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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT  
Fourth session, 21-23 June 2000  
Item 14 of the provisional agenda

**TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

**DRAFT TWO-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK  
JUNE 2000 - JUNE 2002**

Note by the secretariat

This draft programme of work was prepared by the secretariat. A set of priorities for the Committee's main areas of work, as proposed by the Bureau, can be found in TRADE/2000/15/Add.1. The agreed priorities emanating from the current meeting will be used as input to the budgeting process for the biennium 2002-2003. The programme of work takes into account the deliberations of the Committee at its third session, and the decisions taken by the Commission at its fifty-third session. Matters arising from the fifty-fourth session of the Commission in May 2000 will be presented earlier in the agenda, together with any recommendations related to the programme of work.

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1. The 1997 Plan of Action, which implemented the reform of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), transformed the Committee on the Development of Trade into the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. This “new” Committee was given enlarged, as well as new, responsibilities. Beginning with the 2000-2001 biennium, these have been included under a single budgetary and reporting UN/ECE Sub-Programme designated as: *07 Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development*.

2. These developments have changed fundamentally the role of the Committee. In addition to its own programmatic functions, the Committee must now work with a diverse group of trade-related subsidiary bodies in order to set strategic policy and directions. It must coordinate their work, develop new activities, and identify areas of joint interest where synergies may be found through the exchange of expertise and joint activities.

3. The Committee must ensure that it and its subsidiary bodies support the UN/ECE’s objective of “facilitating and strengthening the involvement of all member countries in harmonious economic relations”. In particular, this means contributing to the improved integration of all member States into the global and European economies and working to prevent the development of new barriers to trade in the region. Within the United Nations system, the Committee is also responsible for ensuring regional input to work on global cross-sectoral and trade-related issues.

4. The following are the subsidiary bodies which currently report to the Committee:

- ~ United Nations Centre for the Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/CEFACT)
- ~ Working Party on the Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development (WP.7)
- ~ Working Party on International Legal and Commercial Practice (WP.5)
- ~ Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (WP.6)
- ~ Ad hoc Group of Experts on Steel
- ~ Ad hoc Group of Experts on the Chemical Industry.

5. Further, the Bureau of the Committee has suggested that the Committee consider establishing a Working Party on Sustainable Enterprise Development. This Working Party would be responsible for supervising work done on enterprise development as well as the migration of work currently done under the ad hoc groups of experts on steel and on the chemical industry, and for encouraging a programme with a more cross-sectoral emphasis.

6. The activities under each programme element are described in more detail below. In order to assist with the coordination of the work programme, the secretariat has re-organized, subject to the Committee's approval, the sequence of programme elements in order to more easily distinguish those elements which are under the direct responsibility of the Committee from those which are under the responsibility of the subsidiary bodies.

## **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE**

### Strategic management of the work programme

7. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the work of its subsidiary bodies takes best advantage of the resources available and supports UN/ECE objectives. This implies:

- ~ Identifying new policy areas where subsidiary bodies should undertake supportive work;
- ~ Identifying those areas where joint efforts between subsidiary bodies would create synergies and higher quality, and more relevant outputs;
- ~ Ensuring that work is fully coordinated both between subsidiary bodies and with other international organizations;
- ~ Ensuring, where appropriate, the adequate involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

### Regional input to United Nations work on cross-sectoral and trade related issues

8. Description: The United Nations Economic and Social Council, to which the UN/ECE reports, accords high priority to work done on cross-sectoral issues in the following areas:

- ~ Special concern for the economies in transition;
- ~ Mainstreaming of the gender perspective;
- ~ Outlook for sustainable development; and
- ~ Involvement of the business community.

Indeed, the Economic and Social Council has requested that, to the greatest extent possible, all subsidiary bodies incorporate these areas into their work programmes. This also requires regular reporting on the work done.

9. So far the Committee has made a limited contribution to discussions on these cross-sectoral issues, but demands on the Committee to do so are likely to increase significantly in the future. Therefore, as a matter of policy, the Committee, needs to ensure that the work of its subsidiary bodies, as well as its own work, takes into account these cross-sectoral issues whenever it is possible and appropriate to do so.

