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Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

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Geneva, 22-24 May 2006
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE UN/CEFACT BUREAU

Revised Mandate, Terms of Reference and Procedures for UN/CEFACT

Draft proposal by the Bureau

Addendum

This document is one of four addenda to the 4th revision of the Mandate and Terms of Reference of the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). These were requested by the member States at the 11th Plenary in 2005. The addenda are as follows:

Addendum 1: Provisions regulating UN/CEFACT's Open Development Process

Addendum 2: Rules of Procedure of the Bureau

Addendum 3: Mandates and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT Rapporteurs

Addendum 4: Provisions for an intersessional approval process for UN/CEFACT

The provisions in this document come into effect after the approval by the Plenary.

I. Introduction

1. This document comprises the rules of procedures for the UN/CEFACT Bureau. These rules are based on the Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT (see TRADE/R.650/rev.4.)

II. Chair

2. The UN/CEFACT Chair shall preside over the Bureau meetings. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, or any part thereof, one of the Bureau members, designated by the Chair, shall preside. In the absence of a designated Chair, the Bureau members shall decide on who should preside.

III. Principal functions of the bureau

3. The Bureau shall be responsible to the Plenary for the open, transparent and efficient operation of the Centre. Bureau members shall assist the Chair in meeting the requirements of the full portfolio of responsibilities held by the Bureau. To fulfil its responsibilities, the Bureau may establish advisory teams. Upon the establishment of these teams, the purpose and names of the team members shall be transmitted to the Plenary.

4. The Bureau prepares the elections of Plenary and Forum officers and manages the process for nominating candidates.

5. The Bureau establishes the strategic direction of UN/CEFACT within the policy and resource framework agreed with the UN/CEFACT Plenary. It prepares the annual session, revises the programme of work, resolves concerns raised by the Plenary and governs the Forum Management Group (FMG).

6. The Bureau oversees the delivery of planned results by monitoring the implementation by the secretariat and the UN/CEFACT Forum of the programme of work and the agreed strategic objectives and targets.

7. The Bureau identifies and develops cooperation agreements, in consultation with the FMG and the secretariat. The cooperation agreements are submitted to the UNECE for signature.

Iv. Decision-making

8. The preferred way of reaching decisions shall be by consensus. Voting within the Bureau shall be carried out in accordance with the quorum that is established by the present procedures.

Quorum

9. In order for the Bureau to draft resolutions and take formal decisions, a quorum must at all times be present. A quorum shall consist of at least two-thirds of the voting members.

Voting

10. The Chair shall have the authority to call for a vote if consensus cannot be reached on a particular issue.

11. Under these circumstances, the Chair shall give 2 weeks' notice of the intention to call for a vote and notify all the other officers of the Plenary and the secretariat.

12. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

13. Ex-officio members shall not have a vote.

V. MEETINGS

Dates

14. The Bureau shall hold regular telephone conferences. At least one physical meeting shall be held every year. The date for that meeting should be agreed not later than two months in advance.

Attendance requirements

15. Bureau members shall attend scheduled meetings in accordance with the provisions foreseen in the Mandate, Terms of Reference and Procedures for UN/CEFACT (TRADE/R.650/Rev.4).

VI. WORK ITEMS

16. The Bureau will update its programme of work during its meetings and will maintain a "Topics and Issues" log.

VII. Documentation and reporting

17. The working documents of the Bureau shall be numbered. The status of the document should be indicated in the numbering scheme.

18. Documents for decision should be distributed to Bureau members not later than two weeks before the meeting.

19. The Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, provides timely communication of UN/CEFACT developments, e.g. through Quarterly Reports, the UN/CEFACT web site and the Forum meetings.

VIII. ANNEXES

Code of Conduct

20. Procedure for Developing and Approving Cooperation Agreements, Cooperation Plans and Collaboration Statements

21. Procedure for the publication of UN/CEFACT Press Releases

ANNEX 1

Code of Conduct

1. The Code of Conduct sets out the basis on which Bureau members should seek to discharge their responsibilities.
2. Bureau members must, at all times:
 - observe the highest standards of propriety involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the management of the Centre;
 - treat all persons fairly, respectfully and equitably;
 - respect the rights of privacy for all participants;
 - take all reasonable care to ensure that our work and work products cause no avoidable damage or personal harm;
 - avoid promoting our individual companies, organizations or affiliations during UN/CEFACT meetings and communications;
 - to respect the rights of all parties for freedom of access to information and communication;
 - respect legitimate intellectual property rights, refrain from plagiarizing the work of others, and acknowledge the contributions of other parties;
 - be forthright and realistic in stating claims or estimates;
 - seek, accept, and offer honest assessments of technical work and acknowledge and correct errors;
 - to conduct all communications within the generally accepted framework of courtesy and civility; and
 - encourage UN/CEFACT Forum members to follow this code of conduct.

Conflicts of Interest

3. All Bureau members must declare any personal, professional, or financial interest, which may conflict with their responsibilities as Bureau members. A record of such declarations will be kept by the Secretariat. A Bureau member should not participate in the discussion or determination of matters in which he/she has a declared an interest. At such time as a given interest arises, the member in question will declare the interest and leave the Bureau discussion.

ANNEX 2

Procedure for Developing and Approving Cooperation Agreements, Cooperation Plans and Collaboration Statements

1. The Bureau develops draft Cooperation Agreements with an external organization meeting the following criteria:
 - The external organization shall recognize the merits of collaborating with UN/CEFACT on specific tasks and deliverables
 - The organization shall have a track record of delivering technical specifications relevant to the UN/CEFACT scope of work and current work, which could contribute to achieving UN/CEFACT objectives.
2. The UNECE secretariat assists in reviewing and revising the draft Cooperation Agreement (CA).
3. The Bureau presents a revised draft to the external organization for concurrence. Steps 2 and 3 are repeated until all parties agree to the wording of the CA.
4. The UNECE and the appropriate representative of the other organization sign the CA.
5. The Bureau, in consultation with the FMG, establishes a cooperation team to work with designated representatives of the external organization to develop a project alignment and coordination plan.
6. The Bureau, in consultation with the FMG, reviews and approves cooperation agreements, plans and statements, press releases and other such public documents. All such plans and public documents shall be consistent with the scope and descriptions in the CA. If there is any extension beyond the scope of the original CA or a proposal to change the allocation of UN/CEFACT or secretariat resources, the draft document must be reviewed and approved by the Director of the UNECE Trade and Timber Division.
7. The UNECE secretariat reviews draft public documents and ensures that any reviews and approvals required by the UNECE are completed.
8. The Chair of UN/CEFACT sends notification of approving the public document to the lead for the external organization, the secretariat, the Bureau and the FMG.
9. The FMG provides status reports to the Bureau on its progress in its cooperation and collaboration activities at least every 6 months.

ANNEX 3

Procedure for the publication of UN/CEFACT Press Releases

(under preparation)
