

# **The Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) of the Directors General/Commissioners of Customs Meeting, Goa**

## **Press Release**

9<sup>th</sup> October, 2015

The Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) of the Directors General/Commissioners of Customs was hosted by India on 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 in Goa, and a record number of 41 countries from Asia and Europe and 2 intergovernmental bodies, namely European Union and ASEAN deliberated upon various issues concerning customs administration and areas of cooperation among them.

Mr. Najib Shah, Chairman of Central Board of Excise and Customs, India inaugurated the meeting. Mr. Kunio Mikuria, Secretary General of World Customs Organization (WCO) also attended the meeting.

Mr. Shah highlighted the importance of ASEM in meeting the challenges posed by the fast changing world trade, safety and security requirements, information technology and communication.

The Heads of the Customs Administrations deliberated upon various issues and agreed upon an action plan for the years 2016-17. This action plan is encapsulated in the form of 'Goa Declaration'. The action points involve exchange of best practices and capacity building in the areas of trade facilitation, supply chain security, Authorized Economic Operators, Coordinated Border Management, Intellectual Property Rights, Trans-boundary waste shipment, Joint Customs Operation against counterfeit goods, Paperless Customs, and Passenger Name Record. In order to promote Digital India campaign, India has sponsored 'paperless customs' which received wide support from the ASEM Members

During the Meeting, India and Korea signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) to facilitate the Scheme of Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) for boosting international trade and faster customs clearances between two countries.

The 12<sup>th</sup> ASEM Meeting will be hosted by Germany in 2017 in Berlin.