

JOINT STATEMENT
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In late 2019, the first outbreak of what has now become known globally as the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was reported. On 11 March 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak was categorised by the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) as a pandemic.

The speed with which the pandemic crosses borders demands an urgent and agile response in relation to the international movement of goods in general and essential medical equipment and food supplies in particular. The World Customs Organization (WCO) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) call for a coordinated Customs response to the COVID-19 crisis, including through active participation in multilateral efforts and an open dialogue with neighbouring countries.

We call on Customs administrations and other government agencies to keep trade flowing by maintaining the continuity of the international supply chain and simplifying and facilitating the Customs processes for essential medical equipment, medicines and food supplies—as well as key support personnel—so as to ensure an effective response to the pandemic and to protect lives throughout the world.

This crisis is resulting in an unprecedented threat to supply chains in many sectors, with significant implications for the supply of goods and for employment. Effective trade facilitation—based on international standards—will play a central role in supporting businesses, including micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, towards enabling business resumption and renewed economic growth in the months and years to come.

In order to support its members and relevant stakeholders, the WCO has created [a dedicated section in its website](#) and included several existing and newly developed instruments and tools relevant to the integrity and facilitation of the supply chain in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ICC is working at both global and local levels to: shape public policy responses to both the health and economic impacts of COVID-19; forge vital partnerships between the private sector, governments and international organisations; and provide practical tools and resources to enable businesses continuity and enable enterprises to take effective action to limit the spread of the virus.

The WCO and ICC are partnering to explore potential opportunities to increase the coordination of efforts in response to COVID-19, aiming at keeping trade flows open around the world and at supporting a strong recovery of the global economy.