

Saudi Customs at FIATA World Congress 2019

Saudi Arabia outlines its efforts in supporting logistics and facilitating global trade

Saudi Customs participates in the FIATA World Congress 2019 (International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations) hosted this year in South Africa's Cape Town, between the 1st and 5th of October under the theme "Where Technology and Logistics Meet." This international platform is held on annual basis to discuss the freight and logistics' challenges and developments.

Saudi Customs participation as a diamond sponsor in this world-renowned event to highlight its efforts in positioning the Kingdom as a global logistics hub through offering world-class customs services in line with the ambitious goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

Heading Saudi Customs' delegation at the event, the Governor of the General Customs Authority, H.E. Ahmed Alhakbani, delivered a keynote speech on the comprehensive transformation phase the Kingdom is undergoing, to bolster the Kingdom's strategic position as a trade facilitator linking the world's continents.

Alhakbani outlined the Authority's proactive approach in keeping up with these transformations, mainly in terms of adopting an integrated technical system, moving towards automating clearance procedures, and launching blockchain technology for shipping operations which places it among the first customs authorities in the world to adopt this advanced technology.

H.E. highlighted the significant level of strategic liaison and partnerships between Saudi Customs and relevant authorities which had a notable impact, especially in establishing the single window electronic platform "FASAH" which provides over 135 services to customers.

Touching on international cooperation, Alhakbani emphasized Saudi Customs' keenness to overcome any obstacles that hinder the flow of trade through the continued coordination with the relevant global organizations and entities. As such, several agreements, most notably the activation of the Kingdom's accession to the "Transports Internationaux Routiers" (TIR) Convention agreement was signed, that facilitates global trade while ensuring the secure movement of goods between TIR members.

H.E. added Saudi Customs' signing of mutual recognition agreements MRA's for the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program, which contributes towards strengthening ties between Saudi commercial enterprises and their global counterparts. He emphasized that Saudi Customs has cemented its partnership with the private sector through securing necessary requirements and providing efficient customs procedures to motivate investors.

On the side-lines of the conference, Saudi Customs' pavilion at the exhibition attracted visitors interested in the logistics sector. Guests were briefed on Saudi Customs' recent achievements and developments, most notably the new bonded zones and the 24-hour clearance program, which has contributed to enhancing clearance procedures and reducing the clearance time from 14 days to less than 24 hours.

ABOUT SAUDI CUSTOMS

Saudi Customs is the Governmental Authority responsible for facilitating the safe and efficient import and export of trade goods and associated services via land, sea and air in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Authority is committed to achieving the ambitious goals set out in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which aims to diversify the Kingdom's economy, attract international investment and drive overall growth through the adoption and implementation of groundbreaking technologies and innovative practices.

Through the application of effective and efficient procedures, Saudi Customs is committed to elevating the quality of customs services provided across its network of more than 35 ports, while working to establish the Kingdom as one of the world's premier logistics hubs, supporting the growth and diversification of the country's economy. It is already one of the Kingdom's biggest employers, with a workforce of more than 10,000 across the country.

The depth and scope of Saudi Customs' new roadmap reflects their commitment as an organization to accelerating change across all facets of their operations through the implementation of new technologies designed to simplify and automate customs procedures and deliver the very best services to clients.

Saudi Customs is also moving forward in implementing the latest technologies, and testing various solutions such as blockchain. As part of its blockchain pilot program, and in conjunction with their IT partner "Tabadul", the Authority recently oversaw the integration of the single-window platform Fasah with TradeLens, a blockchain-enabled global shipping solution jointly developed by Maersk and IBM, as part of its pilot.

The Authority's efforts to streamline clearance processes has ensured that 80% of all imported goods clear customs in less than 24 hours of their arrival in the Kingdom, marking a significant improvement on previous years.

It is initiatives such as these that support Saudi Arabia's reputation internationally and positioning it as one of the world's most vibrant, open and dynamic economies.

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