essential for effective and efficient customs administrations. Good partnerships are important for any function of customs authorities, including revenue collection and trade facilitation. These partnerships are equally important to anti-corruption and customs reform as well as modernization efforts. Customs' experiences show that closer cooperation and collaboration with business are beneficial to both customs and business. Benefits to customs may include improved trade security, trade efficiency, and effective enforcement. The trade community is able to benefit from prompt customs clearance, low trade transaction costs, transparency, and predictability of customs procedures. In essence, trade facilitation is a common objective and mutual trust is vital. Therefore, customs should be cognisant of the complexity and vulnerability of the international trade supply chain, and understand the needs and priorities of the business. Similarly, businesses should be aware of border regulations and how customs systems operate in order to maintain a high level of compliance with customs laws and regulations.

Enhancing voluntary compliance by the private sector also becomes a key strategy of customs administrations. The Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) Customs Services Division introduced a program called Customs Accredited Clients

Program (CACP) in 2007. This is a customer-oriented system coupled with a strategy to maximize voluntary compliance and captures the principles and standards of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) program. In both AEO and CACP, customs shares its responsibilities with those private companies that have a high level of compliance. Those who demonstrate good compliance with customs requirements and meet conditions specified by customs are entitled to benefit from special procedures such as a low frequency of customs intervention. Assuming that cargo dealt by the authorized trader is low risk enables customs to focus its resources on the high-risk cargoes.

*The author is a Customs Collector - ABR*

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# SEE ALL, STOP NONE: NON-INTRUSIVE SCANNING SECURES AND EXPEDITES TRADE

By Hillary Mulenga

As we celebrate the 2024 International Customs Day under the theme, “Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose,” it’s an opportune moment to reflect on the evolving landscape of customs practices globally.

In the spirit of the 2024 International Customs Day theme, “Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose,” we delve into a transformative aspect of customs practices that is revolutionizing trade facilitation – the integration of non-intrusive scanners. As we navigate the evolving landscape of customs operations, the role of these cutting-edge technologies is becoming increasingly crucial, providing a glimpse into a future where this facility is made available at all entry points to Zambia. This should be a reality in Jimbe, Zombe, Kipushi, Kashiba, Nchelenge, Mokambo and many other borders in far flung areas.

Traditionally, customs inspections involved time-consuming and invasive procedures, leading to delays in trade and increased operational costs. The advent of non-intrusive scanners has ushered in a new era, where customs authorities can conduct thorough inspections without physically opening containers. These scanners utilize advanced imaging technologies such as X-rays and gamma rays, offering a non-destructive means to scrutinize cargo contents quickly and efficiently.

The implementation of non-intrusive scanners represents a significant leap forward in trade facilitation. By minimizing the need for physical inspections, these scanners streamline the customs clearance process, reducing the time and resources required for cargo examinations. This not only expedites the movement of goods across borders but

also contributes to a more cost-effective and business-friendly environment for importers and exporters.



**Picture: Non - Intrusive Scanner at Chirundu One Stop Border Post**

*The implementation of non-intrusive scanners represents a significant leap forward in trade facilitation. By minimizing the need for physical inspections, these scanners streamline the customs clearance process, reducing the time and resources required for cargo examinations.*

Non-intrusive scanners are not just about expediting trade; they play a pivotal role in enhancing security and ensuring regulatory compliance. The ability to scan imports and exports provides customs authorities with a comprehensive view of cargo contents, enabling them to identify potential risks, such as contraband, illegal substances, or misclassifications. This proactive approach strengthens border security and safeguards

against illicit activities.

As we celebrate International Customs Day, envisioning a future where non-intrusive scanners are deployed at every border becomes a compelling aspiration. The widespread adoption of this technology holds the promise of transforming customs operations on a global scale. With scanners seamlessly integrated into the customs infrastructure, and interfaced with the Customs management system, the goal of risk based interventions becomes not just desirable but achievable.

