



MEDIA RELEASE

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Model taxpayer charter to promote greater fairness in taxation across the world

Three professional bodies representing more than half a million tax advisors worldwide have produced a Model Taxpayer Charter of taxpayer rights and responsibilities intended as a blueprint for what a good tax system should contain.

The Asia-Oceania Tax Consultants Association (AOTCA), Confédération Fiscale Européenne (CFE) and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) collaborated on the development of the Model Charter, the provisions of which were derived from a survey of taxpayer rights and responsibilities in 37 countries, collectively accounting for over 73 per cent of world GDP.

The overriding purpose of the Charter is to provide in due course a model which can be adapted and used in nation states to embed in law the basis on which taxpayers' obligations to the State are balanced against the rights of taxpayers.

Input is now being sought on the preliminary Model Taxpayer Charter, through an extensive worldwide consultation process, in order to refine it and produce a final product that reflects a global consensus.

Copies of the preliminary report have been sent to Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Finance and Revenue of the countries who participated in the survey alongside the institutions of the European Union, the OECD, the United Nations Fiscal Affairs Committee, the World Bank, the IMF, and other interested stakeholders.

Mike Cadesky, Vice President of STEP and co-author of the report said: 'While tax administrations are typically requesting increased co-operation from taxpayers they often lose sight of the importance of whether taxpayers and tax advisors believe that the tax system is, broadly speaking, fair. This report finds that penalties alone are not sufficient to achieve a high level of taxpayer compliance and that a system perceived as fair, results in higher levels of compliance across the board.'

Ian Edward Hayes, Vice President of CFE and co-author of the report said: 'Nowadays taxpayers are required to be transparent in their fiscal affairs in pursuit of which the first steps can be found in clear and simple tax legislation. As we begin the search for tax systems



fit for purpose in the 21st Century we need to accept that transparency, clarity and simplicity can only work in an environment where taxpayers are treated equally. The greatest assurance of this will come when each and every State has adopted a taxpayer charter. '

David Russell, Honorary Advisor to AOTCA and co-author of the report said: 'In the absence of an appropriate balance between revenue authorities and taxpayers, the essential trust required for efficient administration of the tax laws will continue to be eroded. Reference to a document that speaks with one voice, yet unites a large majority of the worldwide tax profession, will be of great assistance to emerging Asia-Oceania region economies as they grow in importance.'

The full report is available to purchase on [Amazon](#)

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Notes to Editors:

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About the authoring bodies:

AOTCA

The formation of AOTCA in 1992 can largely be attributed to the existence of its sister body, the Confédération Fiscale Européenne (CFE), formed in 1959 as a body representing the interests of tax advisors in the European Communities.

In all, AOTCA represents over 330,000 tax professionals in the Asia-Oceania region.

The members of AOTCA meet annually in Member States, on a rotation basis. Matters of mutual interest are discussed and seminars are conducted by international tax experts on selected topics.

AOTCA is also an invited observer at annual meetings of the Study Group on Asian Taxation and Research (SGATAR), a body representative of the various tax administrations in the region.



CFE

CFE represents 33 national professional organisations from 25 European countries, 21 of which are EU Member States, embracing more than 180,000 individual tax advisors. It is an international non-profit organisation established under Belgian law, based in Brussels, with a General Secretariat in Berlin.

CFE regularly hosts technical conferences, in particular the annual CFE spring Tax Forum in Brussels and the PAC Conference in autumn.

CFE first endorsed the idea of a taxpayer charter in 2008, choosing this topic for the CFE spring Tax Forum.

An overview of the subject – and an analysis of existing taxpayer charters and other legal statutes from which taxpayer rights can be derived – was considered a fitting subject to be included in the CFE's 50th anniversary book, published in September 2009.

STEP

STEP is the worldwide professional association for practitioners dealing with family inheritance and succession planning and related taxation matters. STEP helps to improve public understanding of the issues families face in this area and promotes education and high professional standards among its members.

STEP has 18,000 members across 80 jurisdictions from a broad range of professional backgrounds, including lawyers, accountants, trust specialists and other practitioners. Taxation is a central interest to most STEP members. STEP members help families plan for their futures, specialising in a wide range of activities, from drafting a relatively simple will to more complex issues surrounding international families, protection of the vulnerable, family businesses and philanthropic giving.