

Turkey Approves 2013 Agreement with Palestine for Mutual Assistance on Customs

18 Oct 2016

Turkey's Council of Ministers has approved a customs agreement executed between Turkey and Palestine in April 2013. The Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of the State of Palestine on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters ("**Agreement**") was approved on 6 June 2016. It aims to increase compliance with customs legislation and prevent customs crime.

The Agreement was executed to co-operate and assist in preventing, investigating and combating customs offenses, on the basis that such offenses are prejudicial to the economic, commercial, financial, social and cultural interests of both countries.

The Agreement is made in accordance with the international conventions encouraging bilateral mutual assistance and Recommendations by the Customs Co-operation Council (World Customs Organization). Key provisions include:

- Upon request, either country's Customs Administration must provide all available information which could help in enforcing customs legislation.
- Upon request, either country's Customs Administration must provide copies of customs and shipment documents, as well as information on actions which constitute/may constitute an offense against the other country's customs legislation.
- If a country does not have the requested information, it must take the necessary steps to obtain such information.
- Upon request, a country's Customs Administration must (within competence and available resources) conduct checks of
 - Persons who are known or suspected to have committed offenses against customs legislation
 - Goods which are known or suspected to be subject to customs offenses
 - Transport methods known or suspected of being used for committing customs offenses.
- Customs Administrations must (in cooperation with related ministries) provide each other with all relevant information on action which constitutes (or may constitute) an offense against the other country's customs legislation regarding illicit traffic of sensitive goods such as weapons, missiles, explosive and nuclear materials. Transferring this information to third parties is prohibited.
- Upon request, a country's Customs Administration shall investigate acts which constitute (or may constitute) an offense against the other country's customs legislation.
- Information and documents received under this Agreement can only be used during administrative, investigative and judicial proceedings and must not be used for purposes other than those specified under the Agreement.
- A Customs Administration can refuse to cooperate if it believes that such assistance would infringe upon the sovereignty, security or any other essential interest of its state, or would be inconsistent with domestic laws.
- The Customs Administrations, by a mutually agreed program, will provide each other with technical assistance for training of customs officials and exchange of experts in customs matters.
- The Agreement is executed for an indefinite period. Either Party may terminate this Agreement by written notice through diplomatic channels.

Please see this [link](#) for the full text of the Agreement.

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