



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRADE/2002/14/Add.1
16 April 2002

ENGLISH ONLY

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT
Sixth session, 28 and 31 May 2002
Item 16 of the provisional agenda

COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Note by the secretariat

This document was prepared by the UNECE secretariat as input to discussions by the Executive Secretary with Headquarters and is being submitted to the Committee **for information only**.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. The Trade Development programme is a unique programme that supports the elaboration of inter-governmental recommendations, norms, standards and legal instruments in the facilitation and promotion of trade, and the reduction of technical barriers to trade, both in the region and internationally. This programme was defined by the member States in the reform of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in 1997 and was reinforced by the adoption of new Terms of Reference by the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development in June 2001.

2. The UNECE enjoys well-structured cooperation and coordination with the other trade-related organizations in the United Nations system, especially with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Commission on Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Bank (WB) and also with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Customs Organization (WCO), the International Organization for Standards (ISO), International Electro-technical Commission (IEC), and a range of subregional groupings, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) secretariat. In all cases, UNECE work is well-coordinated with the other secretariats and adds value to inter-governmental trade cooperation, working closely with the European Union (EU) and has a dynamic and diverse network of cooperation with the other regional commissions of the United Nations. An overview of existing cooperative arrangements, division of labour and joint activities with other international organizations can be found in the attached chart.

3. UNECE's current Trade Development programme may be summarized under three main themes: Trade facilitation and electronic business; standards and technical harmonisation; and trade promotion and policy.

4. In addition, the UNECE Trade Division contributes to the cross-cutting and inter-sectoral activities of UNECE, including "Trade, Environment and Timber" and "Cross-border Trade and Transport Facilitation" (with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)). The Division also acts as the focal point for UNECE relations with the EU, the WTO, FAO, ISO and the United Nations ICT for Development Task Force and the World Summit on the Information Society.

Trade Facilitation and e-business

5. The secretariat participates in the Trade Facilitation Task Force (with UNCTAD, ITC and WTO) and in the management of the Memorandum of Understanding on international standardization regarding e-business with ISO, IEC, ITU, and several user communities. In addition, a number of projects are currently being undertaken, including on the feasibility of aligned electronic trade documents (UNeDOCS), and a project to promote the implementation of trade facilitation in the Mediterranean region jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Standards and technical harmonization

6. Transition countries are increasingly active in this work, which is perceived as helping them to adopt the harmonization and standardization necessary to support accession to the WTO and the EU. The secretariat undertakes wide-ranging analysis and liaison with the other international standardization organizations, particularly ISO and FAO. This work is undertaken in close cooperation with the European Union.

7. As regards technical harmonization, much of the work focuses on integrating the transition economies into international frameworks, especially with the CIS Secretariat.

8. The work on agricultural standards is undertaken in cooperation with five specialized sections of international experts that define quality standards for (a) fresh fruits and vegetables; (b) dry and dried produce [mainly fruit and nuts]; (c) meat; (d) seed potatoes; and (e) early potatoes. UNECE works in partnership with FAO (responsible for phyto-sanitary standards) and with OECD regarding the dissemination and implementation of its standards. It is important to note that UNECE agricultural standards are generally incorporated into EU regulations under the Common Agricultural Policy.

Trade policy and promotion

9. The Committee's trade promotion activities contribute to understanding the impact of globalization and the WTO on the region and focus special attention on the integration of transition countries into the wider European and global economy, e.g. the Round Table on Services and the GATS in Transition Economies in 2001, and the Briefing on the WTO, Doha and Transition Countries in 2002.

10. In May 2002, the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development and UN/CEFACT will organize together an **International Forum on Trade Facilitation**, in close cooperation with UNCTAD, the secretariat of the WTO, the WCO, and the other UN regional commissions. It is intended that the Forum will make policy contributions to the international debate on simplifying international trade procedures and promoting the economic benefits of facilitating trade. The CTIED on 31 May will hold a policy round table on **Implementing Trade Facilitation in Transition Economies**.

