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IFCBA Kyoto World Conference Concludes with Knowledge, Networking and a Declaration

The IFCBA (International Federation of Customs Brokers Associations) celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary at an important and successful conference in Kyoto, Japan. Hosted by the Japan Customs Brokers Association (JCBA) at a time of unprecedented complexity and interdependence, more than 200 Customs brokers and other trade professionals from 20 countries participated in this event. JCBA President Mr. Seisaku Okafuji observed that “the necessity of international cooperation has never been more paramount for those involved in global trade,”

Opening the conference, a comprehensive keynote speech by Dr. Kunio Mikuriya, former Secretary General of the World Customs Organization, inspired delegates with historical reference, regional geopolitical context and succinct analysis of the challenges ahead. Ms. Mona Haddad, Global Director of Trade, Investment and Competitiveness with the World Bank provided additional important insights about the state of global trade.

Panelists from Australia, India, Jamaica, Korea, Mexico, the United States and Japan, shared their expert views on developments and best practices about gender equality and diversity, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), and Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) as well as views for the future. The conference theme of “Borders Divide: the Value of Customs Brokers Strategic Connections” was reinforced. In addition, speakers from Japan and Korea gave thought-provoking presentations on AI, data and digitalization, and trade connections.

In closing the conference, a declaration (attached) approved by the IFCBA Board of Directors was presented by Chairman Mr. Shankar Shinde of India. The IFCBA commits itself to sustainable economic growth; equality and inclusion; strengthening international cooperation, and investment in education, human resource development, and fairness, and calls on others to uphold these values.