SUMMARY

Event by CLECAT

LOGISTICS PUT TO TEST AT TIMES OF CRISIS

On **12 November 2020**, CLECAT held its web-organised annual Freight Forwarders' Forum, under the theme '**Logistics Put to Test at Times of Crisis**'. Gathering around 250 industry experts and policy-makers, the event discussed resilience and the need to keep global supply chains running during the COVID-19 crisis, the implications of the future economic partnership between the EU and the UK for logistics, as well as sustainable logistics.

The event was opened by Mr **Willem van der Schalk, President of CLECAT**, who welcomed participants, thanking them for their time to join the meeting. Introducing the key themes of the day, he noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had been testing the resilience of logistics supply chains across the globe. He noted that no business was immune to the crisis and that profound disruptions had been felt throughout the freight and logistics industry. These challenges came at a time of pressure on services, new relationship with the UK and capacity shortages in air freight. He also noted that keeping sea freight moving proved difficult given that service quality deteriorated whilst prices increased, allowing carriers to make record profits at a time when European industry had been falling in a serious recession.

Mr van der Schalk emphasised CLECAT's support for the European Commission's ambition to move towards smart, carbon-neutral and resilient transport and mobility system of the future. Referring to the Commission's post-crisis recovery plan, he introduced Ms **Maja Bakran Marcich, Deputy Director General at DG MOVE,** asking her whether the new Commission's vision for transport and mobility would be sufficient for EU companies to remain competitive and whether Europe could get out of the crisis strengthened.

In her keynote speech, Ms Bakran Marcich, noted that, whereas the transport and logistics sector was impacted most severely by the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis at the same time demonstrated the enormous importance of this sector to the EU economy, as it kept the supply chains up and running. She emphasised that the post-crisis recovery and the EU growth strategy, based on decarbonisation and digitalisation, must go hand in hand. To that end, she presented the upcoming EU Strategy on Sustainable and Smart Mobility, to be published around mid-December, and emphasised the role of digitalisation in supporting the greening of the transport and logistics sector.

She added that the Commission continued to stress that national-level investments into smart and sustainable mobility were key to achieving European goals and that the country-specific recommendations contained valuable information for the Member States in that regard. Additionally, under the CEF II programme, the Commission would continue to support investments to complete the core TEN-T network by 2030. As multimodality was at the core of the strategy, it would be ensured that the TEN-T network would integrate all necessary requirements, including the need for transhipment terminals. Moreover, a new proposal for the revision of the Combined Transport Directive, planned for 2021, would support the uptake of multimodality.

Mr **Mirko Woitzik, Manager EMEA, Risk Intelligence at RESILIENCE360,** presented the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis, explaining how companies had been adapting their supply chains. Having monitored the impact of the pandemic on global supply chains, he noted that the maritime sector experienced significant port congestions as a result of delays caused by the crisis restrictions, as well as absenteeism and equipment shortages. At the same time, record rates were observed following strict capacity management by ocean carriers. In the air freight sector, significant capacity shortages were observed, with levels recorded at 25% below the 2019 levels. Moreover, shipment delays were experienced due to the rerouting of cargo. In analysing the change of air cargo capacity by carrier type since the initial outbreak, RESILIENCE360 had observed that on all trade lanes the freighter percentage lay at levels of 66-83%, representing an increase of 24-33% to the pre-COVID levels. Referring to a survey on the impact of COVID-19, it had become apparent that the air cargo capacity shortages posed the greatest logistics-related challenge, followed by trucking shortages and ocean freight disruption. As a result of the challenges faced by all modes, multimodal solutions grew in importance. Mr Woitzik also presented an overview of risk management measures, which organisations intended to implement in response to the crisis, including more active risk management processes. In that regard, he highlighted the importance of investing into technology to support recovery and future resilience, noting that supply chain visibility had grown in importance due to the global supply base and the network complexity.

SESSION 1: LINER SHIPPING PUT TO TEST: SERVING GLOBAL TRADE AT TIMES OF CRISIS

The first session of the day focused on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on liner shipping and in particular on the level playing field between the actors of the maritime supply chain. Ms **Nicolette van der Jagt, Director General at CLECAT**, moderator of the session, shed some light on the recent market behaviour of ocean carriers, as it created serious concerns for their customers, both freight forwarders and shippers. Notedly, carriers had been hiking freight rates, while simultaneously withdrawing capacity and reducing service levels. Consequently, the reliability and predictability of service had become alarmingly worse, whilst prices continued to increase. This resulted in the record profits of carriers at a time when European industry was falling into a serious economic recession.