## **PROGRAMME ELEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMITTEE**

### Analysis of recent and prospective trade and investment trends, policies and problems

10. Description: The Committee shall contribute to policies regarding trade facilitation, technical harmonization, standards in trade and the development of trade and investment in the UN/ECE region by:

- Strategically reviewing selected issues;
- Developing information useful to policy makers and the business community;
- Promoting the exchange of such information and experiences;
- Building public/private partnerships.

The Committee will also consider and, where agreed, endorse selected topics for seminars, workshops and publications to be undertaken under its auspices.

11. For the Committee's annual sessions, the Bureau, in cooperation with the secretariat, will define specific subjects for discussion under the general theme decided upon by the Committee. The secretariat will then prepare discussion papers and arrange a round table or forum on these subjects in consultation with the Bureau. The secretariat will coordinate with other international organizations as appropriate. It may also prepare special studies and notes on other subjects selected by the Committee, giving special attention to the conditions for expanding the trade of transition economies.

12. Work accomplished: During the first half of 1999, the secretariat published the proceedings of the round table organized for the third session of the Committee: "The Polish Experience of Transition: Accomplishments and Problems". A Forum on "E-Commerce for Transition Economies in the Digital Age" has been organized for the fourth session and a *Survey on Internet Infrastructure Development in Transition Economies* has been prepared as a background document for this Forum.

13. Special activities to be undertaken

- (a) A round table or forum on a theme to be selected by the Committee will be organized for the fifth session of the Committee;
- (b) The study for, and the proceedings of the Forum, "E-Commerce for Transition Economies in the Digital Age" will be edited and published.

14. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

## **TRADE FINANCE**

15. Description: The Committee shall contribute to improving the ability of enterprises in the region to develop their trade-finance capacities in support of investment and trade. It will also strengthen cooperation and information exchange in this area between the United Nations regional commissions, relevant United Nations agencies and other international organizations.

16. Work accomplished: In December 1999, the secretariat held informal consultations with a group of interested trade finance experts to identify the problem areas that should be covered by future trade finance workshops and seminars. The secretariat has organized a seminar on "Eliminating Obstacles to Efficient Trade Finance in Transition Economies: Practical Aspects" to be held in May 2000 in Riga (Latvia).

17. In February 2000 a Forum was held in Rotterdam (Netherlands) on trade logistics, trade finance and investment issues, with a special focus on timber ports. In conjunction with a series of information and capacity building events, this Forum offered an opportunity to public and private sector participants from developed market and transition economies to strengthen their cooperation in the field of trade logistics, trade finance and trade and sustainable development.

18. Special activities to be undertaken: The proceedings of the May seminar in Riga will be published during 2000. If a sponsoring organization can be found, the secretariat will organize a workshop on trade finance problems in transition economies in 2001.

19. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

## **INFORMATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

20. Description: The Committee will develop improved methods for disseminating its work to the private and public sectors, particularly in the countries in transition. In particular, it will develop a network of national contact points, with the objective of encouraging these organizations to promote the use of UN/ECE guidelines, norms, standards and recommendations among interested private-sector participants and trade-policy officials.

21. It will also develop and maintain information on its work on the Internet World Wide Web, with cross-reference "links" to the most relevant related work of other organizations.

