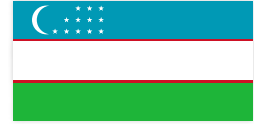# UZBEKISTAN CUSTOMS:

A Leader in Combating Counterfeit and Transnational Crime

SUCCESSES IN GLOBAL TRADE

The State Customs Committee of Uzbekistan (SCC) is the primary agency responsible for enforcing customs and trade laws in Uzbekistan. SCC has been at the forefront of combating counterfeit and transnational crime, and has implemented various initiatives to prevent the flow of counterfeit goods and to facilitate legitimate trade.

Transparency Initiatives

SCC has implemented several transparency initiatives to promote accountability and trust among stakeholders. The agency has established a website that provides information on customs procedures, tariffs, and regulations (SCC, 2022). Additionally, SCC has introduced an online portal for submitting customs declarations, which has improved the efficiency and transparency of the clearance process (SCC, 2023).

In 2022, SCC launched a public awareness campaign to educate the public on the dangers of counterfeit goods and the importance of complying with customs regulations (SCC, 2022). The campaign included radio and television advertisements, as well as social media posts, to reach a wider audience.

International Cooperation Initiatives

SCC has also strengthened its international cooperation to combat transnational crime. The agency is a member of the World Customs Organization (WCO) and has signed several agreements with neighboring countries to enhance cooperation in customs enforcement (WCO, 2022). For example, SCC has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Kazakhstan Customs Service to share intelligence and coordinate efforts to combat cross-border crime (Kazakhstan Customs Service, 2023).

In 2023, SCC participated in a regional workshop on combating counterfeit goods, organized by the WCO (WCO, 2023). The workshop brought together customs officials from several countries in the region to share best practices and discuss strategies for combating counterfeiting.

Recent Legal Reforms

In 2022, the Uzbekistan government enacted the Customs Code, which strengthened the powers of SCC to combat counterfeit and transnational crime (Uzbekistan Government, 2022). The Code introduced stricter penalties for customs offenses and provided for the use of advanced technology to detect and prevent smuggling.

The Code also introduced a new provision that allows SCC to share information with other law enforcement agencies, both domestically and internationally, to combat transnational crime (Uzbekistan Government, 2022). This provision has enabled the agency to work more closely with other agencies, such as the Uzbekistan National Security Service, to combat crime.

Sustainable Development Initiatives

SCC has also implemented sustainable development initiatives to reduce its environmental footprint. The agency has introduced a paperless clearance system, which has reduced the use of paper and minimized waste (SCC, 2023). Additionally, SCC has implemented energy-efficient lighting and air conditioning systems at its facilities, which has reduced energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions (SCC, 2024).

In 2023, SCC launched a project to install solar panels at its facilities, which will reduce the agency's reliance on fossil fuels and lower its carbon footprint (SCC, 2023).

Enhancing Trade Facilitation

SCC has implemented several initiatives to enhance trade facilitation and reduce the time and cost of clearing goods. The agency has introduced a risk-based approach to customs clearance, which has reduced the number of physical inspections and expedited the clearance process (SCC, 2023). Additionally, SCC has implemented a single window system, which allows traders to submit all required documents and information through a single online portal (SCC, 2024).

In 2022, SCC launched a pilot project to implement a blockchain-based system for tracking and verifying the origin of goods (SCC, 2022). The system uses blockchain technology to create a secure and transparent record of the movement of goods, which can help to prevent counterfeiting and smuggling.

Combating Counterfeit Goods

SCC has also intensified its efforts to combat counterfeit goods. The agency has established a dedicated unit to investigate and prosecute cases of counterfeiting (SCC, 2022). In 2023, SCC seized over 1,000 counterfeit goods, including clothing, electronics, and cosmetics, worth over 10 billion Uzbekistan som (SCC, 2023).

The agency has also worked closely with other law enforcement agencies, such as the Uzbekistan National Security Service, to combat counterfeiting (Uzbekistan National Security Service, 2022). In 2022, SCC and the Uzbekistan National Security Service conducted a joint operation to seize counterfeit goods, which resulted in the seizure of over 500 counterfeit goods worth over 5 billion Uzbekistan som (SCC, 2022).

Capacity Building

SCC has also invested in capacity building to enhance its ability to combat counterfeit and transnational crime. The agency has provided training to its officers on customs enforcement, risk management, and investigative techniques (SCC, 2023). Additionally, SCC has partnered with international organizations, such as the WCO, to provide technical assistance and capacity building programs (WCO, 2022).