Specific issues in cooperating with other international organizations

11. UNECE Agricultural Quality Standards: As regards the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, the implementation of cooperation could be improved if the Codex Committee fully used the options already included in the Codex Procedural Manual. If these Codex Procedural Manual options were fully used, WP.7 could serve as a rapporteur to create Proposed Draft Codex Standards, which would: a) give increased recognition to the importance of UNECE standards for international trade; and b) facilitate the adoption process in the Codex Committee.

12. Cooperation could be extended with ISO, to further promote the implementation of UNECE agricultural quality standards in the international business community, on condition that additional resources both personnel and, especially, for international travel, could be made available for this new activity.

Adjustment of the division of labour / complementarity

13. The CTIED and its subsidiary bodies have jointly reviewed cooperation with all the major international organizations during the past four years. Currently there is an effective, operational division of labour with all the organizations mentioned in the attached chart. UNECE would have higher visibility if adequate travel resources were available to permit the secretariat to participate more frequently in the major meetings of partner organizations.

Suggestions regarding what UNECE should drop, keep or take on board

14. With the currently available resources, UNECE can maintain existing activities and support its obligations with partners. As mentioned above, the main constraint on extending cooperation internationally is the lack of travel resources to enable participation in relevant meetings outside of Geneva.

Suggestions for new joint activities

15. The WTO secretariat has suggested that UNECE would be a welcome partner to work jointly to support capacity building and technical cooperation in those transition countries who are candidates for WTO accession. We have been invited to participate in several workshops in the CIS and South-east Europe, but the secretariat does not have adequate travel resources. The WTO secretariat has informed us that its technical assistance regulations do not permit it to pay for travel costs of the staff from other international organizations.

16. A specific recent initiative proposed by the Secretariat of WTO to the UNECE Trade Division concerns a new series of capacity building workshops in the Russian Federation and other CIS countries to promote the implementation of UNECE agricultural quality standards and best practice codes in trade procedures for agricultural products. It is not possible for UNECE to respond positively to this invitation within existing resource constraints.

Abbreviations

CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CTIED	[UNECE] Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development
EU	European Union
ECA	Economic Commission for Asia
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEC	International Electro-technical Commission
ITPWG	International Trade Procedures Working Group
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITC	International Trade Centre [UNCTAD/WTO]
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
TA	technical assistance
UN/CEFACT	United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNeDOCS	United Nations Standard for electronic Documents in International Trade
WCO	World Customs Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTO SPS	WTO sanitary or phytosanitary measures

Summary table on the cooperation arrangements of the UNECE Trade Development Programme

Organization	Roles & division of labour		Partner's outputs	Partner's activities	Mechanisms for Cooperation	Current concrete UNECE cooperation
	Related activity of the partner organization	Relevant UNECE activity				
FAO Codex Alimentarius (Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Codex Alimentarius creates food safety standards to protect consumers and to ensure fair practices in the sale of food. - Codex is one of the three organisations mentioned explicitly in the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and thus has a special role for food safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and maintenance of harmonized commercial quality standards for perishable produce: fresh fruit and vegetables; dry and dried food; seed potatoes; eggs and eggs products; meat (porcine, bovine, poultry); cut flowers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food standards for commodities - Codes of hygienic or technological practice - Pesticides evaluated - Limits for pesticide residues - Guidelines for contaminants - Food additives evaluated - Veterinary drugs evaluated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Codex Committee sessions, chaired by host countries - Regional meetings, commodity committees. - The Codex Alimentarius Commission decides work proposed by committees biannually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting schedules are set up in coordination between secretariats - Secretariats actively participate in relevant meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNECE standards are circulated to the members of the Codex Committee for Fresh Fruit and Vegetables whenever a Codex Standard for the same or similar produce is developed
ICC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rules on arbitration, - Incoterms (standard definitions of trade terms) - Uniform Customs and Practice for Documentary Credits - Voluntary codes for marketing and advertising; the suppression of extortion and bribery; sound environmental management practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Incoterms (originally laid out in CEFACT recommendation 5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incoterms - ATA Carnets - Investment guides - Publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training & seminars - Support to and networking of national Chambers of Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in meetings and seminars - Exchange of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in the UN/CEFACT ITPWG - Many Chambers of Commerce host UNECE Multiplier Points Joint organization of the elections of the special committee under the 1961 European Convention on International Commercial Arbitration - Discussions on standardization of the documentary credit form