In his introductory presentation, entitled “More stability and predictability in liner shipping?”, Mr **Stijn Rubens, Senior Consultant at Drewry,** pointed at a risk of cost and service levels spiralling out of control. Explaining the COVID-19 capacity conundrum, he noted that carriers responded to the pandemic-induced demand collapse by an unprecedented wave of blanked sailings. Whereas capacity was restored by August, there was still 6.2% less capacity in 2020 from January to October, in comparison to 2019. The impact on exporters and importers was that there were widespread cost implications from this year’s container shipping disruptions, resulting from an increase in freight rates, in-transit cost of finance, additional detention and demurrage charges and the cost of re-booking processing. Overall, Drewry analysis found that the direct cost implications of service unreliability for Asia-Europe trade amounted to a 19% increase (i.e. USD 500 per container extra), in comparison to 2019. However, there were large differences in reliability between different shipping lines and alliances, emphasising the importance of measuring carrier service performance.

In the following introductory presentation, Mr **Olaf Merk, Project Manager for Ports and Shipping at the International Transport Forum,** questioned whether EU policies were fit for purpose given the ‘new normal’ in liner shipping, increasingly characterised by vertical integration. He argued that pure liner shipping did not exist anymore, becoming rather a hybrid sector. Most major liner companies had integrated other activities, including terminal operations, freight forwarding and intermodal transport, aiming to provide door-to-door service. Nonetheless, the EU regulation did not take appropriate account of this phenomenon, perpetuating special regimes for carriers in terms of competition (i.e. Consortia BER) and thus allowing for joint capacity management, negotiation with suppliers and information exchange on volumes moved, average revenue per TEU earned, demand and supply forecasts, reference costs per service or trade. Given that the latter was increasingly proliferated by digital carrier-dominated platforms such as TradeLens and data standard-setting organisations like Digital Container Shipping Association (DCSA), Mr Merk pointed at a question whether forwarders had access to similar possibilities of information exchange, which was highly relevant considering that carriers were more and more active in forwarder markets. The other sphere of preferential treatment of carriers related to state aid and taxation, benefitting vertically integrated shipping companies, at the cost of independent liners, terminals and forwarders, and creating incentive for carrier haulage instead of merchant haulage. The inclusion of certain ancillary activities in tonnage tax schemes created market distortions throughout the EU, he explained. All of these special regimes continued to create increasing market distortions in the forwarding (and terminal) sectors, Mr Merk concluded, adding that there was a need for a serious reform. Options for change included cancelling, delimiting or enlarging the current policies.

Mr **Jens Roemer, Managing Director at a.hartrodt,** representing the freight forwarding voice in the panel, noted that due to the current crisis the maritime supply chain became extremely unreliable, and it appeared that the world trade was at the mercy of a few major shipping lines. He warned that the ‘new normal’ must come to an end as soon as possible and encouraged all the stakeholders to work together by entering into a regular dialogue to make sure that the maritime supply chain becomes once again more reliable, predictable and resilient. Mr Roemer also stated that the privilege of the Consortia BER protection for shipping lines to exchange information and data was being used to compete with the forwarding industry on land-based services, with the latter unable to rely on similar protection. The development of vertical integration and digitalisation demonstrated clearly that the current competition rules were no longer fit for purpose. Moreover, the purpose and use of state aid must also be looked into, noted Mr Roemer, as funds made available to carriers may be used for investments in the land-side supply chain, allowing carriers to compete with forwarders, who may not have access to similar funds.

Mr **Pyers Tucker, Senior Advisor Corporate Development at Hapag Lloyd,** agreed with Mr Roemer that it was in the interest of all stakeholders, carriers included, to return to a more stable and reliable liner shipping market as quickly as possible. The current operational challenges were due to the temporarily much higher demand than anybody forecasted at the beginning of the pandemic. This resulted in an exceptional ‘perfect storm’ due to the coincidence of changed consumer behaviour, restocking, peak season, empty container repositioning and constraints due to the COVID-19 measures. The most worrying question was for how long the COVID-infused disruptions would continue into the future, considering that governments would be less and less able to keep supporting consumer spending. Therefore, the uncertainty about demand going forward into the next year had never been higher, he remarked. With respect to the vertical integration concerns, Mr Tucker believed that carriers had not historically proven to be particularly effective owners of supply chain services adjacent to ocean freight and that expanding into other sectors was a strategic mistake, explaining why Hapag Lloyd was not going down that path and was concentrating purely on operating ships.

