



## Inaugural INCU Global Conference

**Press Release – Canberra, 30 May 2014**

The Inaugural INCU Global Conference “Trade Facilitation Post-Bali: Putting Policy into Practice” was held from 21 to 23 May 2014 in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan. The conference was jointly organised by the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) and the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and hosted by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The conference was a tremendous success. It brought together delegates from over 70 countries including representatives of customs administrations, the private sector, academic institutions and international organisations.

The conference was co-chaired by the Chairman of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Professor Aydin Aliyev, and the President of the INCU, Professor David Widdowson.

The opening address of the conference was delivered via video by the Director General of the World Trade Organization, H.E. Ambassador Roberto Azevedo. Conference delegates were also addressed by three Nobel Laureates: Professor Sir Christopher Pissarides, Professor Thomas Sargent and Professor Alvin Roth, and the Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Homeland Security, Dr Alan Bersin, along with many other distinguished academics and customs practitioners.

The high level Government representation at the conference, including that of the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Minister of Communication and Information Technology, the Deputy Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other senior members of Government was extremely well received and greatly appreciated by all delegates.

On Day 3 of the conference, the INCU signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the European Ports Community Systems Association (EPCSA) with the goal of promoting cooperation in the development and provision of world-class research and education. The initial objective of the two organisations is to develop new curriculum modules based around Port Community Systems (PCSs) and the important role they play in the smooth flow of cargo around the world.

The conference also incorporated a General Meeting of INCU members. The meeting was also attended by a number of observers including representatives of EPCSA, the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the US Department of Homeland Security.

Based on the outcomes of the conference and the General Meeting, the INCU adopted the *Baku Resolution*, which is available on the INCU website ([www.incu.org](http://www.incu.org)).

The success of the conference is testament to the dedication and commitment of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and that of its Chairman, Professor Aydin Aliyev, to capacity building and academic excellence as a driver for improved customs services, not only of the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, but that of its regional and international counterparts. In recognition of this, Professor Aliyev was admitted as an Honorary Fellow of the INCU.

The INCU wishes to formally thank the conference host, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and all involved in the event’s planning for the excellent organisation of this conference and their impressive hospitality. The quality of services, which was simply outstanding, underpinned the conference’s success and positive outcome.

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