At the occasion of the International Customs Day, let us acknowledge the transformative power of non-intrusive scanners in reshaping the landscape of customs and trade facilitation. As customs authorities engage with traditional and new partners with purpose, the integration of cutting-edge technologies like non-intrusive scanners stands as a testament to our collective commitment to efficient, secure, and forward-thinking customs practices. Embracing this vision, we move towards a future where the seamless flow of goods across borders is not only facilitated but safeguarded with precision and purpose.

*The author is passionate about continuous learning and is dedicated to shaping the next generation of customs professionals. His journey is defined by an unwavering commitment to shaping a workforce that is not just proficient in customs operations but is also resilient, adaptable, and ready to meet the challenges of the future.*

*He is a Senior Collector – Learning & Development & holds a MA & BA in HRM.*





# CUSTOMS ENGAGING TRADITIONAL AND NEW PARTNERS WITH PURPOSE

By Precious Muzyamba

The theme for the 2024 International Customs Day is “Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose.” This topic is comprehensive and all-encompassing, ensuring that Customs expands their revenue base and capitalizes on the new markets that have emerged due to the rapidly shifting global economic landscape.

Priority should be given to ensuring that customs organizations strengthen their ties with established partners. Effort should also be taken to properly identify the partners for mutual benefits. To boost revenue, customs organizations need to form new alliances with fresh competitors. These stakeholders may include financial institutions and educational institutions among many others across sectors.

Working together with a purpose to make sure that partnerships align with the goals, objectives, and core values of unique organizations is also an important call to action. In addition, the customs agencies have to assess these collaborations to make sure that the necessary benefits are being derived in terms of trade, both domestically and internationally, security, and maintaining an effective supply chain.

Organizations involved in customs must also endeavour to improve inclusivity and diversity in their interactions. It is

implied that in the pursuit of developing effective policies that will guarantee that all inhabitants of the world benefit from customs organizations, no stakeholder should be left behind. Because they offer value, all parties involved in the customs organizations need to be thoroughly heard. Furthermore, it is imperative to ensure that methods are modified and impacts evaluated

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on a regular basis. Because of the nature of their industry, customs organizations have collaborations with a range of stakeholders, each with varying degrees of importance. Making impact evaluations and corrections is therefore crucial since it will improve connections and provide fruitful outcomes.

Further, customs organisations must leverage technology and data in their firms to ensure optimal operations. Information Technology (IT) including Artificial Intelligence (AI) must be adopted throughout the chain of

work. For this reason, merely automating procedures is not enough; there is an urgent need to digitize the work and, in the process, ensure that all stakeholders are well served. Technology will also aid in customs clearance management, mitigation and management of risk, services such as payments, verification of information and declaration processing. Customs organisations must also use technology like telematics, and data mining to ensure effective and efficient operations which lead to trade that is secure.

It is critical to acknowledge that the world in which we live is always evolving and presents new difficulties beyond those of the past. Global pandemics, environmental problems, technology, and other political difficulties are some of the challenges that need to be overcome. Because of this, customs authorities around the world need to be prepared at all times to minimize difficulties and guarantee efficient operations.

*The writer is a customs professional with over 7 years experience as an examining Officer. Her competencies include Tariff classification, Valuation, warehousing amongst many others. She is knowledgeable in other procedures which include Harmonised systems, Coordinated Border Management, Customs valuation, Customs Operational Practices for Enforcement and seizures.*





By Gershom Mwansa

# ENHANCING ENGAGEMENTS WITH PARTNERS, TRADITIONAL AND NEW

This year's theme for International Customs Day, 2024, highlights the importance of partnerships in today's rapidly changing world. Customs administrations are recognizing the need to enhance their engagement with partners to achieve their goals. These partnerships bring solutions to the challenges faced by Customs administrations. In this article, we will explore the significance of enhancing engagements, promoting diversity and inclusivity, collaborating with purpose, and why they are crucial for customs administrations.

