

# 9<sup>TH</sup> TF-CIT MEETING

## Countering Illicit Trade for a Strong Recovery

### Agenda

25-26 March 2021  
via Zoom



**Register**

14:00-14:30

**WELCOME STATEMENT**

- OECD Public Governance Directorate

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY TF-CIT CO-CHAIRS**

- **Christopher Martin**, Counsellor, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, United Kingdom
- **Steve Francis**, Director, National IPR Center, Department of Homeland Security, United States

14:30 -15:00

**ILLICIT TRADE: EVIDENCE ON THIS EVER-GROWING RISK**

Globalisation and free trade are the essential engines of general welfare and economic growth. However, they also spur illicit trade, as black markets and criminal organisations benefit from the global economy's excellent infrastructure. The OECD takes this challenge very seriously, which it addresses through its Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade. The Task Force engages the global community, governments, the private sector, and stakeholders around the shared goal of countering illicit trade.

This session will summarise the activities carried out by the TF-CIT in 2020 and 2021. It will present the primary evidence on recent trends in illicit trade, as well as on the crucial governance gaps that enable it.

15:00-15:30

**UNITED AGAINST ILLICIT TRADE -- KEYNOTE ADDRESSES**

15:30-16:00 BREAK

16:00 -16:45

**ILLICIT TRADE AT THE TIME OF COVID: FANNING THE FLAMES OF EXISTING PROBLEMS**

The COVID-19 pandemic poses new challenges to economies, communities, and people. However, for criminals that run illicit trade networks, this pandemic opens new opportunities for profits. Broken supply chains; strong demand for medicines, protective equipment, and tests; or limited capacities of law enforcement officials all shape the landscape of illicit trade. Over the past year, the OECD Task Force on Countering Illicit Trade has closely monitored these trends in co-operation with key private and public stakeholders.

This session will discuss the existing evidence on the challenging landscape of illicit trade during the pandemic.

**16:45 -17:30**

**TOGETHER TOWARDS A CLEAN RECOVERY**

Illicit trade is not a stand-alone problem, and a holistic approach is needed to address it. We need a co-ordinated effort involving all relevant actors, including customs and tax authorities, the trade community, and industry. Furthermore, continued monitoring of the risk is critical for developing a global standard for unbiased and robust evidence on illicit trade. Finally, all these efforts must be complemented with building awareness among consumers and policymakers.

The TF-CIT provides a forum for holistic dialogue and a centre for excellence in building evidence on illicit trade. This session will discuss strategies and concrete actions to address the challenges of illicit trade during the recovery process.

**17:30 -18:30**

**CLOSED SESSION FOR OECD MEMBER COUNTRY DELEGATES ONLY**

In this session, delegates will be invited to discuss the modes and frameworks of future work of the Task Force to further its work on illicit trade, maximize stakeholder engagement and secure the resources needed to carry forward its activities.

14:00 -15:30

**ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY IN FREE TRADE ZONES**

Free Trade Zones (FTZs) can offer substantial economic benefits for host countries and hosted companies alike, but they can also be misused to facilitate trade in fake goods and other illicit activities. The COVID-19 crisis aggravates these problems by re-shaping trade routes and posing additional enforcement challenges.

To address this issue and limit the abuse of FTZs, the OECD adopted a Recommendation on Countering Illicit Trade: Enhancing Transparency in Free Trade Zones. Over the past year, the TF-CIT has been working on implementing the Recommendation, including the development of an assessment toolkit.

This session will discuss the assessment toolkit and the next steps in the implementation process.

15:30-16:00 BREAK

16:00 -17:30

**CONTAINER SHIPS: FIXING THE ENGINE OF TRADE**

Today, containerized maritime transport is the backbone of globalization, accounting for more than 70% of trade's total value. It offers a range of logistical and technological solutions that benefit both consumers and businesses. Unfortunately, as noted in the recently published OECD-EUIPO report, container transport can also be abused for illicit trade. Moreover, the present crisis has aggravated existing problems, enabling criminals to exploit governance gaps.

Building on findings of the OECD-EUIPO report, the TF-CIT could develop more robust governance solutions to tackle containerized maritime transport abuse in illicit trade.

This session will discuss the existing evidence on misuse of containerized maritime transport in illicit trade. Participants will reflect what more robust governance solutions would look like.