



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Singapore Customs Joint Media Release

SINGAPORE AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO COUNTER PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD)

The 12th International Export Control Conference will be held in Singapore from 24 to 26 May 2011. This is the first time the Conference is being held in Asia. It is a testimony to Singapore's commitment to counter the proliferation of WMD. The Conference is jointly organised by Singapore, the United States of America and the European Union.

Singapore Remains Committed to Counter Proliferation of WMD

2 This International Conference sends a strong signal that responsible nation states must be serious about the role they can play in bringing about, and contributing to a peaceful global trading environment through counter-proliferation efforts. Being one of the first countries in the region and the first in ASEAN to adopt an export control regime, Singapore is committed to implementing the various international non-proliferation regimes as well as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1540. The UNSC Resolution calls on all UN members states to have effective domestic controls against the illicit trafficking of WMD items and their related materials.

3 Singapore has implemented a robust export control regime since January 2003 to regulate trade in strategic goods. The regime has since undergone several rounds of enhancements to keep it in line with updates in key multilateral export control regimes and international developments. While ensuring that Singapore's regulatory requirements are effective to counter the threats of WMD proliferation and to uphold the integrity of the trading system, Singapore's export control regime also ensures that legitimate traders are capable of complying with the evolving requirements of the strategic trade regime at reasonable costs.

Non-proliferation through International Cooperation and Knowledge Exchange

4 The Conference provides an opportunity for export control officials to promote closer international cooperation and knowledge exchange to counter the proliferation of WMD. Singapore believes that enhanced international and regional cooperation is the way forward to combat WMD proliferation. Singapore will continue to extend its cooperation and assistance to other countries on export control issues, and to exchange reliable and actionable intelligence to counter proliferation in order to ensure the security of the global trading system.

5 Singapore supports the sharing of knowledge on implementing an export control regime and its associated challenges. To this end, Singapore has always been open about sharing our experience on implementing strategic goods control with regional countries, and will continue to do so through international forums and workshops. Singapore welcomes more networking opportunities with like-minded nations to pave the way for closer collaboration in future.

Export Control Does Not Hamper Trade Growth

6 Singapore Customs, as the National Authority for the Strategic Goods (Control) Act, recognises that regulation must not become a barrier to legitimate trade. Hence, Singapore Customs has implemented the Strategic Trade Scheme (STS) to facilitate legitimate trade in dual use goods, which is based on the principles of risk management coupled with robust internal compliance system of traders. Singapore's export control regime strives to ensure that regulation of trade in dual use items does not hamper trade.

7 In 2010, more than \$1.8 billion worth of strategic goods exports were brought out of Singapore. In the same year, Singapore Customs received and processed more than 17,700 strategic goods permit applications, averaging more than 1,475 per month.

Building Up Business Community's Compliance with Strategic Trade Regulations

8 Singapore Customs recognises that a successful export control regime starts from the industry. Therefore, Singapore Customs will continue to outreach to our local industry through various seminars and workshops to ensure that Singapore's business community is aware of the latest developments and requirements under the Strategic Goods (Control) Act, and to help them establish internal control procedures to ensure compliance.

9 In addition, Singapore Customs works in partnership with foreign customs authorities in the provision of capacity building programmes to co-host joint seminars so as to better inform the business community on international strategic trade control policies. Be they local or foreign outreach activities, Singapore Customs seeks to build up the compliance levels of the business community, and in turn encourage greater self-compliance.

End of release

**ISSUED BY: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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