Ms **Lamia Kerdjoudj-Belkaid, Secretary General at FEPORT,** questioned the decision of the European Commission to prolong the Consortia BER and therefore the privileges for the shipping lines, as there was no data collected to see what the impact was on other parties in the chain, including the port services, terminals and freight forwarders. She expressed hopes that the review should start as soon as possible, especially in terms of data collection. Regarding state aid, Ms Kerdjoudj-Belkaid pointed at some decisions of the Commission made since 2004 that clearly expanded the scope of the tonnage tax to include ancillary services. She noted that, whereas nobody believed that the intention of DG Competition was to facilitate through all the tonnage tax decisions the vertical integration, the result was exactly that.

Ms **Monique Negenman, Head of Unit for State Aid at DG COMP,** explained that the 2004 State Aid Maritime Guidelines and their objectives – mainly to avoid the flagging out of shipping companies to third countries and maintain maritime knowledge and employment in the EU – remained pertinent. She said that the guidelines included mechanisms delineating the activity for shipping purposes but added that there was a lack of concrete data on what competition distortions might be appearing on the market. Ms Negenman therefore urged stakeholders to provide the evidence of competition distortions that might be caused as a result of state aid issued to the container shipping sector, to help the Commission further reflect on how big the distortion might be and how would that be ringfenced.

Mr **Daniel Boeshertz, Head of Unit for Antitrust in Transport at DG COMP,** confirmed that the Commission would soon re-start the in-depth evaluation process of the Consortia BER. He ensured the participants that the intention of the Directorate-General for Competition was to listen to all relevant stakeholders, including trade associations but also academia and researchers, in view of adopting the best possible decision in due time.

SESSION 2: FUTURE EU-UK RELATIONSHIP: IMPLICATIONS FOR LOGISTICS AND CUSTOMS

The second panel, which was moderated by Mr **Dimitri Sérafimoff, Director at Portmade**, focused on the implications of the future economic partnership between the EU and the UK for customs and logistics. Mr Sérafimoff gave a set the scene, outlining the major preparedness aspects and challenges for business. He stressed that regardless of whether there is a deal between the EU and the UK, border obligations will apply, and urged businesses to prepare for the upcoming changes. In light of the preparedness efforts taken by both industry and national authorities, he highlighted the main challenges still being the capacity of the intermediary sector, differences in local measures and procedures, as well as the readiness of IT infrastructure.

Mr Sérafimoff informed the participants on the preparedness efforts of Belgian authorities for the end of the transition period. He highlighted the increased capacity of customs and veterinary officials, communication initiatives and the increased dialogue with trade. He further noted that raising awareness within the industry had been a challenge. Mr Sérafimoff also presented the level of preparedness of the Belgian ports of Zeebrugge and Antwerp, focusing in particular on the port community systems in place. He finally outlined several remaining concerns for the customs brokerage sector being representation, VAT-related and other fiscal matters.

Mr **Robert Windsor, Policy & Compliance Manager and Executive Director at BIFA,** provided the UK industry's perspective on the implications of the future EU-UK relationship and the readiness for the end of the transition period. Mr Windsor outlined the main impacts for trade which included reduced regulatory alignment between the EU and the UK, reimposition of customs and non-tariff controls, higher costs, less flexibility for businesses and potentially reduced traffic flows. Mr Windsor noted that trade had to adopt a completely different mindset and rebuild supply chains. He pointed to the main elements of the updated Border Operating Model (BOM), and pointed to several remaining technical and general concerns, such as the issues of representation and establishment, IT infrastructure and industry capacity.

Mr **Olivier Thouard, Director Customs and Tax at GEFCO,** focused on relevant preparedness activities in France. He noted the specificities of the French border that required new infrastructure to accommodate the flow of cargo, noting that the border was ready. Mr Thouard further outlined the efforts of both industry and national authorities towards training and disseminating of relevant information, stressing, however, that while the physical infrastructure was ready, importers and exporters were not prepared for the end of the transition period yet. He added that there were still a lot areas where additional clarification was needed, such as safety and security and ECMT permits.

