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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Eighth session, 27-30 May 2002

REPORT OF THE UN/CEFACT STEERING GROUP (CSG) MEETING

Geneva, 19-22 November 2001

(Fourth meeting 2001)

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Submitted by the UN/CEFACT Steering Group (CSG)

This document has been submitted by the UN/CEFACT Steering Group (CSG) for information as required under the UN/CEFACT procedures outlined in document TRADE/R.650. It is for information only. Items to be decided upon by the UN/CEFACT Plenary will be presented in a separate report from the Chairman to the CSG.

CSG Chairman:

Ray Walker, United Kingdom - UN/CEFACT Vice Chairman

CSG members present:

David Dobbing, Australia - CDWG Chairman

Pierre Georget, France – EWG Chairman

Peter Guldentops, ICC

Dariusz Haghghi-Talab, Islamic Republic of Iran

Dietmar Jost, WCO

Tahseen Ahmad Khan, India – Rapporteur for Asia

Päivi Lehtonen, Finland

Alexander de Lijster, Netherlands – ITPWG Chairman

Klaus-Dieter Naujok, Canada – TMWG Chairman

Grazyna Rzymkowska, Poland

Christina Wallén-Rahlén, Sweden

Peter Wilson, United Kingdom

Christoph Wolf, Germany

Ex-officio members and Rapporteurs present:

Claude Hamon - Standards Liaison Rapporteur

Kenji Itoh, Japan - UN/CEFACT Vice-Chairman

David Marsh, United Kingdom – LWG Chairman and Legal Liaison Rapporteur

Santiago Milà, IAPH/ Spain - UN/CEFACT Vice-Chairman

Teresa Sorrenti, United States - UN/CEFACT Vice-Chairperson

At the invitation of the Chairman:

Mike Doran – BPAWG Chairman

Christian Frühwald, Chairman of UN/CEFACT

Maxence Orthlieb, Trade Facilitation, UNCTAD

Alexander Safarik-Pstrost, Chairman of the CTIED

Secretariat present:

Mario Apostolov

Tom Butterly

Carol Cosgrove-Sacks, Director of the Trade Division

Hans Hansell

Jean Kubler

Apologies:

Dumitru Anca, Romania

Harry Featherstone, United States

Johnson Jubulu Olumekun, Nigeria - UN/CEFACT Vice-Chairman

Common acronyms:

BPAWG – Business Process Analysis Working Group	eBTWG – Electronic Business Transition Working Group
CDWG – Codes Working Group	EBWG – Electronic Business Working Group
CTIED - Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development	ECLAC – UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EWG – EDIFACT Working Group	ESCAP – UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
LWG - Legal Working Group	ESCWA – UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
TMWG – Techniques and Methodology Working Group	IPR - Intellectual Property Rights
ebXML – Electronic Business XML initiative	JTC1 – a joint ISO/IEC technical committee (JTC) dealing with information technology
AFACT - Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business	MoU - Memorandum of Understanding
BAC – Business Advisory Council	OLA – Office of the Legal Adviser
BIO - Business Information Objects	T1 – Technical Assessment sub-group of the UN/EDIFACT Working Group (EWG)
BOS – Business Object Summit	XCBL – XML Common Business Language
BPIM – Business Process and Information Modelling	UBL –XML Universal Business Language
BSR - Basic Semantic Register	UMM - UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology
BSU - Basic Semantic Unit	
DMR – Directory Maintenance Request	
DTD – Document Type Definition (in XML)	

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

1. Apologies were received from Messrs. Anca, Featherstone and Olumekun. The Chairman of the CTIED and the Director of the Trade Division welcomed the CSG. The UN/CEFACT Chairman participated in the meeting and moderated the discussion on the new structure of UN/CEFACT during the first two days.

ELECTRONIC BUSINESS STRATEGY - CURRENT POSITION, RESOURCES, FORWARD PLANS

2. The CSG Chairman noted that the positive results of the EWG meeting on the development of the proposed new working group structure of UN/CEFACT held in September 2001. The Electronic Business Team (EBT) had been dissolved because its work had been completed. A drafting team had then been established, including CSG members, the UN/CEFACT Chairman, a member of the secretariat and the Head of Delegation of the Netherlands. The CSG Chairman introduced document CEFACT/2001/CS21, Proposal for the Reorganisation of UN/CEFACT, and pointed out the important suggestion of the working groups to unite some of the working groups in larger groups of experts on a functional basis. He also stressed the need to emphasize the concept of trade facilitation in the new structure.

3. The UN/CEFACT Chairman further suggested that the following elements/layers should be taken into consideration in the construction of the new structure of UN/CEFACT: Processes - Procedures - Content/Data elements - Transactions/Forms - Methods/Tools/Templates. The CSG confirmed that UN/CEFACT's Modelling Methodology (UMM) was applicable to all of its activities. The UN/CEFACT Chairman emphasized the need for the commitment of all groups to the UN/CEFACT mission. A clear definition of rules and responsibilities and coordination with the secretariat were necessary. The larger group of experts should encompass working groups.
4. It was agreed that the approval of projects should take place at a higher level. Reports of the Chairs of the various groups to the CSG and conference calls were suggested as part of the coordination and decision process. The CSG would consider the issues of promotion and awareness, policy and liaison and would suggest a way to reflect them in the overall structure. The chairpersons of the various groups would participate in the CSG.
5. It was agreed to include functions related to policy, awareness, promotion and liaison, directly linked to the CSG. The CSG Chairman welcomed the setting-up of a small editing team consisting of Messrs. Dobbing, Guldentops, Georget and Naujok. Mr. Wilson and the CSG Chairman would prepare a final proposal to be reflected in the UN/CEFACT organigramme.
6. The CSG reviewed a proposed organization structure of UN/CEFACT and felt that all the groups should meet at the same place and at the same time – in the UN/CEFACT working group forum – which would significantly improve internal and external coordination. The UN/CEFACT Chairman was ready to submit at the end of January 2002 a document which could be considered by HoDs under the procedure for accelerated inter-sessional approval to Heads of Delegation.
7. The CSG welcomed the agreement between Mr. Naujok, Chairman of TMWG and eBTWG, and Mr. Georget, EWG Chairman, to reallocate the projects currently carried out by eBTWG to TMWG and EWG no later than 12 December 2001.

