

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



## CONTACT:

Contact Person: **Michael Laden, CFO**  
Company Name: **Trusted Trade Alliance (TTA)**  
Voice Phone Number: (+1) **952.975.9099**  
Email Address: **Laden@trusted-trade.net**  
Website URL: [www.trusted-trade.net](http://www.trusted-trade.net) [www.wcoomd.org](http://www.wcoomd.org)

## World Customs Forum 2009 to be held in Seattle

**Vancouver, WA** (PRWEB) AUGUST 12, 2009 – The [World Customs Organization \(WCO\)](http://www.wcoomd.org) and the [Trusted Trade Alliance, LLC \(TTA\)](http://www.trusted-trade.net) today announced the details of the third annual **World Customs Forum**. This globally acclaimed forum brings together world leaders in international trade and customs to discuss and debate new and emerging issues confronting global trade today.

The 2009 World Customs Forum will be held on October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> at the Bell Harbor Conference Center, Seattle, Washington, USA.

This year's theme, **Trade Facilitation in a Time of Economic Crisis - Preserving the Engine of Global Economic Growth** will draw speakers and participants from key sectors of the international trade community including supply chain practitioners, senior level government officials, academia and legal advisors. With a clear focus on the need to stem the imposition of additional regulatory burdens on international trade in the current economic climate, the forum will address a broad range of pressing issues critical to the growth of global trade. Sessions will include vigorous discussions of the impact of government demands on commercial imperatives, emerging security mandates, coordination between national governments, cross border challenges and best practices in global import and export processes.

WCO Secretary General Kunio Mikuriya, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Department of Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, and other high level officials from around the world are among the invited list of high profile speakers, with confirmed panelists including Susanne Aigner from the EU Commission, Graeme Ludlow from the International Monetary Fund, and a number of senior figures from the public and private sector trade community on five continents. The conference is being conducted in partnership with host trade association the American Association of Exporters and Importers (AAEI), the Canadian national trade association IE Canada, the International Compliance Professionals Association (ICPA), as well as the major customs & trade associations in Europe and Asia.

The Forum will be co-chaired by Professor David Widdowson, CEO of the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies at the University of Canberra, Australia; Mr. Allen Bruford, Deputy Director, Compliance and Facilitation Directorate at the WCO; and Mr. Michael Laden, Chief Financial Officer for TTA.

This annual event has been previously held in Europe, at WCO Headquarters in Brussels. However, the WCO and TTA believe it is essential to expand the reach of the Forum by bringing it to other key international trading centers, and this event will allow US based members of the trade community to engage Customs at the world level and have first-hand exposure to WCO views and processes.

The conference is expected to sell out quickly and seating is limited. Registration will be open on August 11<sup>th</sup>, and can be accomplished by visiting the following link: <http://www.trusted-trade.net/en/world-customs-forum/>.

A conference brochure and agenda is appended to this release. For further information please visit <http://www.trusted-trade.net/en/world-customs-forum/> or the WCO web site <http://www.wcoomd.org>.

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### **About the [World Customs Organization \(WCO\)](#)**

The WCO is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium and was established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC). The WCO is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations. Today, the WCO represents **174 Customs administrations** across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community. The WCO's governing body – the Council – relies on the competence and skills of a Secretariat and a range of technical and advisory committees to accomplish its mission. Besides the vital role played by the WCO in stimulating the growth of legitimate international trade, its efforts to combat fraudulent activities are also recognized internationally. The partnership approach championed by the WCO is one of the keys to building bridges between Customs administrations and their partners. By promoting the emergence of an honest, transparent and predictable Customs environment, the WCO directly contributes to the economic and social well-being of its Members.

### **About the [Trusted Trade Alliance \(TTA\)](#)**

The Trusted Trade Alliance is comprised of a team of professionals located in more than 15 offices on five continents across the globe. TTA provides premier consulting in the fields of import and export compliance, supply-chain security, risk mitigation, and cross-border trade. The TTA team also focuses on trade advocacy services for the private sector, educational and training programs for both the private and public sector, and technology assessments for companies looking to implement trade software solutions. Our notable team of experts includes trade compliance professionals with extensive practical experience in setting up successful customs and trade compliance organizations within major multinationals, former senior government officials, the founders of the leading graduate-level customs degree programs globally, and recognized experts who lead training programs for front-line customs officials on five continents. We are uniquely positioned to provide support and guidance in the implementation or expansion of compliance operations across multiple countries or globally. From Nuevo Laredo to New Delhi, from Munich to Minneapolis, the Trusted Trade Alliance stands ready to assist you with your trade and supply-chain security needs.