22. With the support of extrabudgetary funding, it will contribute to improved trade performance by designing programmes for capacity and trade-contact building which draw upon all the work undertaken under the Committee, i.e. trade facilitation, enterprise development, trade finance, investment promotion and agricultural standards. Emphasis will be placed on extending UN/ECE guidelines, norms, standards and recommendations for the benefit of economies in transition. In addition, and to the extent that resources permit, specific materials, seminars and workshops will be developed for, and in cooperation with, these national contact points.
23. Work accomplished: At the request of the Russian Federation, the secretariat is implementing an extrabudgetary activity entitled “Capacity Building to Improve Trade Finance and Investment Prospects for the Russian Timber Sector”.
24. The aim of this activity is to strengthen the trade performance of the Russian forest sector by extending UN/ECE norms, standards and recommendations to support sustainable development in the forest sector. In December 1999, a Workshop on Sustainable Development and Certification of the Russian Forest Sector was held in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation.
25. Staff training was undertaken and first steps made to improve the Trade Division’s Internet WWW sites.
26. Special activities to be undertaken: Existing organizational networks that could serve as the basis of the above-mentioned network of national contact points, such as national trade facilitation organizations and chambers of commerce, will be identified and contact information will be obtained for the relevant national offices/organizations.
27. A draft agreement between national contact points and the UN/ECE will be developed.
28. The following meetings will be organized with extrabudgetary funding:
- Expert meeting on improved customs and trade procedures;
  - Workshops on sustainable development and trade;
  - Workshops on trade logistics;
  - Workshops on trade finance and investment.
29. Further improvements will be made to the Trade Division’s Internet WWW sites and, in particular, to those pages directly related to work of the Committee.
30. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

**PROGRAMME ELEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMITTEE BUT WHICH THE BUREAU SUGGESTS BE PLACED UNDER A NEW WORKING PARTY ON SUSTAINABLE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

**ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT**

31. Description: Work in enterprise development focuses on cross-sectoral issues of particular concern to countries in transition. It includes providing policy and practical assistance in the drawing up and implementing of strategies that support the development of private entrepreneurship in industry and the service sector. The work is conducted in cooperation with the regional advisers for trade and investment promotion and for the development of small and medium-sized enterprise (SMEs). The UN/ECE cooperates and exchanges information on an ongoing basis with other international and regional organizations.

32. This work programme reflects the priorities set out in the 1997 Plan of Action: promotion of sustainable development; policies supporting privatization and restructuring; and information and statistics.

33. As approved by the Committee at its third session, work is being undertaken in the following areas:

(a) **Entrepreneurship and SME development**

- **Best practice in enterprise development.**
- **Internet and enterprise development in the transition economies.** This project aims at identifying the impact of the Internet and electronic commerce on the development of enterprises, in particular in the transition economies.
- **Barriers to industrial restructuring resulting from overmanning.** This project aims at providing countries in transition with an evaluation of their labour efficiency on the basis of internationally accepted criteria and at helping them to develop solutions to overmanning.
- **Promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises.** This work is carried out primarily by the UN/ECE Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities and covers three basic areas: (a) guidelines, papers and information on SMEs; (b) seminars and workshops; and (c) development of SME programmes and cooperation with sub-groupings and international organizations.

(b) **Promotion of sustainable development**

- Pilot project demonstrating the environmental clean-up of selected sites polluted by chemicals.
- Maintenance and updating of the comparative data bank on chemical legislation in UN/ECE

countries (Note: if no extrabudgetary resources can be found to support this project within the next year, it should be terminated).

- Seminars and workshops on sustainable development in the chemical industry.
  - Regional Environmental Management Centre for the Chemical Industry. The purpose of the Centre is to improve the environmental management, safety and quality performance of chemical producers in central and eastern Europe. The Centre is currently operating under the joint auspices of the UN/ECE and the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC). No specific activities are required of the secretariat.
  - Guidelines on harmonizing legislation and drawing up codes of practice on trade in radioactive contaminated metallurgical scrap. In collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a team of specialists has been created to propose solutions acceptable at the international level in order to harmonize the legislation, systems of measurement, and levels of investigation concerning radioactivity of metallurgical scrap and, possibly, to draw up codes of practice/conduct in this area.
- (c) **Restructuring and privatization:**
- Competitiveness of basic industries
  - Study tours in areas undergoing industrial restructuring

(d) **Information, statistical data and market prospects**

34. The Committee will also receive a report on current work in this area from the UN/ECE Regional Adviser on Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development.