Enhancing engagements with traditional partners such as suppliers, customers, and regulatory bodies is essential. These partners have an in-depth understanding of the industry and can provide valuable insights and knowledge. Customs can tap into their expertise, establish strong relationships, and foster trust. This collaboration can lead to improved efficiency, streamlined processes, and shared resources, ultimately benefiting all parties involved. An effective way to engage partners is by utilising technology. Develop online training modules for partners to learn about customs regulations, procedures, and best practices. Furthermore, conduct outreach programs to reach out to a diverse range of partners and ensure they are aware of the opportunities available. This includes translating important documents into multiple languages, providing clear

guidelines and instructions, and offering support for partners with different levels of expertise or resources. Ultimately, promote diversity and inclusivity because all partners from diverse backgrounds will have access to information and will easily understand and comply with customs requirements. This will empower partners to navigate through the customs process

*"An effective way to engage partners is by utilising technology. Develop online training modules for partners to learn about customs regulations, procedures, and best practices. Furthermore, conduct outreach programs to reach out to a diverse range of partners and ensure they are aware of the opportunities available".*

more efficiently and foster a stronger relationship with customs.

In addition to traditional partners, customs should actively seek new partnerships to stay relevant and innovative. Collaborating with startups, technology companies, financial institutions, environmental organizations, NGOs, and academic institutions can bring fresh perspectives, disruptive ideas, and access to cutting-edge technologies. This will result in better management, analysis of data, identify bottlenecks, analyse trends, and make data-driven decisions to optimize their

operations. One interesting topic to explore further is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in customs processes. AI can help in automating complex tasks, predictive analytics for risk assessment. It would be intriguing to learn more about the potential of AI in customs. These partnerships can lead to the development of new solutions, improved customer experiences, and increased competitiveness. By embracing new partners, customs can expand their network, diversify their capabilities, and create a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

In conclusion, for customs administrations to succeed in this changing world market dynamics, enhancing engagements and collaboration is the key, and purpose-driven partnerships will attract like-minded partners. This approach fosters a culture of purpose and sustainability, leading to long-term success. To ensure the effectiveness of engagements, customs organizations must continuously assess their impact and adjust strategies accordingly. By measuring key performance indicators, collecting feedback, and analysing data, organizations can identify areas for improvement, make informed decisions, and adapt to evolving needs. This iterative approach allows customs to stay agile, responsive, and focused on achieving their goals.







# PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS WORK ESSENTIAL TO TRADE FACILITATION

By Cosum Sinyinza

In the wake of modernisation and trade facilitation, indeed its time Customs continued engaging traditional and new partners in order for this to be achieved. Therefore, the 2024 International Customs Day theme “Customs engaging traditional and new partners with purpose” is befitting the crusade embarked on by the Zambia Revenue Authority whose strategic vision is to be *“a model of excellence in revenue administration and trade facilitation”*.

Being purposeful involves engaging in thoughtful, deliberate, and intentional mental processes with a specific goal or objective in mind. It often involves critically analyzing information,

considering various perspectives, and making decisions or taking actions based on the desired outcome. As Customs engages stakeholders, the energies should be purposely skewed towards trade facilitation owing to many benefits which comes with it among them increased revenue collection.

Internationally, one of the critical roles of Customs has been facilitation of legitimate trade. In the context of the World Customs Organization trade facilitation is defined as the avoidance of unnecessary trade restrictiveness. This means that trade processes would then become simpler, harmonized and modernized making it cheaper, accessible, sustainable and inclusive for all. It is also worth noting that trade facilitation does not mean being loose or less strict when enforcing the law.

Trade can be frustrated in many ways, which may include late reporting for work

and knocking off early, not responding to mails on time, and deliberately not picking official phone calls. When Customs processes are not predictable, it raises anxiety in stakeholders and this may to some extent negatively affect their compliance levels. It is thus imperative that every Officer of Customs carry out duties diligently without being reminded or rather pushed knowing that they are in the front line for the trade facilitation crusade. Customs work is a noble one.

Finally, in his book titled Net Positive, former Unilever CEO Paul Polman wrote *“We have the ability to address the world’s greatest challenges. What we are missing is mindset”*. With a proper mindset and attitude towards work, Officers of Customs can contribute greatly to making Zambia a prosperous nation through collection of correct taxes and trade facilitation.



