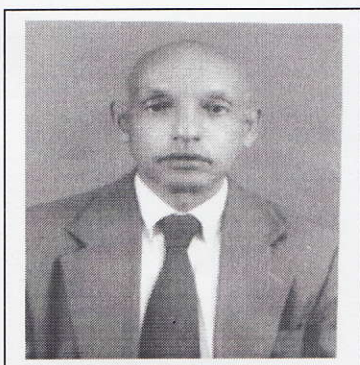


Message from the Director General



Mr. Fessahaie Haile
Director General
ERITREA CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT

4th March, 2009

It is my great pleasure and gratitude, on behalf of the Customs Department of the Ministry of Finance, to present brief of ASYCUDA project in Eritrea.

Customs administrations around the world have been modernizing their administrative and operational activities in order to face up to the challenges of the fast changing global economy. As part of the global community, Eritrea cannot be left behind in this drive towards modernization. Several efforts have been made to computerize some of the department's operations. This includes development of the statistical processing system and the accounts system both at the customs stations and at head office as far back as 1995. In 2006 however, the department embarked on a COMESA project to computerize the whole of its operations from declaration processing up to goods release and report generation. The ASYCUDA project in Eritrea formally commenced in October 2006. Many developments have taken place ever since and the system was implemented at the first pilot site, Asmara Airport, in October 2007 followed by the Railway customs station on 2nd January 2008, port of Massawa customs station on 2nd June 2008, Port of Assab customs station on 12th May 2008. Very soon the ASYCUDA system will be extended to the Tesseney customs station bordering Sudan.

Additionally it was also successfully implemented in Asmara parcel post customs station on 1st April 2008 and Asmara airport passenger's terminal on 29th March 2008 with a simplified declarations form. These two sites were not part of the initial designated Customs offices to be computerized.

The department is already reaping good benefits from these successful implementation as declarations are keyed-in by agents (Direct Traders Input - DTI), faster clearance time of goods, transparent revenue collection, up to date statistics and useful management reports to efficiently monitor the day to day activities of the Customs declaration processing.

However, an important facility, namely Wide Area Network (WAN) is not in place yet. Without the WAN in place, full benefits of the ASYCUDA++ system may not be realized. Effective transit management, data replications from stations to HQ, remote system updates and maintenance, etc. are among the important areas of the system that depend on an efficient WAN.

Lastly, allow me to pay tribute to all international and local organizations that are helping the Customs Department, directly or indirectly, in the implementation of this very important customs modernization project.

Thank you.