35. Work accomplished : The Strategic Directions for Enterprise Development (TRADE/1999/10) has been implemented, and a new, cross-sectoral enterprise development programme for the UN/ECE has been launched. The secretariat has:

- Established two pilot dissemination centres for entrepreneurship information in cooperation with the Central European Initiative and the Russian Academy of Management in Moscow;
- Undertaken a survey on Internet Infrastructure Development in Transition Economies;
- Coordinated the UN/ECE Forum on E-Commerce for Transition Economies in the Digital Age;
- Updated the compilation of the focal points on the Information Society and Internet Enterprise Development Initiatives in transition economies;
- Issued the second edition of the Compendium of Soil Clean-up Technologies and Soil Remediation Companies;
- Organized a seminar on “Analysis, Methodology of Treatment and Remediation of Contaminated Soils” in April 1999 in Paris;
- Organized a study tour (scheduled for May 2000) to examine the restructuring of the chemical industry in Romania.





36. Special activities for 2000 / 2001 : The secretariat will:

- Update the UN/ECE best practice guidelines on business incubators,
- Establish a task team to determine further steps to promote business incubation in transition economies;
- Further develop dissemination centres and development networks on business incubation throughout Europe;
- Promote business advisory services in transition economies;
- Develop further activities to disseminate best practice in enterprise development, based on an analysis of the experiences gained from the pilot dissemination centres;
- Organize a regional workshop or conference on Internet Enterprise Development with the assistance of teams of specialists in the subject;
- Create a web-based information centre on national initiatives, policies and instruments for developing the Information Society in the region;
- Organize in December 2000 a seminar to identify the implications of overmanning for industrial restructuring;
- Assist, as appropriate and as resources allow, the UN/ECE Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities with activities related to promoting SMEs;
- If resources permit, publish the third edition of the Compendium of Soil Clean-up Technologies and Soil Remediation Companies
- Issue, in mid 2000, a progress report on the pilot project demonstrating the environmental clean-up of selected sites polluted by chemicals ;
- Organize a workshop on the Use of ISO 14000 Environmental Management System Standards in the Chemical Industry in the UN/ECE region in conjunction with the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies;
- Organize, at the invitation of the Government of France, a seminar on the Analysis, Methodology of Treatment and Remediation of Contaminated Soils for 13-15 March 2001, in Paris;
- Prepare the first draft of the guidelines on harmonizing legislation and drawing up codes of practice on trade in radioactive contaminated metallurgical scrap;
- Organize, on the invitation from the Government of Hungary, a seminar on Trends in Steel Consumption - Responding to Market Needs in Budapest, 11 and 12 September 2000;
- Organize study tours to examine restructuring in the steel industry in China and Poland in October 2000 and 2001 respectively;
- Prepare the following reviews of the steel and the chemical industries during the year 2000-2001: (i) The Chemical Industry in 1999: Annual Review; (ii) Annual Review of the Steel Market; (iii) Directory of European Chemicals and suppliers;
- The following bulletins will be prepared during the year 2000-2001: (i) Annual Bulletin of Steel Statistics for Europe, North America and Asia; (ii) Annual Bulletin of World Trade in Steel; and the (iii) Quarterly Bulletin of Advanced Statistics on Steel;
- A review of small and medium-sized enterprises in countries in transition in 1998-1999 will be prepared.

37. Duration : June 2000 - June 2002

## **PROGRAMME ELEMENTS UNDER THE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMITTEE'S SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

### **TRADE FACILITATION**

38. Description: This work is carried out by the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). By identifying and defining simple, transparent, and effective processes for global commerce, the Centre develops solutions to support the efficient exchange of products and relevant services across global markets by all sizes of enterprise. These are based on best practices in trade facilitation and electronic business and on internationally agreed information and communication technologies and standards.

39. UN/CEFACT comprises a Plenary which meets annually, a Steering Group, six working groups and one ad hoc group. Each group has its individual work programme and implementation plan. The work covers the following areas:

- Business process analysis;
- Codes;
- UN/EDIFACT (United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport);
- International trade procedures;
- Related legal issues;
- Techniques and methodologies;
- Promotion of UN/CEFACT's work;

40. On an ongoing basis, UN/CEFACT:

- (a) Continues to analyse business processes to identify constraints to more effective processes, and develop (in the context of UN/CEFACT) value chain analysis;
- (b) Develops Recommendations aimed at facilitating international trade transactions through rationalizing and simplifying related procedures and their information flows;
- (c) Develops Recommendations for trade documents suitable for reproduction and transmission from electronic and manual systems based on the UN Layout Key;
- (d) Develops and maintains UN/EDIFACT as a key component of electronic business and as a key element in integrating electronic business with internal corporate systems and data;

