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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

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

**Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development
Proposed Prioritization of Activities**

Note by the Secretariat

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, during its fifty-fourth session in May 1999, requested (see E/ECE/1374) that all of its subsidiary bodies prioritize their activities during the year 2000 based on a standard form (see annex I) and the instructions found in its accompanying explanatory note (see annex III).

Therefore, the Bureau, after consultations among its members, and taking into account the prioritizations given by the Committee to its activities in 1998 (see annex II) as well as changes made to the programme of work in 1999, has developed a proposed set of priorities for consideration by the Committee (see annex I).

The Bureau would like to note, however, that the proposal to change the priority from medium to higher for activities under Cross-Sectoral Enterprise Development is being made upon the assumption that the basic proposals found in document TRADE/2000/8 will be adopted. In other words, under the conditions that (i) a supervisory body be established for this work and (ii) the activities currently being undertaken by the transitional ad hoc groups of experts on steel and the chemicals industry be either terminated or migrated, within a defined time period, to this supervisory body.

Annex I**PROFORMA**

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

[Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development]SECTION 1: PRIORITIZATION

Please complete the following prioritization table. Each priority level (Higher, Medium or Lower) must contain at least one cluster of activities. The number of regular budget Professional staff (excluding the Divisional Director) must be shown against each cluster of activity eg 0.7, 1.4 etc

No	Clusters (or Main Subject Areas) of Activities	Priority Level (H, M, L)	Regular Budget Professional Staff
1	Trade facilitation	Higher Higher (last time)	6.70 P staff
2.	Technical harmonization and standardization policies	Medium Medium (last time)	0.80 P staff
3	Standardization of perishable produce and quality development	Higher Higher (last time)	1 P staff
4	Trade and investment promotion and analysis of recent and prospective trade and investment trends, policies and problems, including discussion themes for the Committee's annual sessions	Lower Lower (last time)	0.50 P staff
5	Preparation and revision of guides relating to international commercial transactions	Medium Higher (last time)	2 P staff 1 L staff
6	Cross-Sectoral Enterprise Development	Higher* Medium(last time)	4 P staff
7	Trade finance	Lower NA (Last time)	0.50 P staff
8	Information and capacity building	Medium NA (Last time)	0.50 P staff + XB staff

* On the assumption that a supervisory body is established for this activities.

SECTION 2: ACTIVITY OPTIONS

With the addition of one extra staff member, what additional activities would the Committee consider? TO BE AGREED IN THE COMMITTEE

With the reduction of one staff member, what activities would the Committee consider reducing? TO BE AGREED IN THE COMMITTEE
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Annex II from ECE/TRADE/222
(the Report from the 16-18 June 1998 CTIED Meeting)

Prioritization of the CTIED Work Programme

Prioritization Between Major Areas of Activity

Trade Facilitation and Agricultural Standards

- | | | |
|----|---|--------|
| A. | Trade Facilitation | Higher |
| B. | Standardization of Perishable Produce and Quality Development | Higher |

Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development

- | | | |
|----|--|--------|
| A. | Trade and Investment Promotion | |
| | A1 - Trade and Investment Promotion and Analysis of Recent
And Prospective Trade and Investment Trends, Policies
And Problems Including Discussion Themes for the
Committee's Annual Sessions | Lower |
| | A2 - Preparation and Revision of Guides Relating to
International Commercial Transactions | Higher |
| B. | Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies | Medium |
| C. | Enterprise Development | Medium |
| D. | Liaison with Other Organizations, and the Organization
of Seminars and Workshops | - |

Annex III
(as found in Annex to E/ECE/1372)

PRIORITIZATION: EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. Background

- 1.1 The Commission agreed, at its fifty-fourth session in May 1999, to revise the system of prioritization. It was also agreed that PSBs should prioritize their activities using a proforma, in preparation for the biennial programme budget submission. This would allow the GEPW to compare the activities of PSBs on a cross-sectoral basis, with information provided in similar formats.
- 1.2 This note explains the revised system, and offers guidance to PSBs for future reference. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the GEPW, the Secretariat and the PSBs in the prioritization process; describes the individual sections of the proforma; and explains the procedure for preparing and completing the proforma.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 There are three main groups involved in the prioritization exercise: the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work (GEPW), the ECE secretariat (including the Office of the Executive Secretary and the Divisional Directors) and the individual PSBs (and their Bureaux). Each plays a specific and significant part in ensuring the effectiveness of the new system, which is designed to ensure that all three groups work together rather than individually.

