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UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR TRADE FACILITATION AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS (UN/CEFACT)

**SYNTAX INDEPENDENT MODELING OF BUSINESS PROCESSES (UMM)
AND BUSINESS INFORMATION (CC) BASED ON BCF**

POSITION PAPER OF THE DELEGATION OF GERMANY

UN/CEFACT has a very distinguished history in building e-business standards that are accepted in a wide range of industries and thus enabling cross-industry interactions. UN/CEFACT recognized the benefits of XML in the 1990's by initiating the ebXML project which has been successfully completed in collaboration with OASIS. The ebXML project represents a broad consensus across commercial and governmental entities in terms of the requirements for B2B interactions across industries.

ebXML consists of standards that support both the Business Oriented View (BOV) as well as the Functional Service View (FSV) of the Open-edi Reference Model (ISO 14662) for e-business systems. Particularly in the area of FSV, the software industry has rallied around Web Services, which is a conceptually and syntactically different technology compared to the ebXML Functional Service View. Web Services Technology represents the future direction of the industry with support for standards such as SOAP, WSDL, UDDI, and WS-Security. The Web Services Interoperability Organization (WS-I) has taken on the role to further the promotion and adoption of Web Services and is profiling specifications from other groups such as the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and OASIS to bring broad consensus to the industry as to how to build truly interoperable e-business systems based on Web Services.

Unfortunately, most recently a visible rift between Web Services as the industry's mainstream and the ebXML project has emerged. While some components of the ebXML project – most notably the UN/CEFACT Modeling Methodology (UMM) and Core Component Technical Specification (CCTS) – can be applied to both the Web Services and ebXML Functional Service View, a large portion of the ebXML stack is incompatible with the Web Services stack

Based on its history and reputation, UN/CEFACT has an excellent opportunity to guide the world-wide community as expressed in the UN/CEFACT e-business vision. UN/CEFACT is uniquely positioned to analyze and understand the key elements of international processes, procedures and transactions and working for the elimination of constraints in order to develop methods to facilitate global ebusiness, including the relevant use of information technologies.

UN/CEFACT has the opportunity with UN/CEFACT Business Collaboration Framework (BCF) to describe the Business Oriented View of e-business systems across all industries world-wide independent of syntax and of the underlying information technology infrastructure. Unfortunately, through its broad support of the ebXML project, UN/CEFACT seems to favor one technology over the other. Though the Chairmen clearly explain, as already decided by the UN/CEFACT plenary last year, that through its Business Collaboration Framework (BCF) UN/CEFACT should in fact focus its work on the Business Oriented View of an e-business system, this positioning is not fully understood by other organisations interfacing with UN/CEFACT. We assert that UN/CEFACT needs to focus on the Business Oriented View of an ebusiness system, and facilitate the harmonization of business processes across industry boundaries. UN/CEFACT should furthermore continue to promote the use of its CCTS as well as UMM and apply it independent of the supported syntax of the e-business system infrastructure.

Throughout its published material, UN/CEFACT should present itself in a strictly technology-neutral way and should further explain the BCF as its means to accomplish that.