- (e) Improves UN/EDIFACT by automating its maintenance process, as well as by defining, developing and implementing new working tools;
- (f) Evaluates different technologies and works towards developing the future generation of electronic business messages;
- (g) Develops proposals and recommendations for code sets and code structures to support business processes and procedures and, in particular, code lists for Recommendation No. 16, UN/LOCODE;
- (h) Identifies and evaluates legal constraints that affect procedures and practices in international administrative, commercial and transport transactions. Proposes and recommends practical solutions to these legal constraints, when appropriate in cooperation with organizations such as the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL);
- (i) Develops practical legal guidelines and Recommendations to assist in advancing electronic business and commerce. Cooperates with the legal work of other international bodies on electronic business and commerce;
- (j) Cooperates to ensure that the Memorandum of Understanding on International Standardization with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the participating international user groups is implemented effectively;
- (k) Develops and maintains working relationships with other international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- (l) Strengthens cooperation and information exchange between the United Nations regional commissions, as well as with other United Nations agencies, especially the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

41. Work accomplished: Several revised trade facilitation Recommendations were submitted for approval to the March 2000 UN/CEFACT Plenary: Recommendation No. 5, Abbreviations of INCOTERMS, Recommendation No. 20, Codes for Units of Measurement used in International Trade and Recommendation No. 24, Harmonization of Transport Status Codes as well as a new Recommendation, No. 31, Electronic Commerce Agreement, which takes full account of the demands of electronic commerce and open-edi in the relation to contract formation. Two new UN/EDIFACT directories have been published and new versions of the Code Lists for Recommendation No. 16:

UN/LOCODE and Recommendation No. 21: Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging have been approved and released. The Memorandum of Understanding between UN/ECE, ISO and IEC continues to be of significant value to UN/CEFACT and, in March 2000, the Memorandum of Understanding was extended to include the ITU.

42. Following the pressing need for the development of a common technical framework for XML (extensible markup language) business specifications, UN/CEFACT has launched an initiative in cooperation with the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), to research and identify the technical basis upon which the global implementation of XML can be standardized to the benefit of all sizes of enterprise. This initiative is known as the electronic business XML (ebXML) initiative.

43. Special activities to be undertaken: To continue to develop a single technical framework which would support the inter-operability of XML based electronic business. To complete the revision of Recommendation 18 (Facilitation Measures Related to International Trade Procedures) and revise and issue a Compendium of Trade Facilitation Recommendations; specify and make recommendations for a modelling technique, methodology and associated procedures for UN/CEFACT in support of the development of a Business Process Model for use by UN/CEFACT's working groups; continue to develop Recommendation 30 (Harmonized system for the coding of goods and commodities); explore the possibility of establishing, in cooperation with UNCITRAL and other United Nations and international bodies, an international convention on electronic signatures.

44. Duration: June 2000 – June 2002

#### **STANDARDIZATION OF PERISHABLE PRODUCE AND QUALITY DEVELOPMENT**

45. Description: The Working Party on the Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development prepares and revises standards, recommendations and interpretative brochures for controlling the commercial quality and marketing of selected perishable produce moving in international trade between and to UN/ECE member countries. Its work is organized into five specialized sections:

- Coordination of standardization of fresh fruit and vegetables
- Dry and dried produce (fruit)
- Meat
- Seed potatoes
- Early and ware potatoes.

46. The Working Party organizes workshops in the form of informal meetings of rapporteurs working on developing or revising particular standards (seed potatoes, meat, etc.) and on harmonizing standards and control procedures in countries in transition. The Working Party maintains close cooperation with the

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and OECD.

