

**UN/CEFACT Geneva Forum  
30 August 2010**

**Welcome Address**

**Andrey Vasilyev  
Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE**

- I would like to welcome you all to this important event. With over 180 participants from over 30 countries and international organizations, this is a clear and positive testament to the global reach of and interest in the work of UN/CEFACT and UNECE's role as a global standards developer.
- I would also like to pass on to you the complements and encouragement from our Executive Secretary, Ján Kubiš. As you know, he takes a keen interest in all developments related to UN/CEFACT.
- UN/CEFACT is one of UNECE's key intergovernmental bodies, set up to foster economic integration, both within the UNECE region and between the region and the rest of the world. This is a primary objective of UNECE and I very much appreciate your support in this effort.
- Trade facilitation is at the heart of Governments' efforts to become more efficient and competitive in global trade and this is evident in the current discussions on the topic at the World Trade Organization. UN/CEFACT can and does make an important contribution here in terms of the Recommendations and Standards it produces. We must involve all member States in this process to the maximum extent possible, as it will facilitate the adoption of these tools by other international organization. We must especially reach out, through the UNECE secretariat, to countries with economies in transition and developing economies, to ensure that they understand this work and are included in its development.
- I am pleased to announce that the secretariat has organised two briefing sessions in this regard for tomorrow, one for missions of the member States and one for technical experts. I can also announce that we have translated the home page of the UN/CEFACT Website into all three official languages of UNECE, and we will maintain this.
- We should continue our efforts to involve member States in the selection of the projects for development. As UN, we are driven by the needs of governments and we welcome the strong participation of the private sector in supporting this work.
- The UN regional commissions are working closely together to support the implementation of trade facilitation and relevant international standards, both regionally and inter-regionally. UN/CEFACT has a key role to play in supporting this work, both through the development of recommendations and

standards and, importantly, by assisting the secretariat in developing implementation guidelines.

- I understand that you are considering options to streamline both the organization and management of the work within UN/CEFACT. This is very important to achieve both greater efficiency and transparency as requested by our Executive Committee (EXCOM). I wish you every success in this and look forward to hearing of progress made.
- Working within the UN structure has many benefits in developing globally recognised and implemented standards. The UN rules and structure facilitate the work by providing the framework, transparency and accountability necessary for this global acceptance of your standards. In this regard, make full use of the secretariat resources available to you. We are there to support you and help you get the job done within this globally recognised UN framework.
- In closing, I wish you every success in your work this week and a favourable outcome of your deliberations.