Mr **Roel van 't Veld, EU Customs Policy Lead/Brexit Coordination at Dutch Customs,** presented how Dutch Customs was preparing for 1 January 2021. He stressed that regardless of whether there was a deal reached between the EU and the UK, the free movement of goods would end with the transition period. The main consequences for freight traffic, he noted, would be unavoidable customs formalities, potential levying of customs duties and trade policy measures and non-tariff trade barriers (ex. SPS). Given the impact of the upcoming changes, authorities had already prepared by hiring extra officers. He stressed, however, that preparedness was a joint responsibility. Mr Van 't Veld further explained that participation in the Dutch chain solution (via the Port Community System - Portbase) had been made mandatory by all ferry terminals and most shortsea terminals, and that operators would not have access to the Dutch terminals without digitally pre-notified customs documents. He then outlined the 5 easy steps to be taken by operators to make sure they were ready for 1 January.

Mr **Chris Taylor, Head of Customs at UK Mission to the EU,** provided an update on the state of play of the negotiations on the EU-UK future partnership. He informed the participants that the two parties had intensive discussions throughout the past weeks and that the UK was confident a deal could be reached within the strict timeframe. He noted, however, that a number of difficult issues remained, including fisheries, the level playing field for open and fair competition, and the overall governance of the agreement. He reiterated the main message from the panel, which was that as of 1 January, the UK would leaving the EU Single Market and Customs Union and that therefore trade between the EU and the UK would change. Building on the comments from Mr Sérafimoff and Mr Windsor, he highlighted the key customs aspects of the UK's Border Operating Model to be used from January 2021, including the phased approach. He also highlighted the fact that preparedness was a joint effort between the EU, the UK and businesses. Mr Taylor further outlined the main processes for trade with Northern Ireland, focussing on the Trader Support Service, which would help traders with new requirements for trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland as of 1 January 2021.

SESSION 3: MOBILISING EUROPEAN FREIGHT FORWARDERS TO TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

Introducing the third panel, which aimed at mobilising European freight forwarders to reduce emissions from their logistics operations, Ms **Nicolette van der Jagt, Director General at CLECAT,** emphasised that enormous challenges were ahead of the freight forwarding industry. She stressed in particular the need to get the SMEs on board with the ambitious EU decarbonisation objectives at the time when customers focused solely on price and service. She therefore posed a crucial question to the panel as to what was needed the most to support SMEs to start measuring and reducing emissions, using climate commitments and actions as a value proposition to customers and policy-makers.

Ms **Astrid Schlewing, Head of Sector Logistics at DG MOVE,** recalled that the European Commission viewed the EU post-crisis recovery plan and envisaged investments as an unprecedented opportunity to move towards a smart and carbon-neutral transport system of the future. She also explained that the EU Green Deal objective to achieve a 90% reduction in transport emissions across all modes by 2050 would require a clear pathway, based on mode-oriented greening and system optimisation. Whereas emissions reduction was the ultimate objective, there was a need for robust emissions measuring framework and methodology to achieve this. According to Ms Schlewing, emissions measurement was key to unlock lower costs and higher efficiency, thus providing a strategic competitive advantage and enabling higher value proposition for customers. She noted that the Commission had always been encouraging efforts to develop a common logistics emissions reduction methodology, through supporting European research projects and industry initiatives, such as the GLEC Framework, as well as the ongoing development of an ISO standard and possible action at EU level, which was to be considered by the Commission.

Ms **Sophie Punte, Executive Director at Smart Freight Centre,** noted that a changing market signal from shippers had been observed in Europe and beyond, with sustainability criteria increasingly becoming a condition for forwarders to be able to become the suppliers of any customer in the future. She then elaborated on gradual customer requirements, which ranged from a) asking their suppliers to report on the GHG emissions associated with services provided to them, b) setting targets that could help them achieve theirs, c) reducing emissions according to an action plan and demonstrating progress made and 4) collaborating on concrete actions. Ultimately, she explained that forwarders could respond either by focusing on what they can do as a minimum to retain their 'licence to operate' and be ready to collaborate when asked to or by taking a proactive approach and making green logistics part of their value proposition to customers. According to Ms Punte, the latter was the way of the future, as it would create a win-win situation, whereby forwarders could work together with shippers on joint emissions reduction goals.

