



SACU AND THE WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANISATION SIGNS A COOPERATION FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WCO-SACU CONNECT PROJECT

The Executive Secretary of the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU), Ms Paulina M. Elago, and the Secretary General of the World Customs Organisation (WCO), Dr Kunio Mikuriya signed a Cooperation Framework Agreement for the implementation of the WCO-SACU Connect Project on 05 March 2018, at the Headquarters of the WCO in Brussels, Belgium.

SACU and WCO have established and maintains a long standing partnership under the framework of the WCO-SACU Connect Project that focuses on IT Connectivity; Risk Management and Enforcement; Trade Partnership; and Legislative Framework. Significant progress has been recorded in all the above-mentioned areas of focus, which amongst others include the conclusion of the:

- a) Regional Customs Risk Management Strategy and three joint Enforcement Operations targeting illicit trade in tobacco, alcohol, and textile and clothing industry, respectively;
- b) Regional IT Connectivity Framework to facilitate automated data exchange between the SACU Member States;
- c) Regional Training Manuals for the Preferred Trader Programme; and
- d) Regional Manuals to guide traders and Customs Officials on the implementation of the Preferred Trader Programme.

Commenting on the signing of the Agreement, the SACU Executive Secretary, Ms. Paulina M. Elago said,

“The signing of the Cooperation Framework Agreement signals the commitment by the WCO and SACU to continue working together to strengthen the relationship and partnership in order to derive tangible benefits that will improve the trading environment in SACU”.