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**Decree No. (19) of 2020 Ratifying the Joint Customs Cooperation Agreement between the Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Mutual Recognition of the Economic Operators Programme Approved by Each of Them**

**We, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain.**

Having reviewed the Constitution;

And the Joint Customs Cooperation Agreement between the Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Mutual Recognition of the Economic Operators Programme Approved by Each of Them, signed in the city of Riyadh on 5/4/1441 A.H., corresponding to 30/12/2019;

And upon the submission of the Minister of Interior,

And after the approval of the Council of Ministers,

**Hereby Decree the following:**

**Article One**

The Joint Customs Cooperation Agreement between the Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Mutual Recognition of the Economic Operators Programme Approved by Each of Them, signed in the city of Riyadh on 5/4/1441 A.H., corresponding to 30/12/2019, and attached to this Decree, has been ratified.

**Article Two**

The Minister of Interior shall implement the provisions of this Decree, and it shall come into force from the day following the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

**King of the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa**

**First Deputy of the Prime Minister**

**Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa**

**Lieutenant General**

**Minister of Interior**

**Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa**

Issued at Riffa Palace:

On: 28 Shaaban 1441 A.H.

Corresponding to: 21 April 2020

**Joint Customs Cooperation Agreement between the Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the Mutual Recognition of the Economic Operators Programme Approved by Each of Them**

The Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, hereinafter referred to as (parties), are aware of the importance of cooperation between them in the common customs field for the mutual recognition of the programme of economic operators approved between them.

As members of the World Customs Organization, and aware that their respective programmes apply security requirements that comply with the regulations and laws in force in both countries, and the internationally recognized security standards stipulated in Annex No. (3) of the Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate the Global Trade Supply Chain (SAF).

Based on the willingness of both parties to coordinate and cooperate with each other in order to facilitate the flow of trade goods between the two countries: Import, export, re-export, transit and means of transport, as well as resolving the obstacles they face, in accordance with the regulations and laws in force in both countries and in accordance with available capacities.

Have agreed as follows:

**Article One**

The following terms designate what is displayed next to each of them:

Approved Economic Employment: A status granted to a commercial establishment that deals regularly with Customs Authorities with a clean transaction record.

Approved Economic Operator Programme: A programme that provides benefits to a business that complies with internationally recognized security standards stipulated under the Standards to Secure and Facilitate the Global Trade Supply Chain (SAF).

**Article Two**

The two parties acknowledge the approved economic operator programme, which contributes to facilitating customs procedures at borders for goods and means of transport imported, exported, re-exported and in transit by the economic operator, and they seek - through this programme - to strengthen the security of the supply chain and enhance their common interests, including the continuous exchange of benefits offered to approved operators.

**Article Three**

Taking into account the efforts made to unify the procedures of restrictions between the two parties on all goods so that they transit safely through the interport, each party has the right to apply prohibitions and restrictions on goods: Imported, exported, re-exported, transit and means of transport, in accordance with the regulations and laws in force.

**Article Four**

This Agreement does not create any rights or obligations outside the scope of the Approved Economic Operator Programme, and neither grants nor creates any rights or privileges to any third party.

The goods of the Approved Economic Operator of either party, imported, exported, re-exported and in transit, as well as their means of transport, shall comply with the import and export requirements and conditions applicable to each party.

This Agreement shall not affect or prejudice the authority responsible for enforcing obligations under other international treaties or agreements concluded by the parties or to which either of them is a party.

**Article Five**

For the purposes of recognition of the Approved Economic Operator Programme, each party undertakes to:

Accept the results of the assessment and the status granted to the Approved Economic Operator of the other party.

Provide the Approved Economic Operator - as part of the Approved Economic Operator Programme - with the following trade facilitation measures:

Reduce manual inspection rates on customs imports.

Speed up the customs clearance process for imported goods.

Take priority measures in the event of disruptions to trade flows due to increased security alert levels, border closures, natural disasters or other emergency situations.

Any party shall have the right to suspend, in whole or in part, the trade facilitation measures of the Approved Economic Operator referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article, provided that the other party is informed promptly of the reasons for such decision.

**Article Six**

Each party shall designate - in writing - a contact point responsible for communicating with the other party, facilitating procedures and monitoring the implementation of this Agreement.

**Article Seven**

Any dispute arising between the two parties concerning the interpretation or implementation of this Agreement shall be resolved by mutual agreement between them in a manner which serves their common interests.

**Article Eight**

Both parties undertake that the information and documents exchanged between them shall only be used for the purposes stipulated in this Agreement, and shall not be transferred to a third party without the written consent of the party that provided it. This Article shall remain in force after the suspension of this Agreement or after its expiry or termination.

**Article Nine**

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of the last mutual notification between the two parties - through diplomatic channels - confirming the completion of the procedures necessary for its approval.

This Agreement shall remain in force for a period of three years from its entry into force, and shall be automatically renewed for one or more similar periods, unless either party expresses - in writing - its wish to terminate it or not to renew it. Such notice shall be dated at least three months prior to the date fixed for its termination.

The provisions of this Agreement may be amended with the written consent of both parties, in accordance with the necessary legal procedures applicable in both countries.

This Agreement was drawn up in the city of Riyadh, on 5/4/1441 A.H., corresponding to 30/12/2019, in two original copies in the Arabic language, both copies being equally authentic.

**On behalf of the Customs Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**On behalf of the General Customs Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Ahmed bin Hamad Al Khalifa

Head of Customs

Ahmed bin Abdulaziz Al-Hakbani

Governor of the General Administration of Customs