

Press Release

As Cambodia is a members of the ASIA-EUROPE Forum (ASEM), the General Department of Customs and Excise of Cambodia - GDCE has participated in the “Joint Customs Operation DIABOLO II” or “DIABOLO II” in accordance with the decision made by ASEM Meeting held in Japan in 2007, 1st ASEM Working Group (AWG) Meeting in France in 2008, and 3rd AWG Meeting in Hungary in 2009. Member Countries involved in the project consists of 27 countries from Europe and 13 countries from ASIA and including ASEAN Secretariat and European Commission. The project was implemented from August till October 2009. The performance evaluation of the project was conducted in Japan in January 2010. Its main strategic purpose of the project is to prevent and suppress illegal trade and smugglings of cigarette and tobacco, and trade on counterfeit cigarettes exported from ports of ASIA to ports in Europe.

As a result, customs administrations have confiscated approximately 65 million pieces of counterfeited cigarettes, and other fake items such as shoes, cameras, mobile phones etc. of more than 360,000 as well. This has been resulted from physical inspection made on about 30 cargo containers out of the total of 300 risk-base targeted containers. According to the Law Enforcement Unit of the Europol and Interpol, about 89 relevant companies or individuals are under investigation. These illegal activities have resulted in the loss of millions of dollars or national revenues; it has badly affected good compliant traders and producers, thus, affected the free market competitive environment, and related economic benefits; and finally produce negative impact on consumers’ health.

In this context, the GDCE would like to call on all government ministries and agencies, non-government agencies, civil organizations, public and private entities as well as business communities contribute their full cooperation with us for effective investigation, prevention, and suppression of these illegal activities and to achieve further success for the benefit of economic development and Cambodian society towards prosperity.

Phnom Penh, March, 2010.