

TRACIT Highlights the Importance of Public-Private Partnerships at the “*Taller Internacional sobre Comercio Ilícito y Competencia Desleal*” in the Dominican Republic

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic – November 19, 2024 – The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) was honored to participate in the “*Taller Internacional sobre Comercio Ilícito y Competencia Desleal*”, an influential gathering focused on addressing the challenges of illicit trade and unfair competition. The event was convened by the Dominican Republic Customs and brought together key government officials, industry leaders, and experts to discuss comprehensive strategies for safeguarding the Dominican economy against illicit practices.

The event was inaugurated by prominent national figures, including the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Industry, and the Director of Customs of the Dominican Republic, who underscored the government’s commitment to combating illicit trade and fostering an environment of fair competition.

Presentation of TRACIT’s Report on the Dominican Republic

During the workshop, TRACIT presented key findings from its newly released report, “*Confronting the Threat of Illicit: Spotlight on the Dominican Republic*”. This report provides an in-depth analysis of the pervasiveness of illicit trade within the Dominican economy, examining its detrimental impact on legitimate businesses, public revenue, and consumer safety. The report highlights how sectors such as tobacco, pharmaceuticals, and consumer goods are disproportionately affected by counterfeit and smuggled products.

Key Takeaways from the Report

- **Economic Consequences:** The extensive presence of illicit trade results in substantial tax revenue losses, straining public budgets and impeding economic growth.
- **Consumer Protection Concerns:** Counterfeit products pose significant health and safety risks, necessitating stricter market oversight.
- **Regulatory and Enforcement Gaps:** Although existing laws target illicit activities, limited enforcement resources and coordination create vulnerabilities that are exploited by illicit actors.

Public-Private Partnerships as a Solution

In addressing the conference, Esteban Giudici, Senior Policy Advisor at TRACIT, stressed the importance of collaborative efforts between the public and private sectors to effectively combat illicit trade. “*Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are essential for pooling resources, expertise, and strategies to outpace the increasingly sophisticated methods of illicit traders,*”

Giudici stated. *“By fostering collaboration, we can build stronger enforcement networks and more resilient markets that protect consumers and legitimate businesses alike.”*

A Call to Strengthen Cooperation

TRACIT’s participation in the workshop underscored the need for a holistic and united approach to tackle the complex nature of illicit trade. TRACIT’s Director-General, Jeff Hardey, remarked, *“The Dominican Republic’s leadership in organizing this workshop is a commendable step toward elevating the fight against illicit trade. It highlights the value of cross-sector cooperation, which is crucial for addressing shared challenges and enhancing the country’s economic security.”*

About TRACIT

The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) is an independent, private sector initiative to drive change to mitigate the economic and social damages of illicit trade by strengthening government enforcement mechanisms and mobilizing businesses across industry sectors most impacted by illicit trade.

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