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## **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF THE CUSTOMS SERVICE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS**

### **Международное сотрудничество таможенных органов Республики Беларусь**

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One of the most important tasks for each state is to establish strong ties in the sphere of international cooperation. The Republic of Belarus is not an exception to the rule. Our country, as all the other states, is economically interested in creating favorable conditions for interaction with world structures.

The Customs Service is one of the state bodies that bears the burden of protecting the economic interests of its country on the international arena. Therefore, the actual direction of the development of international cooperation is the international cooperation of the Customs Service of the Republic of Belarus.

In order to develop multilateral cooperation of the Republic of Belarus, to improve the legal framework, to develop the implementation of international obligations, the Customs authorities of the Republic of Belarus cooperate with the Customs services of foreign countries, participate in the work of various international organizations and integration associations.

Since gaining independence, the Belarusian state has concluded 69 international agreements, memoranda, protocols on cooperation and mutual administrative assistance in Customs sphere with 28 states.

In 1998 the Republic of Belarus joined the Brussels Convention on ATA Carnet and the Istanbul Convention on Temporary Admission, the Brussels Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding system, the Nairobi Convention "On the provision of mutual assistance in the prevention, suppression and investigation of Customs offenses", signed within the World Customs Organization in 2000, the Kyoto Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures in 2011.

The pragmatic and flexible relations with the states of Western Europe outlined in 2010, which served as an additional incentive for intensifying the work on the creation of the legal base for cooperation with the Republic of Belarus in Customs sphere. So, the relations on cooperation and the avoidance of double taxation with Austria were settled. The negotiations on mutual administrative assistance in Customs sphere with the Kingdom of Belgium, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Montenegro, Romania, the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic, the Italian Republic, the Swiss Confederation were held.

The most productive cooperation in the Customs sphere has been conducted in the post-Soviet space. The idea of forming the Eurasian Economic Union for the first time was put forward on March 29, 1994, during a speech of the President of Kazakhstan in Moscow. At the base of the creation of the Eurasian Economic Union the large project of integration of independent states laid. The innovation was to create an integrated structure that envisaged the adoption of joint strategic development programs in the key sectors of the economy, as well as in the political, defense, legal, environmental, cultural and educational spheres without abandoning further improvement of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The rapprochement of the Eurasian states began in 1995 with the signing of the Agreement on the Customs Union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Thus, the integration center of states was determined. All the states moved towards the creation of the Common Economic Space (CES) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) over the next 20 years, not without difficulties and

pauses, but consistently and directionally. Soon to the Customs arrangement joined Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

There was a real jerk in 2000. The five of contiguous States created a new integration structure that was the Eurasian economic community which was aimed at closer cooperation on the basis of unification of the legislation and harmonization of the processes of economic restructuring.

Step by step leaders of the states moved to agreed positions finding a balance of interests. On January 1, 2010, the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia was launched, within the framework of which the Common Customs Tariff and the Common Commodity Nomenclature activities, the Customs Code of the Customs Union and the Commission of the Customs Union, other international treaties between the sides, as well as decisions of the Supreme Body of the Customs Union were set.

Since July 1, 2011, when the Customs control at the internal borders was completely removed and, thus, the formation of a single Customs territory was completed, the Customs Union was fully operational.

The participation of the Republic of Belarus in Eurasian integration became not only a political step, but also demonstrated economic benefits and prospects for closer cooperation in the region. Studies of the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) showed that by the end of the forecast period (by 2030) the greatest positive effects will be observed in Belarus due to the current economic structure, directions of foreign trade relations and scale of the economy.

That is why, on the one hand, the breakthrough integration in the post-Soviet space created the conditions for the modernization of the Eurasian states, and, on the other hand, sharpened their competitive geopolitical confrontation.

In recent years, cooperation within the CIS and the Russian Federation has traditionally remained productive (15 international treaties were signed; 13 came into force). The cooperation in the field of taxation of the movement of oil and oil products, the construction of a nuclear power plant in the Republic of Belarus were significantly improved.

Based on well-calculated economic benefits and mutual benefits the EAEU is ambitious and at the same time the most realistic integration project in modern Eurasia.

In 2019 the Eurasian integration project turned 25 years. Successive transformation of the Eurasian space continues today as opposed to world crisis phenomena on the principles of in-depth Customs cooperation and market economy with preservation of political independence and the prevailing cultural identity of sovereign states.

Despite the fact that the Republic of Belarus is involved in international cooperation, the number of states with which it carries out foreign economic

relations, significantly exceeds the number of states with which agreement on cooperation in Customs relations has been reached.

All in all, further improvement of the legal framework international Customs cooperation, including with the Customs authorities of the states with which the Republic of Belarus has a common border, remains as an urgent task of the Customs authorities.

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## **THE HISTORY OF THE CUSTOMS UNION OF THE EU AND THE EAEU**

### **История таможенного союза ЕС и ЕАЭС**

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The EU Customs Union has got more than 50 years history. In July 1968 all customs duties and restrictions are lifted between the six member countries of the European Economic Community - EEC. A common customs tariff replaces national customs duties on products from the rest of the world. Trade between