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In 2022, SCC sent several officers to attend a training program on customs enforcement organized by the WCO (WCO, 2022). The program provided training on advanced techniques for detecting and preventing smuggling, as well as strategies for combating transnational crime.

Public Awareness

SCC has also launched public awareness campaigns to educate the public on the dangers of counterfeit goods and the importance of complying with customs regulations (SCC, 2022). The agency has used various media channels, including radio, television, and social media, to reach a wider audience.

In 2023, SCC launched a campaign to educate the public on the risks of buying counterfeit goods, including the potential health and safety risks (SCC, 2023). The campaign included radio and television advertisements, as well as social media posts, to reach a wider audience.

Stakeholder Engagement

SCC has also strengthened its engagement with stakeholders, including traders, importers, and exporters. The agency has established a stakeholder forum, which provides a platform for stakeholders to raise concerns and provide feedback on customs procedures and regulations (SCC, 2023).

In 2022, SCC conducted a survey of stakeholders to gather feedback on customs procedures and regulations (SCC, 2022). The survey provided valuable insights into the needs and concerns of stakeholders, which has helped the agency to improve its services and procedures.

Regional Cooperation

SCC has also strengthened its regional cooperation to combat transnational crime. The agency is a member of the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and has signed several agreements with neighboring countries to enhance cooperation in customs enforcement (CAREC, 2022).

In 2023, SCC participated in a regional workshop on combating transnational crime, organized by CAREC (CAREC, 2023). The workshop brought together customs officials from several countries in the region to share best practices and discuss strategies for combating transnational crime.

Use of Technology

SCC has also leveraged technology to enhance its ability to combat counterfeit and transnational crime. The agency has introduced advanced scanning technology to detect and prevent smuggling (SCC, 2023). Additionally, SCC has implemented a data analytics system to analyze trade data and identify potential risks (SCC, 2024).

In 2022, SCC launched a project to implement a machine learning-based system for predicting and preventing smuggling (SCC, 2022). The system uses machine learning algorithms to analyze trade data and identify potential risks, which can help to prevent smuggling and counterfeiting.

Risk Management

SCC has also implemented a risk management approach to customs clearance, which has reduced the number of physical inspections and expedited the clearance process (SCC, 2023). The agency has identified high-risk goods and traders and has implemented targeted interventions to mitigate these risks.

In 2022, SCC conducted a risk assessment of its customs procedures and regulations, which identified several areas for improvement (SCC, 2022). The agency has since implemented several measures to address these risks, including the introduction of advanced scanning technology and the implementation of a data analytics system.

Compliance

SCC has also strengthened its compliance program to ensure that traders comply with customs regulations. The agency has introduced a compliance framework, which outlines the requirements for traders to comply with customs regulations (SCC, 2022).

In 2023, SCC conducted a compliance audit of several traders, which identified several areas of non-compliance (SCC, 2023). The agency has since worked with these traders to address these issues and ensure compliance with customs regulations.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

SCC has also introduced stricter penalties for non-compliance with customs regulations. The agency has imposed fines and penalties on traders who fail to comply with customs regulations, including those who attempt to smuggle goods or evade duties (SCC, 2023).

In 2022, SCC imposed a fine of 10 million Uzbekistan som on a trader who was found to have evaded duties on a shipment of goods (SCC, 2022). The agency has also prosecuted several cases of smuggling and counterfeiting, which has resulted in the imposition of fines and penalties (SCC, 2023).

Appeals Process

SCC has also established an appeals process for traders who are dissatisfied with customs decisions. The agency has introduced an independent appeals committee, which reviews appeals and makes decisions on disputes (SCC, 2022).

In 2022, SCC received several appeals from traders who were dissatisfied with customs decisions (SCC, 2022). The agency has since reviewed these appeals and made decisions on the disputes, which has helped to promote fairness and transparency in the customs clearance process.

Training and Development

SCC has also invested in training and development to enhance the skills and knowledge of its officers. The agency has provided training on customs enforcement, risk management, and investigative techniques (SCC, 2023). Additionally, SCC has partnered with international organizations, such as the WCO, to provide technical assistance and capacity building programs (WCO, 2022).

In 2022, SCC sent several officers to attend a training program on customs enforcement organized by the WCO (WCO, 2022). The program provided training on advanced techniques for detecting and preventing smuggling, as well as strategies for combating transnational crime.

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