



## Fact sheet

### Certificate of Origin Issued by a Country Other than the Exporting Country

The Chargé d'affaires of the Swiss Embassy and the Commercial & Trade Officer had a meeting 16.05.2016 with the Qatar Customs authorities in order to discuss about the Certificate of Origin issued by a country other than the exporting country Switzerland and exports to Qatar via a third country.

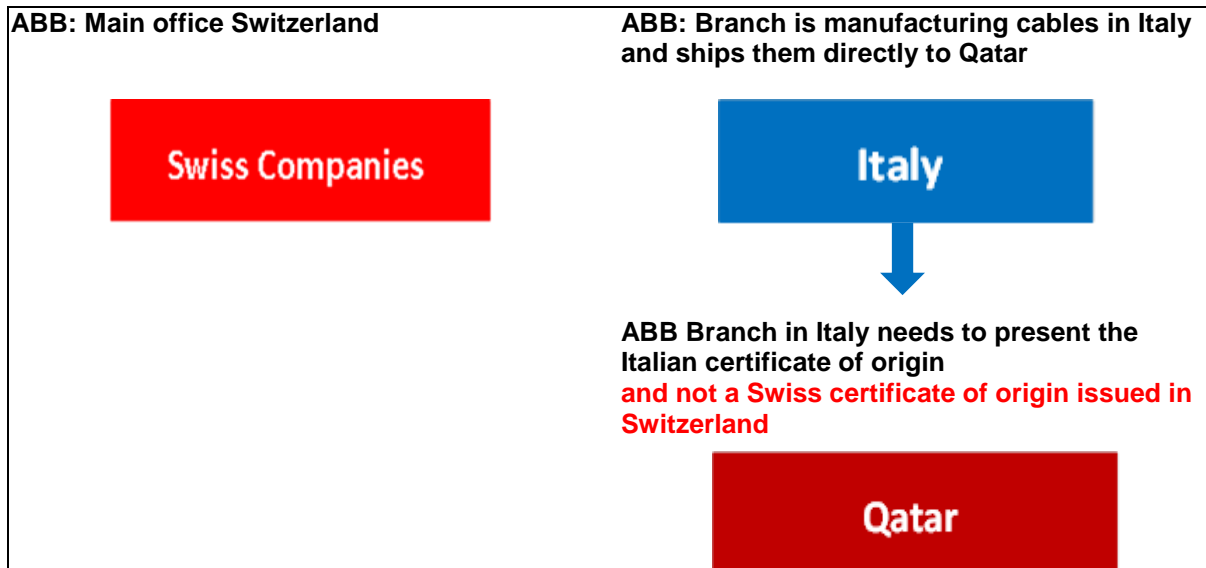
**Example:** The head company is based in Switzerland, operates a branch in Italy, where the goods are produced and exported directly to Qatar. The invoice and the certificate of origin (mentioning that the product was produced in Italy) will be issued in Switzerland.

**The Qatari customs authority confirmed that they will not accept a certificate of origin from Switzerland in this case.** This rule was implemented since 2013 announcing that for all shipments, the certificate of origin must originate from the country where the shipment is shipped from.

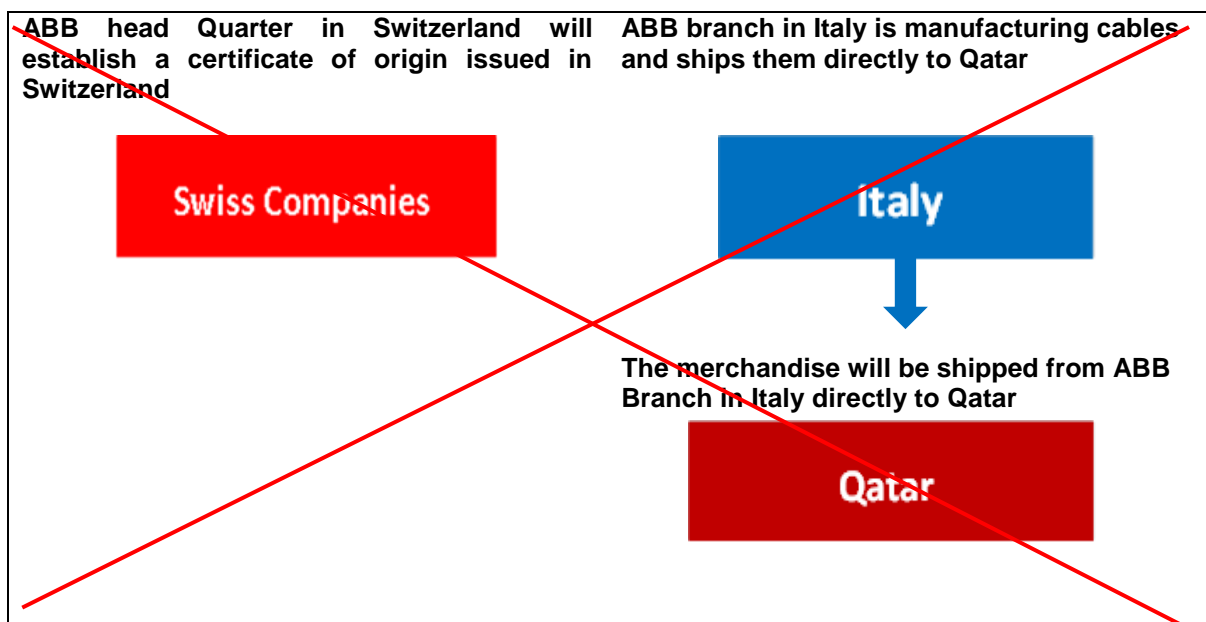
**The Qatar Customs Authority proposed the following approach for this issue:** In order to facilitate the export process via a **third country** into Qatar, foreign companies need to generally follow the following steps:

