



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 February 2016

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Committee

Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business

Twenty-second session

Geneva, 21-22 April 2016

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

UN/CEFACT structure, mandate, terms of reference, and procedures

Terms of Reference for Liaison with other Organizations

Submitted by the UN/CEFACT Bureau

Summary

As part of its effort to clarify and streamline the work of UN/CEFACT, the Bureau has prepared Terms of Reference for Liaison with Other Organizations. These Terms of Reference set out the basic principles and objectives of official representation of UN/CEFACT in liaison activities with other organizations. The document also lists considerations for establishing liaison or collaboration with other organizations and for the selection of candidates to provide representation. The role of the Bureau Vice-Chair(s) responsible for liaison activity is also defined.

This document is presented to the Plenary for noting.*

* This document is submitted in line with the Programme of work of the UN/CEFACT for 2015-2016
ECE/EX/2015/L.14



I. Basic principles and objectives

1. The basic principle is that only the UNECE secretariat can officially represent the United Nations, the UNECE secretariat and UN/CEFACT in official meetings with other organizations.

2. However, in technical areas where the secretariat does not have the requisite technical knowledge, the secretariat may ask the Bureau to represent UN/CEFACT. Following joint consultations between the secretariat and the Bureau, this role may be delegated to either a Bureau member or a registered UN/CEFACT expert in order to ensure that the best interests of UNECE and UN/CEFACT are represented. Hereafter, a person fulfilling such a role is referred to as a technical liaison.

3. Liaison with other international standards setting organizations on technical matters may fit into the latter category above. In such cases, the general objective of UN/CEFACT liaison is to:

- Ensure that the best interests of UNECE and UN/CEFACT are represented;
- Explain and promote the work of UN/CEFACT;
- Ensure that ongoing work within UN/CEFACT is properly presented to “outside” audiences;
- Observe the activities and projects of other relevant organizations and report these activities back to the secretariat, the UN/CEFACT Bureau, and the larger UN/CEFACT community;
- Promote the participation of UN/CEFACT experts in relevant activities of organizations and groups with which UN/CEFACT has working relations and ensure that the activities are reported on a regular basis; and
- Promote strategic goals and positions which have been agreed by the Plenary and/or technical liaison by the Bureau.

4. These brief guidelines seek to establish general terms of reference for this activity and establish how other organizations are chosen for liaison or a different mode of cooperation. (The list of organizations with which cooperation agreements have been established is available at: http://www.unece.org/cefact/cf_mou_index.html)

II. Establishing liaison with other organizations

5. For each new technical liaison or collaboration agreement, the following aspects should be considered:

- The name of the other organization, its sector of activity, the nature of the relationship to be established;
- The benefits to and the goals of UNECE and UN/CEFACT in establishing such a relationship;
- The benefits to and the goals of the other organization in establishing such a relationship;
- Which activities of UN/CEFACT (Programme Development Area, domain, projects) could be impacted by establishing such a relationship, the effects such a relationship

might have on them, the level of participation which could be expected by these UN/CEFACT activities in the relationship; and

- Any potential negative impacts such a relationship could have on UN/CEFACT in general.

6. The secretariat shall draft and/or negotiate any memoranda of understanding or other such framework documents. The secretariat shall seek input from the Bureau on technical and strategic directions in accordance with Plenary-approved documents. Therefore, these framework documents should be presented to the Bureau for discussion.

III. Representative guidelines

7. When a technical liaison is going to be put in place, the secretariat asks the Bureau to suggest possible candidates. The Bureau and the secretariat shall select by agreement the appropriate Bureau Member or registered UN/CEFACT expert who can assist the secretariat in this role of representation. This selection should take into consideration the desired competencies necessary for successful completion of the mission.

8. The scope and the mission of this representation should be defined by agreement of the Bureau and the secretariat at the moment of the establishment of the relationship. The potential candidate for the liaison should be consulted when drafting the scope and mission. This should include, at the minimum, the following points:

- Length of the assignment;
- Frequency of assignment activities (conference calls, meetings, etc.);
- Logistical considerations (travel expenses, meeting facilities, etc.) – it is understood that the identified technical liaison person will cover the related travel expenses;
- The strategic position of UN/CEFACT that the assistant-representative person is expected to pursue;
- The frequency with which the technical liaison person is expected to report to the Bureau, the secretariat and other relevant parties within UN/CEFACT; and
- Any other considerations that the Bureau or the UNECE secretariat wish to be addressed in such a scope and mission.

9. This scope and mission should be approved by agreement of the Bureau and the UNECE secretariat. The Bureau and the secretariat can revise this scope and mission as needed during Bureau meetings, providing sufficient notification given to the relevant technical liaison. This can be at the initiative of the Bureau, the secretariat or at the request of the relevant technical liaison. The Bureau shall take into consideration revision requests from relevant activity areas (Programme Development Areas, Domains, Projects, etc.) within UN/CEFACT that are impacted by the representation.

10. Within this framework, the relevant technical liaison can officially be identified to the other organization as assisting in the representation of UN/CEFACT. The actions of the technical liaison are limited to those outlined within the defined scope and mission. She/he is expected not to act outside of this scope; any out-of-scope actions would result in immediate suspension of their representative function until their action has been discussed within the Bureau and a decision made as to consequent actions.

IV. Managing of representation

11. Within the Bureau, at least one Vice-Chair will be identified as responsible for liaison activity. The Vice-Chair(s) will oversee all liaison activity in close collaboration with the secretariat. This includes:

- Providing any advice, council or instructions to the approved technical liaison;
 - Ensuring that technical liaison are acting within the framework of the defined scope and mandate described above;
 - Ensuring that technical liaison are acting in accordance within the strategic direction defined and approved by the Bureau; and
 - Ensuring that the relevant guidelines have been established and approved by the Bureau for all regular liaison activity.
-