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ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

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

Eleventh session, 22 – 23 June 2005

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

UN/CEFACT DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK, 2004-2007

Trade Development Subprogramme

Work Items

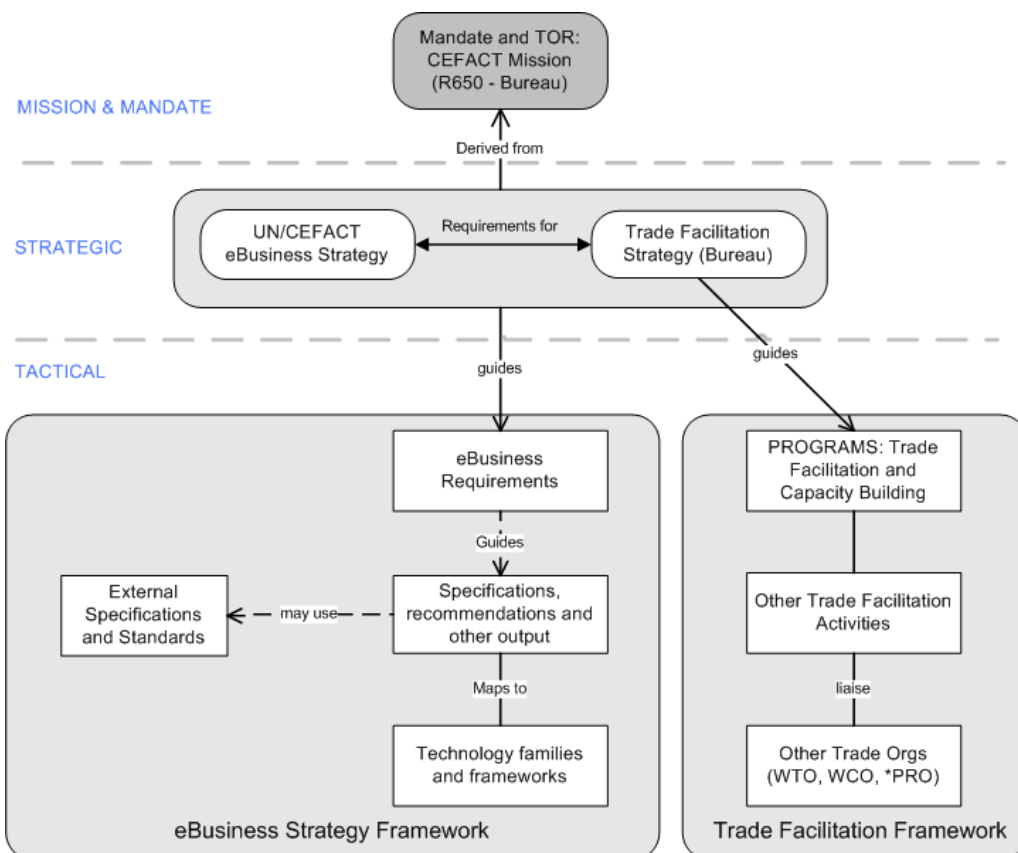
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Related documentation:	
TRADE/R.650/Rev.4	Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT
TRADE/CEFACT/2005/4	Rules of Procedure of UN/CEFACT Forum
TRADE/CEFACT/2005/5	Open Development Process of UN/CEFACT
TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6	Trade Facilitation Strategy
TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7	e-Business Strategy
TRADE/CEFACT/2005/18	Overview of UN/CEFACT outputs

Introduction

1. The following presents the 2004 to 2007 programme of work for UN/CEFACT. It is based upon and takes fully into account the approved mandate, strategic goals and objectives for the Centre. The programme of work will focus on five key objectives. The numbering does not imply any particular priority, as they are all interrelated and interdependent:

- Policy development in the area of trade facilitation through analysing and understanding the key elements of international processes, procedures and transactions and working for the elimination of constraints;
- Developing and maintaining international trade-related recommendations and standards, in response to the needs of the global economy;
- Reducing barriers to trade in goods and services in all countries, and UNECE member States in particular, through greater implementation of international and UN/CEFACT norms, standards, instruments and recommendations, especially in trade facilitation;
- Promoting the value and effectiveness of trade facilitation instruments and standards in trade and economic development;
- Integrating UN/CEFACT's trade activities with those of other UN and international trade-related bodies.