World Customs Organization  
Organisation mondiale des douanes

Customs Engaging Traditional  
and New Partners with Purpose





# Customs Engaging Traditional and New Partners with Purpose: A Pivotal Role in International Trade

By Alice Chansa

This year's theme, "**CUSTOMS ENGAGING TRADITIONAL AND NEW PARTNERS WITH PURPOSE**," resonates deeply with the evolving landscape of global trade, emphasizing collaboration and innovation in our customs practices.

Traditionally, Customs administrations play a pivotal role in fostering economic growth and security. Traditionally, our engagements have centered on ensuring compliance and collecting revenue and have been perceived as gatekeepers, ensuring the smooth flow of goods across borders. However, the dynamics of the global landscape call for a paradigm shift – a shift towards actively engaging with both traditional and new partners to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency in our operations. In today's interconnected world, the role of customs extends far beyond mere regulatory compliance. It is about actively engaging with both traditional and new partners to foster a conducive environment for trade and economic growth.

One key aspect of the theme is the enhancement of engagement with traditional partners. Customs authorities have long-standing relationships with various stakeholders, including importers, exporters, and logistics providers.

Strengthening these ties is essential for streamlining trade processes and ensuring the efficient movement of goods. By fostering open communication and collaboration with our traditional partners, we can address challenges collectively, identify opportunities for improvement, and adapt to the dynamic nature of international trade.

*"Collaborating with technology providers and industry experts allows customs authorities to stay ahead of the curve, ensuring that our processes are not only compliant but also agile and responsive to the evolving needs of the trade community".*

On the other hand, forging new partnerships is equally vital in the modern era. The landscape of global trade is constantly evolving, marked by technological advancements and shifting geopolitical dynamics. Customs authorities must proactively seek collaboration with new partners, such as emerging industries, technology providers, and international organizations. These partnerships can bring fresh perspectives, innovative solutions, and novel approaches to address the challenges of the 21st-century trade environment.

Innovations in customs practices play a central role in achieving the objectives set forth by the theme. Embracing technological advancements, data analytics, and automation can significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of customs operations. Collaborating with technology providers and industry experts allows customs authorities to stay ahead of the curve, ensuring that our processes are not only compliant but also agile and responsive to the evolving needs of the trade community.

As customs officers, we play a crucial part in realizing the theme's vision. Our commitment to engaging with both traditional and new partners with purpose is a testament to our dedication

to facilitating trade, fostering economic development, and contributing to the overall prosperity of our nation.

Together, we can make a lasting impact on the international trade landscape and pave the way for a more interconnected and prosperous world.

Happy International Customs Day 2024!

*The author is a Customs Officer in the Zambia Revenue Authority.*







# Innovation in Customs

By Mutale Musonda

Customs plays a crucial role in international trade, regulating the flow of goods and ensuring compliance with various regulations and laws. However, traditional customs practices and procedures can often be time-consuming, inefficient, and prone to errors. To address these challenges, there is a growing need for customs innovation to streamline processes, enhance risk management capabilities, improve data sharing, enhance collaboration with stakeholders and foster trade facilitation.

In the recent years, customs innovation has involved the development of risk-based approaches that allow for targeted inspections and better identification of high-risk consignments, thereby increasing the efficiency of customs operations and reducing the burden on low-risk traders. Overall, customs innovation is essential to modernize and optimize customs practices, making them more efficient, transparent, and business-friendly. It allows for the seamless flow of goods across borders, reduces trade barriers, facilitates economic growth, and enhances global supply chain security.

## Why Innovation is Important in Customs?

Innovation plays a crucial role in the customs industry for several reasons. Firstly, it enables customs agencies to keep up with the ever-increasing demands of

global trade. As the volume of international shipments continues to rise, customs processes need to become more efficient and responsive. Innovation allows agencies to automate tasks, reduce manual errors, and improve the overall speed and accuracy of customs clearance.

