



**TREATY SERIES 2009**  
**N° 15**

**Convention concerning the Creation of an International  
Union for the Publication of Customs Tariffs, Regulations  
for the Execution and Memorandum of Signature**

Done at Brussels on 5 July 1890

Ireland's instrument of accession deposited with the Government of  
Belgium on 26 September 1969

Entered into force with respect to Ireland on 6 November 1969

Ireland's instrument denouncing the Convention deposited with the  
Government of Belgium on 25 March 1988

Ceased to be in force with respect to Ireland on 1 April 1989

Presented to Dáil Éireann by the Minister for Foreign Affairs

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL  
UNION FOR THE PUBLICATION OF CUSTOMS TARIFFS,  
REGULATIONS FOR THE EXECUTION AND MEMORANDUM OF  
SIGNATURE**

Convention respecting the Creation of an International Union for the Publication of Customs Tariffs between the Argentine Republic, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Bolivia, Chile, the Independent State of Congo, the Republic of Costa Rica, Denmark and her colonies, France and her colonies, Great Britain and certain British colonies, British India, the Dominion of Canada, the Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope, Natal, Newfoundland, New South Wales, New Zealand, Tasmania and Victoria, Greece, Guatemala, the Republic of Hayti, Italy and her colonies, Mexico, Netherlands and Netherland colonies, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal and her colonies, Roumania, Russia, Salvador, Siam, Spain and her colonies, Switzerland, Turkey, the United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The undersigned, duly authorized, have, subject to approval, drawn up the following Convention:

**Article I**

There is formed between the nations above mentioned and all others which may, at a subsequent time, agree to the present Convention, an association under the title of *Union Internationale pour la Publication des Tarifs Douaniers*.

**Article II**

The purpose of the Union is to publish, at joint expense, and to make known as promptly and as exactly as possible, the Customs Tariffs of the various States of the globe, and the modifications to which those tariffs may from time to time be subjected.

**Article III**

For this purpose there has been formed at Brussels an International Bureau, the duty of which will be to translate and to public these tariffs, as well as such legislative or administrative measures as may introduce modifications therein.

**Article IV**

These documents will be published in a collection entitled *Bulletin International des Douanes (Organe de l'Union Internationale pour la Publication des Tarifs Douaniers)*.

For this purpose those languages will be employed which are most used for trade purposes.

**Article V**

The personnel of the *Bureau International* will be nominated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Belgium, who will advance the necessary funds, and will superintend the regular working of that institution.

#### Article VI

In the correspondence of the *Bureau International* with the Contracting Governments the French language will be used.

#### Article VII

A report on the working condition and finances of the *Bureau International* will be submitted every year to the Contracting Governments.

#### Article VIII

The annual budget of the expenses of the *Bureau International* is fixed at a maximum of 125,000 fr.

In addition to this, a capital sum of 50,000 fr. will, during the first year, be placed at the disposition of the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, for the expenses of the installation of the Bureau.

The States and the colonies which may eventually avail themselves of the power to accept the Convention, which is offered to them under Article XIV, will have to pay their proportionate share of this sum of 50,000 fr. on the basis as fixed by Article IX.

Such States and colonies as may retire from the Union at the close of the first term of seven years will forfeit their right of co-proprietorship in the common fund.

In case of liquidation, the common fund will be divided between the States and colonies of the Union, on the basis as fixed by Article IX.

#### Article IX

In order to decide in an equitable way what part each of the Contracting States shall pay, the latter are classified in proportion to the importance of their respective trade, into six categories, each of them in the proportion of a certain number of units, namely:

		Units
1st class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to more than 4 milliards of francs	55
2nd class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to from 2 to 4 milliards of francs	40
3rd class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to from 500 millions to 2 milliards of francs	25
4th class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to from 100 to 500 millions of francs	20
5th class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to from 50 to 100 millions of francs	15
6th class	Countries whose trade regularly amounts to less than 50 millions of francs	5

## Article X

For those countries whose language will not be employed by the *Bureau International*, the above figures will be subject respectively to a reduction of two-fifths. The reduced amounts will be therefore as follows:

For the 1st class	to 33 units
For the 2nd class	to 24 units
For the 3rd class	to 15 units
For the 4th class	to 12 units
For the 5th class	to 9 units
For the 6th class	to 3 units

## Article XI

The total of the annual expense, divided by the sum of the units distributed among the different contracting States, as above laid down, will give the *unit of expense*. It will be sufficient to multiply this by the number of units assigned to each of the States to determine the amount of such State's contribution to the cost of the *Bureau International*.