1. The Swiss company needs to provide only once a proof letter, that the main office in Switzerland is maintaining **a branch** in a third country, which is necessary for the acceptance of the commercial invoices issued in Switzerland by the Qatari Customs Authorities.
2. This letter needs to be translated into Arabic in Qatar by a certified and accredited translator in Qatar.

→ Details of the procedure according to the following pages.



- If the product is declared “Made in Italy”, an Italian certificate of origin is required.
- General Authority of Customs will accept to clear the shipment in this case.



- **The General Authority of Customs will refuse the clearance of this shipment according to the Qatari law.**

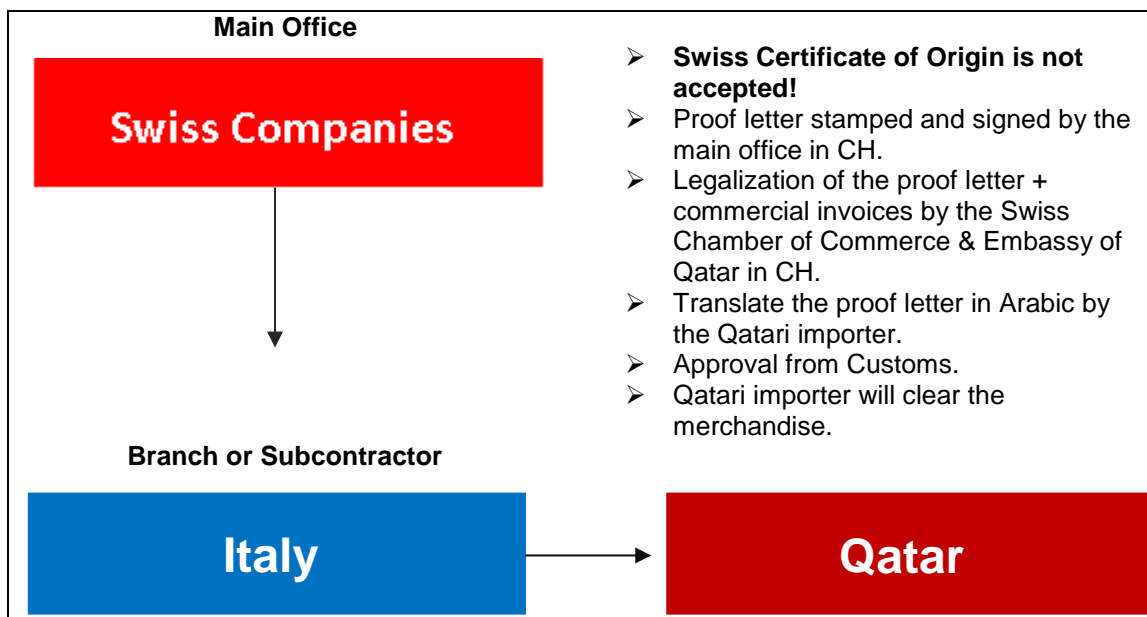
According to the Qatari Customs Authority, the following procedure will be applicable in this case:

1. The Head Quarter of the Swiss company in Switzerland must address a proof letter on a proper letterhead to the **Director of Customs Affairs Department (Mr. Sultan Abdullatif Al Naimi)** for the acceptance of the necessary commercial invoices. This proof letter must contain:
  - the name of the Swiss company
  - including logo, address in Switzerland, phone number, fax number, email (*may be already displayed in the letterhead*);
  - the branch name abroad or their subcontractors (*what kind of contractor do they have*);
  - the product being manufactured abroad.

2. This proof letter must be
  - issued, stamped and signed by the Head Quarter in Switzerland (*not by the branch or subcontractor in a third country*);
  - accompanied by a commercial invoices issued in Switzerland.
3. This proof letter and the commercial invoices – both issued in Switzerland - must be
  - legalized by the Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland
  - and afterwards by the embassy of the State of Qatar in Berne or by the Consulate General in Geneva.
4. This proof letter and the commercial invoices must be handed over to the local importer (or handling agent / logistic officer), who must be registered at the Qatar Customs, Clearance Department, in order to be able to process the customs clearance of the goods.
5. The local importer will be in charge of the **translation of the proof-letter into Arabic** through an official translator in Qatar, who is accredited with the authorities.
6. The customs clearance can now be done.

**Note:**

The Swiss companies in that case will not benefit of a preferential customs clearance under the EFTA-GCC free trade agreement according to the General Authority of Customs.



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