Secondly, innovation in customs is essential for enhancing security measures. With the increasing threat of smuggling,

*“Customs innovation is essential to adapt to the ever-evolving global trade landscape and meet the demands of an interconnected world”.*

terrorism, and illegal trade activities, customs agencies need to adopt advanced technologies to detect and prevent such activities. Innovations like real-time tracking systems, AI-powered risk assessment tools, and advanced scanning technologies enable customs authorities to identify potential risks and take necessary actions swiftly.

Lastly, innovation in customs can lead to substantial cost savings. By automating processes and reducing manual interventions, customs agencies can streamline their operations and minimize

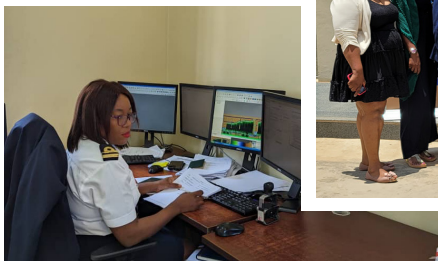
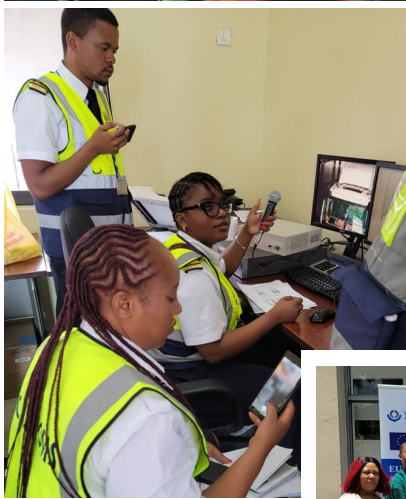
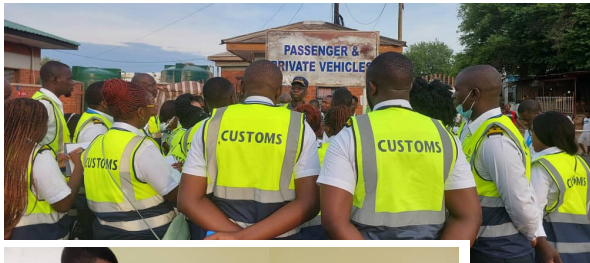
the need for additional resources. This not only saves time but also reduces the administrative burden, allowing agencies to allocate their resources more effectively.

Customs innovation is essential to adapt to the ever-evolving global trade landscape and meet the demands of an interconnected world. Customs innovation plays a vital role in streamlining processes, enhancing risk management capabilities, improving data sharing and collaboration among customs authorities and stakeholders, and fostering international trade facilitation and cooperation. Innovation in customs is essential to adapt to the ever-evolving global trade landscape and meet the demands of an interconnected world. Furthermore, it paves the way for enhanced collaboration trade processes, and drives efficiency by automating and digitizing customs procedures.

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, the customs industry is undergoing a significant transformation. The traditional ways of doing business are rapidly evolving, thanks to the wave of innovation sweeping across the sector. From automation technologies to advanced analytics and machine learning, customs agencies are embracing these technological advancements to streamline their operations, enhance the customer experience, and combat complex challenges.









## LIST OF OFFICERS AND INSTITUTIONS AWARDED AT THE 2024 ICD

No.	Name (Person / Organisation)
1	Peter Nyirenda
2	Tapiwa Nkaka
3	Cindy Libanda
4	Bupalo Kalaba
5	Eunelyky Ndhlovu
6	Lubona Mukatasha
7	Daisy M. Nalishuwa
8	Ngibo Kampakasa
9	Kelvin Mwape
10	Ian Sibalwa
11	Deliwe Masendeke
12	Coca Cola Beverages Limited
13	First Quantum Minerals Trident Limited
14	Hitachi Construction Machinery Zambia Limited
15	UNZA ZICA Chapter
16	CBU Management and Accountancy Association (CUMAA)
17	Professional Insurance
18	A Plus General Insurance Limited
19	Road Transport and Safety Agency (e-ZAMTIS)
20	National Road Fund Agency