Mr **Graham Major-Ex, Head of Green Revenue at sennder,** led with the statement that financial incentives were a key driver for core business decisions, especially for SMEs, and explained how the offer of greener logistics could provide a strategic advantage for SMEs and help them meet the changing business demands of customers in a financially attractive manner. Indeed, low-carbon transport would result in lower costs, higher efficiency, better data visibility and more attractive services. The switch from an old-fashioned cost-centred mentality to the mentality of strategic low-carbon advantage was therefore fundamental. From the EU perspective, a decisive 10-year policy plan was needed, as it would impact the technological and operational choices of companies and enable sufficient financing of these choices through direct investment and development of new financial vehicles. Moreover, the continued development of carbon standards, encompassing all GHG emissions and embracing a well-to-wheel approach, was of key importance to ensure the comparability of effort and the measurement of true progress against actual climate-changing emissions. Eventually, neither shippers nor carriers or forwarders were able to accomplish changes single-handedly – a transition to sustainable logistics must therefore be an integrated effort as part of a 'coalition of the leaders', stressed Mr Major-Ex.

Dr Dustin Schöder, Corporate Programs & Project Management at Deutsche Bahn, confirmed that sustainability had become and would continue to be an important qualification criterion in a growing number of tender negotiations, with a shift from road to rail, utilisation of low-emission technologies and capabilities in emission accounting as key criteria. There were opportunities for SMEs to change the existing cost structures, with efficiency, digitalisation of processes and utilisation of new technologies as drivers of profitability. There were also strategic opportunities for SMEs to form new partnerships with shippers and large 3PL/4PLs by specialising in certain niches or sustainable approaches and technologies. It was important that freight forwarders, including SMEs, understood that the target system of their partners was changing and that the demand for sustainable logistics was rising. In terms of EU financial support, the funding criteria and the focus on the acquisition of new powertrain technologies were often not suitable for SMEs, as it took a lot of time and resources to even apply for funding – this had to be looked at in order to encourage SMEs to invest in sustainable solutions.

Following the presentations, speakers engaged with the audience via an interactive survey, in view of identifying the biggest challenges for SMEs in their journey towards decarbonisation and establishing what was most needed to support them in their preparation for evolving customer demands and regulations. While the lack of human and financial resources was identified as the main hurdle, more funding and financial support, as well as targeted regulatory incentives, appeared necessary to enable the green transition for SMEs.

Mr **Jan Euwema, Business Development Manager at M-Star Freight Services (Herfurth Group),** commented that within the European forwarders community a battle remained to be won in relation to sustainable logistics. The reality was that the cost factor remained the most important consideration in decision-making for logistics and transport services. This was observed in the business models of the forwarders but equally in the earning models of the majority of their clients and their sub-contractors. He noted that he noticed a widespread lack of the sense of urgency about the need for CO2 reductions in the transport and logistics sector. Mr Euwema concluded that there was an urgent need for a radical mentality switch towards sustainable logistics in the near future. This was not going to be an easy route and needed support from all the stakeholders, including SMEs, within the freight forwarding community.

SESSION 4: AIR CARGO LOGISTICS SUPPLY CHAINS PUT TO TEST AT TIMES OF COVID-19

The fourth and final session of the day, which was moderated by Mr **Ben Radstaak, Director Innovation and Compliance at Air Cargo Netherlands**, focused on the challenges which the air freight industry was facing, as air freight was likely to shoulder a high portion of global transport of vaccines for COVID-19 in the coming years. The industry would therefore need to be prepared for the import of vaccines, as well as for guaranteeing the necessary capacity, even at times of crisis.

Mr **Lothar Moehle, Director AVSEC & Governance Global Air Freight at DB Schenker,** provided an overview of the challenges, including lack of capacity, cancelled commercial agreements, financial difficulties for airlines and airports leading to reduced staff, as well as overall difficulties in planning for all industry stakeholders. The sector had already responded with innovative and flexible solutions, including the conversion of passenger aircrafts to carry freight on the passenger level, and postponing the retirement of older planes. He also noted that the demand for vaccines would increase the capacity challenge, which was characterised by high demand for air cargo space from production to wholesale distribution up to patient, with a minimum of time whilst ensuring quality at the highest level. While on a short-term basis, cargo was being shifted to other modes of transport to overcome the capacity shortage, he warned that this could have long-term effects if the situation would not improve, thus leading to additional challenges. Mr Moehle explained how the industry had already changed significantly due to the crisis and would likely continue to do so, including through the quicker deployment of new technologies.

