



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRADE/CEFACT/2002/18
18 April 2002

ENGLISH AND FRENCH ONLY

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

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

Eighth session, 27-30 May 2002

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

STANDARD LIAISON RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

Submitted by the UN/CEFACT Standards Liaison Rapporteur

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The present report is submitted to the Centre for information.

This is the last report I have the honour to address to the UN/CEFACT Plenary, owing to various considerations. I have decided to benefit from an early retirement plan. Thus, today is my last appearance in a CEFACT meeting. Therefore, in addition to a report and some thoughts on the past year's events, I have taken the liberty of including in this report some considerations (recommendations ?) about the future.

We tried during most of last year to establish a close cooperation agreement with JTC1 through the set-up of an A-liaison status. This effort has not been successful so far, not because of lack of will or clumsiness on our part, but because of very sensitive, and somewhat exaggerated, reactions from JTC1 towards the possibility given, by status, to an A-liaison body, to have documents processed by JTC1 in a "fast-track" mode. And this, despite repeated assurances from our part that we were mostly, or even exclusively, interested in the possibility of participating in any work item in JTC1 work programme, and of demanding that previously existing work or documents from UN/ECE be taken into consideration.

My successor will have to solve this problem, for the ever-broadening spectrum of JTC1 activities has more and more overlap with UN/CEFACT's portfolio of interests and preoccupations. But the solution might be found in an even more efficient operation of TH MoU/MG. For this is, in my opinion, the significant event of last year, as far as cooperation with other standard bodies is concerned. The MoU/MG is now running efficiently, if not always smoothly, is attracting a growing number of participants, be it more working groups from the constituting members such as ISO or IEC or new members such as OASIS.

To fully benefit from this cooperation and coordination tool, we must firstly put some order in our own house. Since there will be a/some new organisation, with new working groups, now seems to be an appropriate time to establish a comprehensive, fully documented and well-maintained list of all the liaisons between UN/CEFACT working groups and the corresponding bodies among our partners from the MoU/MG. But this will be the task of my successor, to whom I wish good luck.