1. The conceptual view of UN/CEFACT's strategy

1.1 STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE - Developing and maintaining effective international trade-related instruments, norms, standards and recommendations, in response to the needs of the global economy

2. Developing and maintaining trade-related instruments, norms and standards is one of the core activities of UN/CEFACT. In order to further this work, UN/CEFACT will undertake the following activities:

1.1.1 Development of a Recommendation on the establishment of a Single Window

3. The “Single Window” environment aims to expedite and simplify information flows between trade and government and bring meaningful gains to all parties involved in cross-border trade. Essentially, a “Single Window” is a system that allows traders to lodge information with a single body, or entry point, to fulfil all import- or export-related regulatory requirements. Through the work of UN/CEFACT, the UNECE will develop a formal Recommendation for establishing and operating a Single Window for Trade Information and Procedures. The Recommendation will consist of a short formal section containing the core elements of the Recommendation, followed by four annexes with a more elaborate description of the Single Window and operational examples from trade and business.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and Trade in all countries, but with a special focus on transition and developing countries
<i>Period of work:</i>	Completed
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation
<i>Lead:</i>	Forum - TBG 15

1.1.2 Development of a Recommendation on Standards for Single Window

4. As a follow up to the development and approval of UN/CEFACT Recommendation Number 33 - Recommendation and Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window¹ to enhance the efficient exchange of information between trade and government - UN/CEFACT will establish a working group of existing Single Window operators to look at standards to ensure interoperability between Single Windows. This work will likely result in development of a Recommendation on a set of standards for such facilities

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and Trade in all countries, but with a special focus on transition and developing countries
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005-2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.2.2.2)
<i>Lead:</i>	Forum – TBG 15

1.1.3 Legal Aspects of Trade Facilitation

5. UN/CEFACT will work on preparing Recommendations to address problems and develop best practices and standards regarding the legal aspects of trade facilitation around the world. This work will be carried out in association with other relevant international bodies, including the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

<i>Target audience:</i>	Governments (especially developing and least developed transition economies), the business community (especially SMEs)
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004-2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.5)

¹ A Single Window is a Facility to allow parties involved in international trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single entry point to fulfill all import, export and transit related regulatory requirements. If information is electronic, then individual data elements should only be submitted once.

Lead

Forum - LWG

1.1.4 Development and Subsequent Maintenance of Electronic Business Standard

6. Development and continued maintenance of specifications is an ongoing effort sponsored by the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) and UN/CEFACT. Technical committees for various web services standards, the ebXML Registry and Repository, Messaging, Collaborative Partner Profiles and Agreements are hosted by OASIS. Business Process, Business Requirements, Naming and Design Rules, UN/CEFACT Registry and Core Components are categories of work continuing in UN/CEFACT, Additional architecture work is underway in UN/CEFACT (details provided in the "Overview of UN/CEFACT Outputs"). UN/CEFACT and OASIS are committed to the coordinated development of standards.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum

1.1.5 Development and Maintenance of UN/CEFACT Methodologies

7. Development and maintenance of the UN/CEFACT methodologies to capture and document Business and Trade Facilitation requirements in formats for these to be analyzed, generalized, registered, communicated and transmitted.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 001, 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum – TMG

1.1.6 Development and Maintenance of the UN/CEFACT Registry/Repository

8. Development and maintenance of the Registry and Repository for UN/CEFACT Specifications and Standards.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum – ICG

1.1.7 Development and maintenance of Business Requirements Specifications BRS

9. Development, collection, maintenance and collaboration at the international level of requirements for trade facilitation and electronic business from business sectors, governments and enterprises.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 002)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum – TBG

1.1.8 Development and Maintenance of Requirements Specification Mapping (RSM)

10. Development and maintenance of mappings to transform business requirements into formal technical specifications.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum - ICG

