

**No. 497**

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**NETHERLANDS  
and  
BELGIUM**

**Convention regarding the merging of customs operations at  
the Netherlands-Belgium frontier. Signed at The Hague,  
on 13 April 1948**

*Dutch and French official texts communicated by the Permanent Representative  
of the Netherlands to the United Nations. The registration took place on  
7 July 1949.*

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**PAYS-BAS  
et  
BELGIQUE**

**Convention relative à la combinaison des opérations doua-  
nières à la frontière néerlandaise-belge. Signée à La Haye, le  
13 avril 1948**

*Textes officiels néerlandais et français communiqués par le représentant per-  
manent des Pays-Bas auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies. L'en-  
registrement a eu lieu le 7 juillet 1949.*

## TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION

No. 497. CONVENTION<sup>1</sup> REGARDING THE MERGING OF CUSTOMS OPERATIONS AT THE NETHERLANDS-BELGIUM FRONTIER. SIGNED AT THE HAGUE, ON 13 APRIL 1948

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The Government of the Netherlands and the Government of Belgium, desiring to simplify and expedite to the fullest possible extent the formalities connected with the crossing of the common frontier between the two countries; considering that the competent Ministers in the two countries should be authorized to determine the cases in which measures should be taken to this end; have for this purpose appointed their duly authorized representatives, who have agreed upon the following provisions:

*Article I*

In order to expedite the international traffic of persons and goods between the Netherlands and Belgium, the competent Ministers of each of the two countries may designate, by mutual consent, in Belgian or in Netherlands territory, railway stations or posts situated on waterways or roads, hereinafter referred to as "international customs houses", and sections of railway, waterway or road leading to such customs houses, hereinafter referred to as "international customs routes", in which customs operations in connexion with the crossing of the frontier by persons or goods, in which shall be included currency and securities of any kind, may be carried out both by the country of exit and by the country of entry.

The examination of passports shall be included in the said operations.

*Article II*

In the international customs offices and on the international customs routes, customs operations of the kind to which article I refers, carried out by either of the two countries, shall be subject to the laws and regulations of that country as regards both the obligations of persons subject to such operations and the duties and rights of officers and officials.

For the purposes of the application by one country on the territory of the other of the laws and regulations to which the preceding paragraph refers,

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<sup>1</sup> Came into force on 8 May 1948, upon the exchange of the instruments of ratification at Brussels, in accordance with article XV.

the international customs stations and the international customs routes shall be deemed to be in the territory of the country first mentioned.

*Article III*

The officers and officials of the country of exit shall have precedence in carrying out the duties incumbent on the officers and officials of each of the two countries.

*Article IV*

For the purposes of prosecution and trial, offences against the laws or regulations referred to in article II of either country committed in the other country in an international customs office or on an international customs route shall be deemed to have been committed in the jurisdiction which includes the first country's frontier post situated on the international customs route.

*Article V*

Where an offence against the laws or regulations referred to in article II is committed in an international customs office or on an international customs route, the competent authorities of the one country shall, on direct request by the competent authorities of the other country and in accordance with the legal provisions in force in the first country:

- (a) examine witnesses and experts;
- (b) institute official enquiries;
- (c) serve on accused or convicted persons any procedural documents or judicial or administrative decisions. The service of such documents shall be valid if effected in accordance with the usual procedure for the service of similar documents in the country to which the request is addressed.

Costs of such proceedings shall be repaid by the requesting authority directly to the other.

*Article VI*

Officers and officials of one country appointed to carry out their duties in the territory of the other country in application of the present convention, and officers responsible for supervising the service, shall be authorized in the exercise of their duties to cross the frontier without passport or visa formalities and to remain in the territory of the other country so long as the special permit issued to them by their administration has not become invalid either by expiry or by cancellation duly notified to the competent authority of the other country.

Officers and officials to whom the foregoing paragraph refers performing their duties in an international customs office attached to a railway or on a section of a railway forming part of an international customs route in the other country shall be granted by the railways of that country free passes for the part of the section of railway situated in that country.

#### *Article VII*

Officers and officials of one country who in application of the present convention perform their duties on the territory of the other shall be required to do so in uniform or to bear a visible distinctive badge, and shall be authorized to bear regulation arms.

The requirement of the preceding paragraph shall not apply to officers responsible for supervising the service.

#### *Article VIII*

Officers and officials of one country who in application of the present convention perform their duties on the territory of the other shall be exempt from personal service and direct taxation. Exemption from such taxation shall not exceed that enjoyed by diplomatic and consular representatives of the first country in the other.

Motor vehicles, bicycles and other vehicles used in the course of their duty in one country by officers and officials of the other shall be exempt from taxes and other dues which would be payable in respect of their use on the territory of the other country.

#### *Article IX*

Articles which, in application of the present convention, are used in the course of their duty on the territory of one country by officers or officials of the other shall be exempt from any dues and shall be admitted without either import or export formalities.

#### *Article X*

In premises placed exclusively at its disposal on the territory of one country, the administration of the other shall be authorized to maintain order and to remove disorderly persons.

The premises to which the foregoing paragraph refers may be distinguished by the coat-of-arms of the other State.

*Article XI*

Officers and officials of the two countries performing their duties in international customs offices or on international customs routes shall co-operate to the fullest possible extent and shall assist one another in both the prevention and the detection of offences against the laws and regulations to which article II refers. They may exchange information likely to be of assistance in the performance of their duties.

*Article XII*

Officers and officials of one country shall enjoy the same protection and assistance in the performance of their duties in the other country as do officers and officials of the other country.

*Article XIII*

The competent Ministers of the two countries may by mutual consent establish regulations for the application of the present convention.

*Article XIV*

The competent Ministers of one country may terminate joint customs operations in an international customs office or an international customs route on the expiry of at least one year after notice given to the competent Ministers of the other country.

*Article XV*

This convention shall enter into force immediately after the exchange of the instruments of ratification; it shall terminate one year after denunciation by one of the Contracting Parties.

IN FAITH WHEREOF the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present convention and have thereto affixed their seals.

DONE in two copies, in the Dutch and French languages, the two texts being equally authentic, at The Hague, 13 April 1948.

For the Netherlands Government:

(Signed) W. VAN BOETZELAER

For the Belgian Government:

(Signed) LÉON NEMRY