

COMMISSIONER GENERAL

GNSW Conference

9 May 2017

Honourable Ministers, Hon. Dept. Minister, Honourable Member of Parliament, Senior Representatives of the International organizations, representatives of the business community, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

This is an important conference for me as it marks the first opportunity I have had since taking office to publicly express my deep satisfaction with the work of the Customs Division in establishing the Ghana National Single Window. As many of you know, the initial work under this programme involved the replacement of the Destination Inspection Company (DIC) scheme with the new Pre-Arrival Assessment Reporting Scheme (PAARS) operated by the Customs Division, as recommended by The World Customs Organization. This has proven to be highly successful initiative, with the waiting time for approvals reduced from over 2 weeks to less than 2 days, and even hours in many cases. This work was followed by the

introduction of a series of innovative and proactive improvements in Customs services over the past 2 years including:

- The launch of the On-line Single Registration System for Export Declaration,
- The introduction of the Sea and Air e-Manifest System,
- The establishment of the e-Courier Module,
- The introduction of electronic payment for the Import Declaration Forms (IDF) - as a pilot for other similar operations in trade
- The constitution of the National Risk Management Committee and the team to work on Coordinated Border Management and Inspections

- The introduction of facilities such as the Trade Information Portal providing vital tools such as Duty Calculator and regulatory requirements at the detailed product level
- Establishment of the legal framework for the Ghana National Single Window - with the necessary amendments to the Customs Act.
- and the delivery of a range of training workshops to ensure that the business community is fully competent to utilize the new services and facilities.

All of these measures are having a very positive and direct impact on the competitiveness of the Ghanaian Economy, and in particular on our capacity to enhance international trade through the removal or reduction of regulatory barriers to trade. These impacts support the new Government's emphasis on international trade growth by making trade easier, faster and less expensive for traders.

The main focus for the coming months will be on the full launch of the GNSW Integrated Risk Management System, automation

of Ghana maritime internal operations, further integration with the Scanning Modules, and launch of the Helpdesk for GUTA. We will also deliver, through our technical partner West Blue Consulting, a comprehensive package of training and Change and Transition Management support to ensure that the new services are sustainably embedded within the Agencies and that individual managers and officers are fully trained in their delivery.

Representatives of the business community have expressed their strong satisfaction with these developments and have indicated that there has been a particularly positive development for their international trade operations. All of these improvements greatly strengthen our international trade infrastructure, reduce time and costs for our traders, and enhance predictability for both business and government.

You will not be surprised that, I'm also very pleased to advise you that these positive benefits have been associated with a significant improvement in government revenues collected by

Customs over this period. It is extremely gratifying to be able to improve services and simultaneously increase revenue collection.

I would like to highly commend the business community for their strong collaboration and support in implementing the Ghana National Single Window project. They have fully participated in the GNSW Programme to date and have pledged their full support going forward. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the Officers in the Ghana Revenue

Authority, Customs Division and all of the key Ministries for their strong work and commitment that is critical to the success of this initiative. Further, I would like to particularly complement and acknowledge the sterling efforts of West Blue Consulting, our technical partner in the development and delivery on the Ghana National Single Window Programme. It is very gratifying for me to see a local Ghanaian company deliver a world class project that is becoming a model for many countries worldwide.

In closing I ask all of you personally to continue this effort as we progress this important programme. What we are achieving here is a real change in mind-set, where government and trade are working together for the benefit of all. This is a true win-win scenario and I hope it will become a model for other areas of government in Ghana.