47. Work accomplished: Several standards for fresh fruit and vegetables were revised (asparagus, broccoli, plums and table grapes). The recommendation for inshell walnuts was adopted as a revised standard. A new standard for cashew kernels was adopted. A recommendation for the revision of the standard on apples and pears was adopted for a one-year trial period. Work on revising the standards for early and ware potatoes and seed potatoes continued. General provisions for meat were adopted. General information on the Working Party and its specialized sections and on most UN/ECE standards for perishable produce has been published on the Internet. Information about meetings is updated regularly on the Internet.

48. Special activities to be undertaken include:

- (a) Drawing up new standards, as requested by countries, on: pineapples, beef carcasses and cuts, bovine meat;
- (b) Reviewing standards, as requested by countries, for: apples and pears (split into two separate standards), citrus fruit, cultivated mushrooms, kiwi fruit, pistachio nuts, seed potatoes, poultry meat;
- (c) Developing provisions for miniature produce;
- (d) Revising of the standard layout for dry and dried produce;
- (e) Continuously updating the homepage containing information on the work of the Working Party, its specialized sections and the standards;
- (f) Reviewing the working procedures of the Working Party and its Specialized Sections;
- (g) Interpreting the provisions concerning quality tolerances in the standards for fresh fruit and vegetables;
- (h) Examining the modalities and procedures for the possible future task of preparing further explanatory material to UN/ECE standards;
- (i) Organizing workshops on harmonizing standards and control procedures for perishable produce in countries in economic transition;
- (k) Investigating quality assurance systems for perishable produce.

49. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

## TECHNICAL HARMONIZATION AND STANDARDIZATION POLICIES

50. Description: The Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies:

- Reviews developments in the field of standardization at international, regional and national levels;
- Issues recommendations related to technical harmonization and standardization;
- Organizes meetings and workshops.

These activities are aimed at promoting industrial and enterprise development and trade by:

- Encouraging the international harmonization of standards and technical regulations;
- Removing or gradually reducing technical barriers to trade;
- Promoting scientific and technological cooperation through policies for standardization and related activities.

51. The Working Party cooperates and exchanges information with international and regional standardization organizations, particularly, ISO.

52. Work accomplished: As a result of discussions at its ninth session (May 1999) and at the Workshop on Implementation and Use of International Standards organized in conjunction with that meeting, the Working Party suggested a number of measures to encourage the transposition and use of international standards and thus facilitate international trade.

53. The Working Party also decided to establish a group of experts to examine how technical regulations could make wider use of international standards. Following the endorsement of this proposal by the Committee at its third session, the ad-hoc team of specialists on STandardization And Regulatory Techniques ("START") was established in September 1999. The START Team drew up a project for a global model for implementing good regulatory practice in preparing, adopting and applying technical regulations through the use of international standards. The concept of such a model was presented to the WTO and the OECD and experts of these organizations expressed interest in the project.

54. An international workshop on the implementation and use of ISO 14000 standards in the chemical industry in the UN/ECE region was organized in cooperation with the ad hoc Group of Experts on the Chemical Industry (Budapest, 30 and 31 March 2000).

55. Representatives of the Working Party took part in a number international and regional meetings devoted to standardization-related issues. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Interstate



Council on Standardization, Certification and Metrology, on behalf of its member States, expressed its appreciation for the usefulness of the Working Party's activities for transition economies.

56. Special activities to be undertaken:

- (1) To prepare the first draft of the model on harmonization of technical regulations, consult interested governmental experts, international and regional organizations and private sector associations on this project and present the first consolidated draft for discussion at the tenth session of the Working Party;
- (2) To prepare a new draft of the international agreement on technical harmonization;
- (3) To prepare draft methodology guidelines for measuring procedures;
- (4) To pursue cross-sectoral projects on standardization related projects (in particular with WP.7 on the Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development );
- (5) To hold workshops and seminars at the request of UN/ECE member States.

57. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

## **TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION**

### Preparing and revising guides relating to international transactions

58. Description: The Working Party on International Legal and Commercial Practice prepares guides and documents and offers advice to individual Governments of the countries in transition on laws, regulations and institutions that could improve the trade and investment environment in their countries. The Working Party works with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the WTO and other United Nations intergovernmental and international organizations. It involves the business community in its activities where input from this community is important for ensuring effective government policy and successful implementation of joint public/private sector activities and projects.

