

# Letter of Recommendation

Since ancient civilizations, Customs has served its mission of collecting duties and other revenues as well as ensuring our borders. These roles have expanded exponentially since World War II during which time global trade increased more than 100-fold. More recently, Customs' role in balancing trade security and facilitation has been further recognized to be as critical to maintaining global economic development and growth, in particular since the September 11 incident in 2001. The mission of Customs continues to evolve, as we now expect its larger role in protecting our intellectual property rights and even our environment.

It is for these reasons I much appreciate the work of the WCO (the World Customs Organization) to secure and facilitate trade as well as protect our lives. In this regard, Japan has been contributing to the WCO both in terms of its work content and resources since its accession in 1964, and is currently the largest donor. The contribution of

Japan extends in particular to developing country Members, by sharing its experience of post-war development that has largely been achieved through trade, and bridging North-South as well as Asia and the world.

Under such circumstances, I am pleased to introduce Mr. Kunio Mikuriya as a candidate for Secretary General of the WCO. Currently Deputy Secretary General of the WCO, Mr. Mikuriya has demonstrated expertise in the management of international organizations, and possesses extensive experience and knowledge not only in customs and trade, but also economics, public finance and financial markets. His achievements are also highly appreciated by other international organizations such as the WTO, the World Bank and the ADB.

I am confident that Mr. Mikuriya will further improve the quality of the WCO's activities and thus benefit its Members.

I heartily welcome your support for Mr. Kunio Mikuriya.

Prime Minister of Japan  
Yasuo Fukuda


