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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON TRADE

First session
Geneva, 21-23 June 2006
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE REFORM AND
FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2006 SESSION OF THE COMMISSION**

Committee on Trade
Draft Terms of Reference

Note by the secretariat

This Note was prepared at the request of the Bureau for consideration and approval of the Committee.

VISION

An open, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory trading system supported by: international standards; simple, transparent and effective processes; and harmonized product regulations.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Committee on Trade develops and promotes international norms and standards, effective procedures and best practices to facilitate the movement of goods and services. It also promotes the convergence or harmonization of regulatory environments. In its work, it takes into account the needs of Governments, the private sector, consumers and civil society. It contributes to the integration and sustainable development of the UNECE region.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The Committee on Trade (hereinafter the “Committee”), acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations, is entrusted with the implementation of the Trade Subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It shall facilitate trade and trade-related economic cooperation among countries of the UNECE region and globally.
2. The activities of the Committee and of its subsidiary bodies - the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) and the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) – are primarily of a technical nature and complement policy-related work undertaken by other international bodies.
3. In particular, the Committee shall:
 - (a) develop recommendations, norms, standards and other instruments for trade facilitation, electronic business, regulatory cooperation and trade in agricultural produce;
 - (b) provide a multilateral platform to discuss the policy impact of its work;
 - (c) assist Governments with the practical application of UNECE recommendations, norms and standards, and particularly those in Southeastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;
 - (d) help small and medium-sized enterprises integrate into international supply chains by developing global standards and best practices for the simplification and automation of information flows, procedures, processes and business practices used in international trade;
 - (e) review regularly its programme of work, and that of its subsidiary bodies, to ensure coherence of its activities with the overall objectives of the UNECE and develop synergies and joint projects both among its subsidiary bodies and with other UNECE subprogrammes;
 - (f) coordinate its work with other United Nations regional commissions and with international organizations, especially: the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for International Standardization (ISO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the World Bank and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC);
 - (g) contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.