Organization	Roles & division of labour		Partner's outputs	Partner's activities	Mechanisms for Cooperation	Current concrete UNECE cooperation
	Related activity of the partner organization	Relevant UNECE activity				
IEC, ITU and ISO (See also ISO Technical Committee 154 and ISO)	Standardization in electronic business in areas not covered by the UNECE and as defined in the Memorandum of Understanding between UNECE, ITU and ISO.	- Development of trade facilitation standards, norms and recommendations and related e-business standards for trade	E-business related standards that are not related to those of the UNECE as agreed in the MoU between the four organizations - Recommendations to the MoU Management Group and the relevant international – including private – standard setting agencies on coordination issues	See ISO.	Memorandum of Understanding between UNECE, IEC, ISO and ITU	Cooperation and coordination between the secretariats Each organization acts as secretary to the MoU Management Group on a rotating basis - Management meetings twice a year between the secretariats, the expert groups and international user groups - Summit meetings by the Memorandum of Understanding Management group on coordination and standardization issues
ISO (See also ISO Technical Committee 154 and IEC, ITU and ISO)	- Technical harmonization in all fields but electrical and electronic engineering, which is the responsibility of IEC - These standards are not obligatory and are used primarily by the private sector.	- UNECE promotes the implementation of ISO9000 quality standards and ISO 14000 environmental management standards. - WP.6 develops recommendations to Governments on technical regulations and technical harmonization - It also develops lists of Government standardization	Technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines, or definitions of characteristics, to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose	Technical work is carried out in technical committees, subcommittees and working groups.	Memorandum of Understanding between UNECE, IEC, ISO and ITU.	- ISO attends all WP.6 meetings and annual seminars - Participation in the MoU

Organization	Roles & division of labour		Partner's outputs	Partner's activities	Mechanisms for Cooperation	Current concrete UNECE cooperation
	Related activity of the partner organization	Relevant UNECE activity				
ISO Cont'd		priorities and communicates these to international standardization organizations.				
ISO Technical Committee 154 (See also ISO and IEC, ITU and ISO)	- ISO Technical Committee dealing with processes, data elements and documents in commerce, industry and administration - Cooperation with ISO TC 154 allows the publication of UNECE recommendations as International Standards, e.g. UN/EDIFACT, UN Layout Key for documents, the Trade Data Elements Directory, etc.	- Development of trade facilitation standards, norms and recommendations including UN/EDIFACT and maintenance of the UN Layout Key for documents	- International standards (ISO) and Technical Specification within the scope of TC 154 activities		- Regular Working Group meetings - Plenary meetings once a year	- UNECE is the Secretary to the Technical Committee 154 - UNECE is the maintenance agency of the ISO 7372 Standard (Trade Data Element Directory) - The MoU for UNECE to be the secretary of an ISO Technical Committee is unique and demonstrates the excellent cooperation between the two organizations
ITC	ITC develops programmes and training in trade information for developing countries and, to a very limited extent, transition economies, and helps promote use of UNECE standards	- Development of trade facilitation standards, norms and recommendations - Trade Promotion directory for UNECE member States - Focus on Countries in Transition	- Advice on the development of national infrastructure - Market and marketing information	- Product and market development & trade support services - HRD - Training on locating and using trade info - Training utilizing electronic info media - International purchasing and supply management - Needs assessment and programme design for trade promotion	- Active participation in and contribution to each other's programmes - Member of the informal inter-agency group for trade facilitation (ITC, WTO, UNCTAD, UNECE)	- An Informal agency group on trade facilitation. - Presentations on trade facilitation to ITC seminars - ITC has arranged parallel workshops during CTIED Forums - Exploring ITC's participation in the Mediterranean project on supply chain management

