

# The Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP)

## *Broader Implementation of the TIR Convention in Central Asia*



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# CLDP Background

- The Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) is the technical assistance arm of the **U.S. Department of Commerce** Office of the General Counsel.
- **Created in 1992** to help former Soviet bloc countries transition to market economies.
- Today, CLDP has a global reach.
- CLDP provides technical assistance in the **commercial law** sphere to the governments and private sectors of transitional countries in support of their economic development goals.
- The technical assistance programs aim to foster legislative, regulatory, and judicial environments conducive to trade and investment.



# Central Asia Team Background

- As part of the U.S. Government's technical assistance to Central Asia, CLDP was tasked by the U.S. Department of State to assist in improving **trade and transit connectivity** between Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and between Central Asia and other countries and regions in the world.
- CLDP's work in Central Asia furthers the goals of the U.S.- Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) and the C5+1 Platform.
- **Regional Working Groups:** Expert level regional working groups on key trade issues: *Customs, Sanitary/Phytosanitary measures, Standards/Technical Barriers to Trade, Intellectual Property Rights, Women's Economic Empowerment, and Digital Trade.*
- **Bilateral Projects:** Government procurement projects in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan; capital markets development project in Uzbekistan.



# Customs Working Group Background

- In 2020 CLDP was tasked by the U.S. Department of State to assist regionally, in each country, and between Central Asia and other countries, with the **broader implementation of the TIR Convention**.
- The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects highlight the benefits of and greater need for such broader implementation of the TIR Convention.
- In June 2020, CLDP began cooperation with the International Road Transport Union (IRU), which administers the UN-registered TIR Convention, to facilitate the broader implementation of the TIR Convention in and between the countries of Central Asia.



# Customs Working Group

## Broader TIR Implementation – First Steps

- CLDP facilitated the translations of the TIR Convention, new Annex 11, the TIR Handbook, and the TIR “Distance Learning Modules” into Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek languages.
- The translated materials are now available online and have been delivered to the national associations and customs administrations.



# CLDP-IRU Cooperation

## Broader TIR Implementation in Tajikistan

- Conducted hands-on trainings for Customs officials in Tajikistan on correctly implementing digital TIR related processes in April – May 2021 in cooperation with the IRU and Tajik Association of Road Transport Operators (ABBAT).
- Facilitated Tajikistan’s joining the regional Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan Digital TIR Pilot Project in May 2021 .
- Supported additional hands-on trainings, in coordination with the IRU and ABBAT, for Tajik Customs officials on digital TIR procedures at various priority border crossing points.



# CLDP's planned future collaboration with the IRU in Central Asia

- Support the successful implementation of **TIR digitalization** projects in Central Asian countries and facilitate the expansion of digital TIR solutions in the region, including the ongoing **Digital TIR Pilot Project** initiated by Uzbekistan-Kazakhstan;
- Facilitate **trainings** of Customs officials and other relevant government officials using the translated TIR materials to improve the skills in digital TIR solutions;
- Facilitate the establishment of **Green Lanes**, or Green Windows, for expedited Customs processing;
- Support the countries' efforts connecting national customs systems to the **eTIR international system** in accordance with the eTIR specifications consistent with Annex 11 to the TIR Convention.



# Customs Working Group September 2021 Meeting

- Held a virtual meeting of the Customs Working Group on September 23-24, 2021, in collaboration with IRU, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA), and the Tajik Association of Road Transport Operators.
- Brought together over 30 participants, including government officials from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, and private sector representatives from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.
- The Customs Working Group developed and adopted 10 recommendations with respect to the broader implementation of the **TIR Convention** in individual countries and among the countries in Central Asia and examined the specific concerns, and recommendations with respect to the **ASYCUDA** projects in the region.





# Customs Working Group

## Next Steps

- The Working Group agreed to report on the progress of implementation of the adopted recommendations with respect to the broader implementation of the TIR Convention in the first quarter of 2022.
- The next meeting of the Working Group will focus on sharing experiences related to the operational aspects of TIR digitalization efforts and examine the feasibility of potential enlargement of the Central Asian digital TIR Corridors.





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