Mr **Paul Crombach, Program Manager Cool Chain at AirFrance KLM Martinair Cargo,** highlighted that while the capacity for passengers had been reduced to the bare minimum, the existing passenger network allowed his company to carry out an increased number of flights for cargo, including the operation of cargo-only flights on passenger airplanes, and even transporting cargo in the passenger compartment at times. The crisis had led to a significant change in the product mix at AirFrance KLM Martinair Cargo, which also saw a rise in pharma being flown and receiving priority also in light of the preparations for the upcoming COVID-19 vaccine. Mr Crombach emphasised that while it was a moving target, it required significant preparatory work and considerations, such as meeting the necessary requirements in light of dry-ice restrictions and limited cool-room capacities. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring the security of cargo in light of its value. Together with Air Cargo Netherlands, work had started to ensure the preparedness for the vaccine transport of the Dutch industry.

Mr **David Bellon, President at Air Cargo Belgium,** focused on the challenges which the freight forwarding industry was facing in preparation for the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, not the least in view of the fact that the European Commission had pre-reserved 800 million vaccines. Mr Bellon highlighted that every type of vaccine also had its own requirements, ranging from storage temperature, over lifecycle, up to the required distribution channel. In view of the current capacity decrease, congestion would need to be avoided for the vaccine transportation. He also highlighted that significant planning would be required in terms of cargo security, and the provision of special corridors for the transport of the vaccines to ensure that the necessary inspections would not lead to delays or a standstill in the worst case. Therefore, alignment and good cooperation between all parties, including the shipper, forwarder, consignee and relevant authorities, would be essential. To ensure the readiness of the Belgian industry and preparedness for distribution, Air Cargo Belgium and Brussels Airport were cooperating in the BRUcure Task Force, which was divided into several work packages, each dealing with an essential aspect of the vaccine transport.

Mr **Alessandro Albertini, President ANAMA at FEDESPEDI Air Freight Institute,** highlighted how the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines could likely represent one of the biggest challenges the air cargo industry had to face in the past 20 years. The difficulties existed particularly in the fact that there was a lack of information on where, when and how the vaccines would be distributed, and thus only assumptions could be made. In Italy, while the industry had reacted in a fast and flexible way to the crisis, it also launched an appeal to the Italian government to set up a working body involving all stakeholders to verify and address all critical issues surrounding the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. In that regard, ANAMA and all relevant stakeholders, including pharmaceutical associations, were preparing a paper highlighting the challenges that might arise in the coming months based on different scenarios.

Mr **Christophe Dussart, Deputy Head of Unit Aviation Policy at DG MOVE,** presented the actions that had been taken by the European Commission to ease the impact of COVID-19 on the industry, showing a maximum of flexibility in several key areas, including the introduction of Green Lanes for Freight, which should ensure a border passing in less than 15 minutes. Mr Dussart highlighted that upholding the ability to operate cargo flights was amongst the key priorities of DG MOVE. In that regard, the Commission had also extended the slot waiver rule for the Winter Season 2020/2021, with a further extension being called for by airlines for the Summer Season 2021. The Commission was open to such requests, subject to the adherence of the conditions that had been agreed on by the industry stakeholders, as it would need to be ensured that the sector could use the available airport capacity as much as possible. Moreover, Mr Dussart also called on the industry to report any recurring difficulties which were perceived due to COVID-19 to the Commission.

The industry speakers expressed their appreciation for the response actions that had been taken by the European Commission, especially in the flexibility which those provided, and highlighted again the key challenges which lay ahead, including capacity, flexibility, priority regarding border formalities, availability of cooling facilities, as well as enhanced security procedures to avoid any unlawful interference.

Following the end of the air freight session, the 2020 online edition of the Freight Forwarders Forum was closed by Mr **Willem van der Schalk, President of CLECAT**, who thanked all panellists for their valuable contributions to each session.