Group of Experts on the Programme of Work

- 2.2 The GEPW was established in accordance with the ECE Plan of Action, which was adopted by the Commission at its fifty-second session in 1997. The Group's mandate is
- (i) to examine the programmes of work of the PSBs and to advise on arbitration between the competing additional demands from PSBs when they imply significant shifts among these programmes;
 - (ii) to advise on how to adjust the programme of work according to possible changes in orientation, to anticipated changes in the level of resources for the next biennium or, in respect of the current biennium, to unexpected changes of such a magnitude that it would have a significant impact on the existing programme of work.
- 2.3 The GEPW is responsible for ensuring that the direction of ECE work concurs with the wishes of the individual member States. The overall orientation of ECE's activities can be altered by changing, as necessary, the resource allocation to each PSB. This may follow an increase or decrease in the total budgetary allocation. It may also follow a consensus among the member States to place more or less emphasis on individual areas of activity, with no impact on the total ECE resource base.
- 2.4 The GEPW was not established to supervise or to micro-manage the work of individual PSBs. It has no remit to make arbitrary decisions on resource allocations between PSBs. Any recommendation to redistribute resources between PSBs would only be put to the Commission after having consulted the relevant Divisional Directors. The Commission would then need to formally adopt the

recommendations of the GEPW. Even then, it would be for the PSBs themselves to determine how a change in the level of their resources should be most effectively applied, since the experts on each Committee are best placed to decide which activities would benefit from, or be least harmed by, a change in the PSB resource allocation.

- 2.5 In consultation with the respective PSBs through Divisional Directors and PSB Secretaries (who would in turn consult the PSB Bureaux), the GEPW will determine the clusters of activities to be prioritized for each PSB.
- 2.6 The GEPW will meet in the Autumn preceding the submission of the budget narrative by the Executive Secretary. This meeting will determine, in the light of information contained in the proformas and any supplementary information submitted, whether it is necessary to recommend the allocation or redistribution of resources to or between the PSBs. The GEPW may also be convened on an ad hoc basis at the request of the Bureau of the Commission, the Chairman of the GEPW or the Executive Secretary. Individual member States may also formally request the Bureau or the Chairman of the GEPW to convene a meeting of the Group to discuss any other issues relevant to the mandate of the GEPW.

ECE secretariat

- 2.7 Divisional Directors and PSB Secretaries will be consulted on the clusters of activity to be prioritized on the proforma, which will be based on the structure of the programme of work established by the PSB. Divisional Directors will also be responsible for overseeing the prioritization exercise in the Committees for which they are responsible.
- 2.8 The Office of the Executive Secretary will supervise the prioritization exercise as a whole. It will also collate the completed proformas (with supplementary information if submitted) for consideration by the GEPW. It will advise the GEPW on budgetary and administrative matters in ECE that are relevant to the work of the GEPW, and it will convene and attend meetings between the GEPW and other parties (Bureaux of PSBs, Divisional Directors, PSB Chairpersons) as necessary.

PSBs and their Bureaux

- 2.9 The PSB Bureau should aim to present the Committee with a draft completed proforma for discussion and agreement at its annual session. It may request an informal meeting with the Chairman or a representative of the GEPW if any further clarification is required.
- 2.10 The PSB should ensure that the completed proforma meets the requirements of the GEPW. In addition, it may submit any supplementary information which the PSB wishes to draw to the attention of the GEPW.

3. The proforma

- 3.1 An example of the proforma is attached [See Annex I to this document]. It consists of two main sections: a prioritization table listing the clusters(or main subject areas) of activity for each PSB; and two boxes relating to the impact of a change in the level of staff resources.
- 3.2 On the prioritization table, PSBs should allocate a level of priority (Higher, Medium or Lower) to each cluster of activities identified on the proforma. Given their limited size, PSBs which account for less

than 5% of total ECE resources (Human Settlements, Timber and Sustainable Energy) may, if necessary, prioritize on a two-tier basis (Higher or Lower). Each priority level must contain at least one cluster of activity. PSBs should also identify the number of regular budget Professional staff (excluding Divisional Directors) for each cluster of activities. This need not be a round number: a cluster of activities may, for example, cover 1.3 or 2.7 staff.

- 3.3 The two additional boxes on the proforma will ask the PSBs to consider the impact on their activities in the event of an addition or a reduction of one staff member. This will help the PSB to consider potential new areas of activity and the impact of a budget reduction. PSBs are encouraged to consider carrying out new activities from within their existing resource allocation, in which case prior reference to the GEPW is not necessary. The GEPW need only be consulted if additional resources were required

4. Procedures in preparing and completing the Proforma

- 4.1 For each PSB, the Chairman of the GEPW would discuss the clusters of activity to be prioritized (and therefore placed in the proforma), with the PSB Secretary and the Divisional Director who would in turn consult their respective PSB Bureau.
- 4.2 Once the clusters of activities have been determined, the PSB will be asked to complete the proforma. Ideally, the Bureau of the PSB should complete the proforma in draft before submitting it to the Committee at its annual session in the budget submission year.
- 4.3 The prioritization table must be discussed and agreed by the Committee as a whole. For the boxes, in the absence of consensus, the Committee can submit (on supplementary pages if necessary) the different options expressed by member States.
- 4.4 The completed proforma, once agreed by the Committee, should be passed to the Office of the Executive Secretary for collation on behalf of the GEPW in advance of the submission by the Executive Secretary of the budget narrative.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The revised prioritization process is intended to be both cooperative and consultative. Any problems that are identified during the process should be discussed and resolved as soon as possible, to ensure that the end result is not affected. For that purpose, the GEPW will be available for consultation, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss or clarify the concerns of PSBs as necessary.