SUPPORT SERVICE PROVIDER

8. The CSG drafted Terms of Reference on the establishment of an ad hoc group for a Support Service Provider (SSP), and invited Mr. Featherstone to act as leader. It thanked Mr. Featherstone for his previous work on this issue. It was decided to review the paper Framework for Resources and Services in Support of the UN/CEFACT e-Business Working Group and look into the possibility of establishing a trust fund or an equivalent mechanism which should guarantee financial transparency. The trust fund should have separate accounts and independent auditing and publishing. A Supervisory body for the SSP would be established, and would include the UN secretariat. Messrs. Dobbing and Hansell were to hold an initial discussion with the UN Procurement Office on the procedure for soliciting an SSP by 29 November 2001. Under no circumstances should the SSP become a participant in the groups and would have a clear reporting structure to a nominated "operating" officer representing UN/CEFACT. The main responsibilities of the ad hoc group would be:
 - to progress through the UN secretariat with the appointment of one or more SSPs (however, the CSG has a very strong preference for a single SSP)
 - to consider and develop together with the secretariat the formation and functions of a supervisory board to oversee contractual obligations and, in particular, to ensure financial transparency and integrity of the operation. Members: Mr. Featherstone (Chairman), Mr. Dobbing (vice-chairman), Ms. Sorrenti, Ms. Rzymkowska, Mr. de Lijster, Mr. Doran and Mr. Hansell.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE UN/CEFACT STANDARD SETTING PROCESS

9. Mr. Marsh presented document CEFACT/2001/CS20, Note Regarding Intellectual Property in Work created by UN/CEFACT and based on the analysis of various existing solutions. The CSG decided to progress document CEFACT/2001/CS20 to a plenary paper. The Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues in the document would also be discussed at the forthcoming ISO MoU workshop on IPR issues in standardization.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON TRADE FACILITATION, MAY 2002

10. The Director of the Trade Division informed the CSG on the preparation of the Forum on Trade Facilitation in May 2002. She also informed on her discussions with representatives of the WTO secretariat, the United States Trade Representative, the European Commission as well as with the Swiss, Spanish and other Governments. Mr. Apostolov informed the meeting about the preliminary programme of the Forum. The CSG indicated that parallel workshops would not be appropriate and recommended to concentrate on the high-level policy discussions in order to produce a well-focused event.

AGENDA ITEM 5 - PROMOTION OF UN/CEFACT'S OBJECTIVES

11. Ms. Rzymkowska suggested that the academics she identified should be invited to the Forum in May 2002. The list that she had prepared was open and a paper would be prepared for the February CSG meeting.
12. The Rapporteur for Asia presented his report CEFACT/2001/CS22. AFACT had taken the decision to establish a permanent secretariat, for which Chinese Taipei had volunteered. The next AFACT Meeting would take place from 27 October to 1 November 2002 in Kuala Lumpur.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – REPORTS FROM MANDATED GROUPS

13. After the EWG Chairman introduced the Directory Audit Report, the CSG requested the secretariat to publish the D.01C directory. It also requested the EWG chair to produce an explanatory note on the reasons for the publication of three directories for this year. This note should be published with the directory. It was noted that in view of the timing of the Forum, the TMWG would not be able to organize its workshop in May 2002. However, the CSG felt that organizing such an event remained of high priority.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – DEVELOPMENTS IN STANDARDIZATION

14. The UN secretariat, OASIS and the CSG Chairman, as a representative of the CSG, had discussed the cooperation agreement with OASIS. The OLA had suggested that OASIS should join the MoU of UNECE, ISO, IEC and ITU. At the MoU meeting in Fort Lauderdale on 8-9 November, it had been agreed that OASIS would be invited to join MoU as an international user group. Subsequently, OASIS had accepted.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – DEVELOPMENTS IN RECOMMENDATIONS AND OTHER DELIVERABLES

15. It was agreed that the ebXML specifications would be published as recommendations for the May 2002 UN/CEFACT Plenary.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – DEVELOPMENTS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

16. Ms. Wallén-Rahlén informed the meeting of the developments related to the new round of WTO negotiations. The WTO Doha meeting had decided not to include trade facilitation in the new round for the time being, but would take a decision at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting in 2003. UN/CEFACT should consider what kind of contribution it could make to the discussion in the WTO. The Doha meeting had decided that the work on electronic commerce should continue according to the work programme and report to the Fifth Ministerial Meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. The Director of the Trade Division informed the CSG of the planned new structure for the Trade Division, which would have two branches: (a) relations with inter-governmental bodies and (b) trade-related projects. Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos would be head of the first branch and Mr. Hans Hansell head of the second. Mr. Mika Vepsäläinen would be secretary to the UN/CEFACT Plenary.
18. The CSG strongly requested that for every meeting in Geneva, the secretariat should supply a room, a LCD projector, overhead projectors, transparencies, pens, screen, flip chart in order to ensure a smooth running of the meeting.
19. Mr. Apostolov will review the action list and send it to the list server.
20. The following dates for CSG meetings were agreed upon:

25-28 February 2002, Geneva
31 May 2002, Geneva
22-25 July 2002, Geneva
21-24 October 2002, Berlin
