

- Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends,
- I am very pleased to address you today during the Special Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on "Countering the Use of New and Emerging Technologies for Terrorist Purposes".
- Indeed, the pace of technological development has significantly accelerated in recent decades.
- However, these developments are at the service both of society and terrorist organizations.
- One technology poses specific risks: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, commonly known as drones.
- Drones are not a new invention: initially developed by the military, they have been widely used in the theatre of war.
- However, the tide changed in the 2000s, when the first commercially available drones hit the market, thus making this particularly disruptive technology dual-use.
- Not only have drones become smaller and cheaper, but their engines became much more powerful, they can be hand-launched, and the spectrum of their usage has grown from security, safety and surveillance to recreational purposes and delivery mechanisms (for example of parcels by e-commerce giants, first aid during the COVID-19 pandemic, or drugs by cartels).
- Since drones became more accessible to the general public, a growing concern in the international community over the use of drones for terrorist purposes since drones can be potentially armed both with conventional weapons, and what is more frightening, with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear agents.
- From the Customs perspective, drones are subject to export controls, and in recent years, a number of regulatory frameworks have addressed the need to regulate these strategic goods in order to prevent their misuse by criminal or terrorist elements.
- Since the protection of society and the fight against terrorism are very important roles for Customs, the World Customs Organization and its Members constantly follow the developments in the security sphere and update the Harmonized System nomenclature used for the uniform classification of goods across the globe with new HS codes.
- In particular, in the HS 2022 amendments, UAVs obtained their own provisions for easier classification of these goods. The new Harmonized System has been in force since 1 January 2022.

- The WCO also has a Strategic Trade Control Enforcement Programme that addresses the export controls of dual-use items, including disruptive technologies, such as drones.
- Not only we provide technical guidance and training to our Members, we also coordinate operational activities.
- In particular, in 2019, the WCO developed the Strategic Trade Controls Implementation Guide that addresses different types of dual-use goods, their end use as well as end users.
- When dealing with technology, it is very important not only to have a whole-of government approach by ensuring close cooperation between the licencing authorities, Customs administrations and research institutes that can assist in identification of dual-use goods and components. It is also critical to cooperate with the private industry.
- The private industry must be aware of the dual-use nature of the technologies they develop and sell. The Know Your Customer principle is becoming more critical than ever.
- Thus, I would like to emphasize more Public-Private Partnerships and more coordination.
- WCO is making efforts to deploy disruptive technology to cope with this challenge.
- AI-Xray, especially for e-commerce, can be useful for detecting parts of dual-use goods like drones in the import process.
- A data analytics algorithm can also be helpful for the risk management of dual-use goods.
- Thank you for your attention.