**JANET A. FOREST**

Customs and International Trade Lawyer

J. Forest Consulting

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***Key Qualifications:***

Almost 40 years of experience as a customs lawyer, including with the U.S. Government, in private practice and as a consultant to governments and companies in developing countries. Most recent work has included working with companies in Africa to determine eligibility for the duty-free treatment available under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This work includes conducting workshops for customs officers in several West African countries and working individually with companies interested in taking advantage of AGOA. Extensive experience in trade capacity building, including implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), application of the WCO Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) and the SAFE framework, regional integration and single window implementation. Broad experience working with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) drafting modern customs laws and regulations in Southeast Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

Most of the past eleven years has been spent working as an independent consultant for customs, trade and competitiveness projects in developing countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. Work has included developing a project in the South Caucasus looking at trading across borders in the region, leading a project studying the VAT in Ghana, leading a study to determine the level of customs fees imposed in various countries worldwide and working with Ghana Customs to assist them in developing a plan and a timeline for customs reform activities.

Prior to starting my consulting business, I was a Senior Trade Advisor at USAID, responsible for providing technical expertise and field support to advance economic growth in developing countries in Europe, Central Asia, Turkey and the Caucasus. Provided advice on trade and development issues, particularly trade capacity building, WTO accession and compliance, trade policy reform and regulatory reform. Assisted developing countries in streamlining procedures for the collection of customs duty and value-added tax (VAT). Conducted trade capacity assessments in developing countries and designed and managed trade and customs reform projects.

Prior to joining USAID, more than twenty years’ experience practicing customs and international trade law with the U.S. Government and in major Washington law firms, with a focus on such areas as rules of origin, customs valuation, classification, sanctions, agricultural and textile quotas, tariff and trade legislation, customs clearance, security and enforcement.

***Professional Experience:***

***Independent Consultant***

2007 – Present

Recent work has been primarily concerned with assisting small businesses in Africa to take advantage of the duty-free treatment provided under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Assisted USAID’s West Africa Trade Hub to inform existing and potential exporters regarding U.S. customs laws and the use of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Currently working under a contract with USAID’s West Africa Regional Office to continue this work during the period for which no trade hub is operating in West Africa. Working with the government of Lao PDR as a consultant for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to modernize the customs laws and to bring them into better compliance with international agreements and regional standards. Previously drafted new customs law for Mauritius in compliance with proposed Revenue Administration Act of Mauritius and international standards (Revised Kyoto Convention, WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, regional trade agreements (COMESA and SADC)). Prior to that, drafted customs legislation for Ghana, Liberia and several countries in the Caribbean as a consultant to the IMF. Trade advisor to USAID Feed the Future project involving regional trade in agricultural products in Nepal, Bangladesh and India. Spent four months as Trade Expert in USAID/Africa Bureau looking at issues related to regional integration and increasing regional trade in Africa. Assisted USAID/Bangladesh Mission to design a trade and customs project in Southeast Asia. Prepared an analysis of cross-border trade issues in the Caucasus for USAID. Reviewed customs laws and regulations for USAID project in Ghana, team leader for a project studying the VAT in Ghana, team leader for a study to determine the level of customs fees imposed in various countries worldwide and to determine whether the fees imposed in Ghana are in conformance with WTO requirements. Worked with Ghana Customs to assist them in developing a plan and a timeline for customs reform activities.

Provide customs advice in all areas including classification, valuation, country of origin and eligibility for preferential programs. Extensive experience drafting customs legislation in developing countries.

***United States Agency for International Development:***

2004 - 2007 Senior Trade Advisor, EGAT, Office of Economic Growth, USAID.

Provided advice to USAID missions and Washington-based officials on trade and development, including trade capacity building. Designed and managed technical assistance and research activities to help resolve a range of problems that limit the ability of developing countries and emerging markets to integrate into the global trading system. Developed technical guidelines for designing, implementing and

evaluating trade capacity building programs. Represented USAID in interagency meetings and worked with the Department of State, Department of Commerce, U.S. Trade Representative’s Office, Customs and Border Patrol and the World Bank to coordinate activities involving trade agreements, simplification of customs procedures and improvement of transport and logistics systems. Developed information concerning trade capacity building to enable private sector to better understand opportunities in developing countries. Participated in design and review of country program strategies and prepared briefing papers on trade-related matters.

***Private Law Practice in Washington, D.C.:***

1988 - 2003 Lawyer with Washington, D.C. offices of U.S. law firms, including Miller & Chevalier, Kirkland & Ellis, Crowell & Moring and Morgan, Lewis & Bockius.

Counseled U.S., foreign and international corporations regarding customs and international trade matters. Represented companies in a variety of industries, including steel, petroleum, chemicals, textiles, high-tech and manufacturing. Advised major multinational corporations and represented them before the U.S. Customs Service, Department of Commerce, U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. International Trade Commission. Provided advice concerning wide range of customs matters, including classification and valuation, eligibility for special duty programs, such as NAFTA, and country of origin determinations, as well as trade matters, including antidumping, countervailing duties and sanctions.

***Previous U.S. Government Positions:***

1980 - 1987 Lawyer with U.S. Government offices at the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. International Trade Commission.

Responsible for providing legal advice to government agencies on matters related to trade, tariffs, and legislation. Responsibilities included drafting and reviewing tariff-related legislation as well as executive orders and presidential proclamations implementing international trade policy decisions; serving on special assignment to offices of International Trade Commissioners; drafting rulings involving classification and valuation of imported merchandise; and trial preparation of cases involving various customs issues concerning imported merchandise.

***Education:***

Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Masters in International Public Policy.

University of Minnesota School of Law, Juris Doctor.

Gustavus Adolphus College, B.A., German.