## Article XII

In order to enable the institution to produce the *Bulletin International* with as much exactitude as possible, the Contracting Parties will send to it directly and promptly two copies:

- (a) Of their Customs laws, and of their Customs Tariff, carefully corrected up to date.
- (b) Of all regulations which may hereafter modify them.
- (c) Of such circulars and instructions as the said Governments may address to their Customs officers regarding the application of the Tariff or the classification of goods, and which may be made public.
- (d) Of their commercial treaties, international conventions, and such internal legislation as has a direct relation to the Customs Tariffs in force.

## Article XIII

Regulations having the same obligatory power as the present Convention will fix the mode of publication of the *Bulletin of the Union*, and everything relating to the budget of the *Bureau International*, and to the inner organization of the service.

## Article XIV

States and colonies which have taken no part in the present Convention will be permitted subsequently to subscribe to it.

Their adhesion must be notified in writing to the Belgian Government, which will announce the fact to all the other contracting Governments. The fact of joining will imply full adhesion to all the clauses, and admission to all the advantages stipulated for under the present Convention.

#### Article XV

The present Convention shall come into operation on 1 April 1891 and shall remain in force for seven years.

If, 12 months before the expiry of the first seven years, the present Convention has not been denounced, the Union shall remain in force for a further term of seven years, and so on, from one term of seven years to another.

The denunciation shall be addressed to the Belgian Government. It shall only affect the denouncing State, the Convention remaining in operation as regards the other countries which belong to the Union.

The Governments may introduce into the present Convention, by common agreement, and at any time, such improvements as shall be judged useful or necessary.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** the undersigned have subscribed to the present Convention, and have affixed thereto their seals.

**DONE** at Brussels, July 5, 1890.

## REGULATIONS FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE CONVENTION

Regulations for carrying into effect the Convention whereby an International Bureau is created for the publication of Customs Tariffs (Article XIII of the Convention).

### Article I

The *Bulletin International des Douanes* shall be published in five languages, namely: in English, in German, in Spanish, in French and in Italian.

### Article II

Each State taking part in the Union will have the right to cause to be translated and published at its own cost, either the whole or any portion of the *Bulletin* into such language it may find most serviceable, provided that such language be not one of those adopted by the *Bureau International*.

Each of the States of the Union shall further have the right to reproduce extracts from the Tariffs, or, in exceptional cases, portions of the *Bulletin*, in its own official organ, or in its parliamentary documents.

It is, moreover, understood that each State remains free, as heretofore, to publish in the original, or as a translation, all Customs Tariffs, provided that the published text be not the work of the *Bureau International*.

### Article III

The *Bureau International* undertakes that every precaution shall be taken in translating the Customs laws and the official publications which interpret these laws, but it must be understood that the Governments interested do not assume any responsibility as regards the accuracy of such translations, and that in case of dispute the original text will be their only guide.

A notice to this effect will be printed as a footnote in prominent type on the first page of each number.

### Article IV

The form of the *Bulletin* will be decided upon by the Bureau.

### Article V

Each Government will give notice in which language among those adopted by the *Bureau International* it desires to receive those copies of the *Bulletin* which represent its share in the common expenses of the institution.

A Government may take a certain number of copies in one language and the rest in other languages.

### Article VI

The *Bureau International* may not supply any subscribers other than the Governments of the countries forming part of the Union.

#### Article VII

The proportional contribution of each State will be repaid to it in the form of subscriptions to the *Bulletin* of the Union, estimated at the price of 15 fr. each.

#### Article VIII

The expenses are approximately estimated as follows:

Fr.

(a) Salaries of officials of the <i>Bureau International</i> , including an addition of 15 percent to the said salaries	75,000
(b) Cost of printing and postage of the <i>Bulletin of the Union</i>	30,000
(c) Offices, and maintenance of the same, heating, lighting, stationery, office expenses. etc	20,000
	TOTAL 125,000

#### Article IX

The Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs is empowered to take the necessary measures for the organization and working of the *Bureau International* within the limits laid down by the Convention and the present Regulations.

#### Article X

The Chief of the *Bureau International* is authorized, subject to the approval of the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to carry forward to the next year's account such sums as shall not be spent in the course of the financial year. These sums shall form a reserve fund to meet unforeseen expenses. The said reserve shall not in any case exceed 25,000 fr. The surplus may eventually permit of the lowering of the subscription to the *Bulletin*, without increase to the number of copies guaranteed by the Contracting States; this excess may also serve to cover the expenses of adding another language of translation to those named in Article I.

This last measure shall not be carried out except with the unanimous assent of the States and colonies forming part of the Union.