59. Work accomplished: In December 1999, the Working Party held a Forum in Brno, Czech Republic, with representatives of competition authorities from 15 UN/ECE countries, on "Recent Trends in Competition Laws and their Implications for Business in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS". The Forum discussed a set of Guidelines on best practices in implementing competition laws, which were approved by the Working Party.



60. The UN/ECE Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Group, in a project funded by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), prepared a “Negotiating platform” for civil servants to improve their capacity to negotiate concession contracts with representatives of foreign banks and enterprises in public-private partnerships (PPP) projects. It held a conference with ESCAP in Dhaka, in February 2000, at which it offered advice to the Government of Bangladesh on ways to improve the legal and regulatory framework for PPPs and at which it trained officials on issues related to concession contracts.

61. In November 1999, the Real Estate Advisory Group (REAG) held a seminar at the Central European Initiative (CEI) Economic Summit in Prague on “Developing Public-Private Partnerships for Stimulating Real Estate Markets in CEI countries”. It also organized, in early March 2000, a joint Seminar with the Foundation for the Economy and Sustainable Development of the Regions of Europe (FEDRE) to which local authorities from transition economies were invited. The seminar “Trade and Investment Promotion from a Local and Regional Perspective” emphasized the role of real estate in developing local economies. A consultative meeting with organizations promoting real estate markets in transition economies is planned for May 2000.

62. The Advisory Group for the Protection and Implementation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) for Investment held its inaugural meeting in September 1999. The Group has begun implementation of a pilot Support Project, for Estonia, which will result in consultations with the Government of Estonia and joint recommendations on how to improve intellectual property rights implementation in Estonia, including the relevant training of government officials. The Group has also prepared the agenda for a Sustainable Implementation Meeting in Poland during 2000.

63. A questionnaire on the European Convention on International Commercial Arbitration of 1961 has been circulated and 44 responses received, including 36 from organizations nominated by 25 countries (the rest being from recognized experts and international organizations). An informal meeting of invited experts was held in Vienna at the headquarters of UNCITRAL in February 2000 to review the result of the questionnaire and examine options for revising the European Convention, as well as to make recommendations to the Working Party. The Group will meet again in the autumn of 2000 in order to agree upon the wording of either a revision or an optional protocol and to finalize its recommendations to the Working Party.

64. Special activities to be undertaken:

- (a) The Working Party will hold its next Forum on “Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in the Transition Economies” (December 2000). It was agreed that the BOT Group would use this occasion to launch Part II of its Guidelines; and to explore ways in which the Group could offer advisory services to individual member States

on implementing PPPs.

- (b) The Real Estate Advisory Group plans to undertake an advisory mission to Lithuania and to Kosovo. The results of the consultative meeting with other international organizations that are promoting real estate markets in transition economies will be published. The Working Party also approved the organization of a large forum in October 2000 on real estate markets in transition economies.
- (c) The Advisory Group for the Protection and Implementation of Intellectual Property Rights for Investment will make a consultative visit to Estonia and finalize the pilot Support Project for Estonia (final report in 2000). It will also hold a Sustainable Implementation meeting in Poland in June 2000 aimed at identifying the training needs of Polish IPR enforcement officials and developing the appropriate training modules. The Group also plans to organize Latvian and Lithuanian consultative visits within the framework of respective support projects, in September 2000 and, depending upon interest and available funding, a regional meeting on intellectual property rights in the Baltic countries.
- (d) The informal advisory group on arbitration will continue its in-depth review during 2000 of the use of the European Convention on International Commercial Arbitration of 1961 and draft a final set of recommendations as to its possible revision. The group has also agreed to provide advice to and assist the SECI (Southeast European Cooperative Initiative) arbitration project for improving the institutional environment for arbitration in southeast Europe.
- (e) Proceedings of the 1999 Forum on "Recent Trends in Competition Laws and their Implications for Business in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS" will be published.
- (f) Briefing papers will be published on: Legal and regulatory aspects of leasing operations with a view to eastern Europe, Use of land as security for a loan, and The options for international dispute resolution.

65. Duration: June 2000 - June 2002

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