Organization	Roles & division of labour		Partner's outputs	Partner's activities	Mechanisms for Cooperation	Current concrete UNECE cooperation
	Related activity of the partner organization	Relevant UNECE activity				
						- Exploring ITC's contribution to training on trade facilitation
OECD Scheme for the application of international standards for fruit and vegetables	Defines tools that assist countries in the application of the international standards for fruit and vegetables that are developed by the UNECE	- Development of quality standards for perishable produce	Guidelines for the implementation of quality control; explanatory brochures to UNECE Standards	Organisation of workshops and training courses as well as meetings of heads of control services and plenary meetings	- Meeting schedules are set up in coordination between secretaries and secretariats actively participate in each other's relevant meetings	- UNECE Standards are adopted by OECD - The UNECE meetings, the OECD Plenary meeting and both secretariats work closely on updating and interpreting the standards
UNCTAD	UNCTAD provides delivery mechanisms and assistance for the "products" developed by the UNECE as well as technical assistance in trade not covered by UNECE - Focus for Technical Assistance on developing countries	- Worldwide facilitation of international transactions, through the development and promotion of recommendations, norms and standards and the simplification and harmonization of procedures and information flows: - Analysis of activities and elements in international transactions - identification of procedural constraints - Recommendations to eliminate identified constraints, simplify data flows and harmonize remaining procedures - Particular focus on countries in transition	- Practical recommendations and guidelines for governments and enterprises - Trade info providing market and business opportunities data - Info on trade regulations and requirements	- Training, customs reform, databases. - Assistance with trade transactions to improve efficiency and lower costs - Gateway to global networks, improving the access of SMEs to electronic commerce	- Participation in each other's meetings, seminars and forums - Mutual contribution to projects: experts, publications - Member of the informal inter-agency group for trade facilitation (ITC, WTO, UNCTAD, UNECE)	- Joint publications: Compendium of Trade Facilitation Recommendations and the Brochure on Trade Facilitation for the Forum on Trade Facilitation in May 2002 - UNCTAD participates actively in the UN/CEFACT – Trade Procedures Working Group - UNECE supports the Czech technical assistance cooperation managed by UNCTAD - UNCTAD provides assistance to the UNECE Russian timber project

Organization	Roles & division of labour		Partner's outputs	Partner's activities	Mechanisms for Cooperation	Current concrete UNECE cooperation
	Related activity of the partner organization	Relevant UNECE activity				
		for promotion and limited technical assistance				
WCO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International cooperation to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of customs organizations - Development and maintenance of customs -to-customs information exchanges - WCO provides 90 % of the input to Customs EDIFACT messages, and some of the trade messages related to customs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of trade facilitation standards, norms and recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conventions - Standards and recommendations - Harmonized system of tariff nomenclature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securing uniform interpretation and application of the harmonized system across national customs organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorandum of Understanding between UNECE and WCO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participates actively in UN/CEFACT meetings and expert groups - Possible participation with UNECE in an e-learning project - Possible participation in the G7 customs dataset
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with member governments on enforceable trade agreements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNECE participates in the WTO meetings on Technical Barriers to Trade representing all UN Regional Commissions - All WP.6 technical regulations have been presented to the TBT Committee. - UNECE is an observer in the Committee for Trade in Goods and is invited to all meetings regarding trade facilitation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade rules - Enforcement mechanisms for trade rules - Trade Policy Reviews of Member States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works with governments to create rules based on enforceable trade agreements - <i>NO guidelines, norms, standards or recommendations</i> - <i>NO policy recommendations</i> - <i>Technical Assistance provided through ITC and NGOs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member of the informal inter-agency group for trade facilitation (ITC, WTO, UNCTAD, UNECE) - Trade Division & WTO staff meet regularly beyond the inter-agency group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WTO is a partner jointly organizing the UNECE Forum on Trade Facilitation in May 2002 - WTO representatives attend regularly meetings of CTIED subsidiary bodies - UNECE Trade Division attends some WTO committee sessions