**DONE** at Brussels, July 5, 1890, to be affixed to the Convention dated this day.

## **MEMORANDUM RELATING TO THE SIGNATURE OF THE CONVENTION AND REGULATIONS**

The undersigned delegates, who have met today for the purpose of signing the Convention and the requisite Regulations for the creation of an International Union for the publication of Customs Tariffs, have exchanged the following declarations:

1. So far as concerns the classification of the countries of the Union, from the point of view of the share each should contribute to the expenses of the *Bureau International* (Articles IX, X and XI of the Convention):

The undersigned delegates declare that, for the whole period during which the Convention may last, the contracting countries shall be arranged in the following classes, and shall respectively bear a proportion of the expenses in accordance with the number of units specified below:

	Units
First class	
England and her colonies not specially named below	55
Belgium	55
United States	55
France and her colonies	55
Netherlands and her colonies	33
Russia	33
Second class	
Austria-Hungary	24
Spain and her colonies	40
British India	40
Italy and her colonies	40
Third class	
Argentine Republic	25
Brazil	15
Canada	25
Denmark and her colonies	15
New South Wales	25
Portugal and her colonies	15
Switzerland	25
Turkey	15
Victoria	25



#### Fourth class

Cape of Good Hope	20
Chile	20
Colombia	20
Egypt	12
Equator	20
Greece	12
Japan	12
Mexico	20
New Zealand	20
Persia	12
Queensland	20
Roumania	12
Uruguay	20
Venezuela	20

#### Fifth class

Bolivia	15
Costa Rica	15
Guatemala	15
Hayti	15
Natal	15
Peru	15
Servia	9
Siam	9
South African Republic	9

#### Sixth class

West Australia	5
Republic of St Domingo	5
Independent State of Congo	3
Republic of Honduras	5
Nicaragua	5
Paraguay	5
Salvador	5
Tasmania	5
Newfoundland	5

A regards the figures quoted below, and which are given in the Table showing the division of expenses, drawn up on 26 February 1890, they are given merely approximately, it not being possible to give the contribution of each State in an absolutely precise form until all the adhesions have become definite. In any case, it is to be understood that these estimates cannot be exceeded during the duration of the Convention.

	Sum to be paid	Equivalent number of copies of the <i>Bulletin</i> to be received
First class		
England and her colonies not mentioned below	6,833	456
Belgium	6,833	456
United States of America	6,833	456
France and her colonies	6,833	456
Netherlands and her colonies	4,100	274
Russia	4,100	274
Second class		
Austria-Hungary	2,982	199
Spain and her colonies	4,970	332
British India	4,970	332
Italy and her colonies	4,970	332
Third class		
Argentine Republic	3,106	207
Brazil	1,863	124
Canada	3,106	207
Denmark and her colonies	1,863	124
New South Wales	3,106	207
Portugal and her colonies	1,863	124
Switzerland	3,106	207
Turkey	1,863	124
Victoria	3,106	207
Fourth class		
Cape of Good Hope	2,485	166
Chile	2,485	166
Colombia	2,485	166
Egypt	1,491	100
Equator	2,485	166
Greece	1,491	100
Japan	1,491	100
Mexico	2,485	166
New Zealand	2,485	166

Persia	1,491	100
Queensland	2,485	166
Roumania	1,491	100
Uruguay	2,485	166
Venezuela	2,485	166
Fifth class		
Bolivia	1,863	124
Costa Rica	1,863	124
Guatemala	1,863	124
Hayti	1,863	124
Natal	1,863	124
Peru	1,863	124
Servia	1,118	75
Siam	1,118	75
South African Republic	1,118	75
Sixth Class		
West Australia	621	42
Republic of St Domingo	621	42
Independent State of Congo	372	25
Republic of Honduras	621	42
Nicaragua	621	42
Paraguay	621	42
Salvador	621	42
Tasmania	621	42
Newfoundland	621	42

2. As regards the payment of the shares due from the Contracting Parties:

The delegates declare that it shall be made in Brussels during the course of the first three months of each financial year in Belgian legal currency.

3. As regards the bringing into force of the Convention, which is fixed for 1 April 1891:

The delegates declare that it shall, if possible, be preceded by a notification of definitive adhesion on the part of the Governments interested; that, nevertheless, this formality is not indispensable, and that all those countries which, by 1 April 1891, have not formally expressed their intention of withdrawing from the Convention will be kept on the list of signatory countries.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** the respective delegates have signed the present *procès-verbal*.

**DONE** at Brussels, July 5, 1890.