1.1.9 Standards for electronic documents for trade-UNeDocs

11. UN/CEFACT will develop, publish and maintain a coordinated set of international electronic trade documents (UNeDocs) as a UN/CEFACT international trade document standard. This will include a comprehensive cross-domain document data model based on Core Components for UN/EDIFACT and XML document structures, document presentation methodologies and box completion guidelines.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.2.2.1, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 004, 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum

1.1.10 Development and alignment of Web Services

12. Web services are a recent concept for the next generation of e-Business infrastructure technology, providing an internet-based set of specifications and services. The UN/CEFACT Electronic Business Strategy will be used to expand the e-Business architecture and the UN/CEFACT programme of work for capabilities and business content for web services.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum

1.1.11 Review and Updating of Existing UNECE Recommendations

13. The secretariat will work together with UN/CEFACT to review and, where necessary, update existing UNECE recommendations on trade facilitation and electronic business.

1.1.11.1 Revision of Recommendation 12, Measures to Facilitate Maritime Transport Document Procedures

14. UN/CEFACT Recommendation 12, Measures to Facilitate Maritime Transport Document Procedures, was first approved in March 1979 and sought a change in official and commercial practice to: (i) minimise the use of negotiable transport documents and encourage the use of alternative sea waybills or other non negotiable transport documents; (ii) encourage the use of single original transport documents, and (iii) encourage the use of blank back and standard transport documents.

15. However, this Recommendation has to be updated to take account of changes in electronic commerce and document handling. UNECE, through UN/CEFACT, will prepare this update and will encourage the use of electronic documents.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Traders and the transport industry
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.2.1)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum - TBG 15

1.1.11.2 Revision of Recommendation 6, Aligned Invoice layout Key for International Trade

16. Revision of UN/CEFACT Recommendation 6, Aligned Invoice Layout Key for International Trade to ensure that it contains the elements required to exchange information electronically, from the point of view of the user, the service provider and the legislator.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Traders and the transport industry
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 - 2006
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.2.1)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum – TBG 15

1.1.11.3 Revision and Maintenance of Codes for Units of Measure used in International Trade

17. UN/CEFACT Recommendation 20, Codes for Units of Measure used in International Trade, establishes a single list of code elements to represent units of measure for length, mass (weight), volume and other quantities (including units of count). The code elements provided for in this recommendation are intended for use in manual and/or automated systems for the exchange of information between participants in international trade and of other economic, scientific and technological activities, at three levels

18. UN/CEFACT is currently preparing a substantive revision to this Recommendation covering:

- Rationalising of specific units of measure that have questionable usage
- Updating and extending the list of units of measure
- Enhancing the contents, format and presentation of Recommendation 20.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.2.1)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum - ICG

1.1.11.4 Maintenance of UN/EDIFACT

19. UN/EDIFACT comprises a set of internationally agreed standards, directories and guidelines for electronic data interchange (EDI), and in particular interchange related to trade in goods and services between independent, computerized information systems. The UN/EDIFACT directories, or the Trade Data Interchange Directory (TDID), currently comprise a set of over 200 message structures that are used in such diverse sectors as transport, administration, finance, health care and architecture. UN/EDIFACT messages enable enterprises worldwide to exchange vital business information and to coordinate and optimise their supply chain processes. Today, UN/EDIFACT remains the sole internationally accepted standard for the electronic interchange of business information.

20.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004 - 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 005)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum

1.1.11.5 Maintenance and extension of UN/LOCODE (UN Codes for trade and transport locations)

21. UN/LOCODE defines in a precise and unambiguous way locations used in international trade. It is a five-character code system that is used throughout international trade to designate locations whenever

there is a need for a coded representation for the names of ports, airports, inland clearance depots, inland freight terminals and other transport related locations, such as places of receipt and delivery, which are used for goods movements associated with trade (for example, locations where Customs clearance of goods can take place), or otherwise proposed by Governments. UN/LOCODE integrates other important location lists such as IATA Airport codes, the Lloyds Register for ports and codes of the Universal Postal Union. UNECE maintains this code set and database on an ongoing basis (7000-8000 requests for updates and other changes per year).

22. Maintenance and extension of the UN/LOCODE system includes update and extension of the list of locations as required by UN/LOCODE users and development of an Internet-based registration and dissemination system for UN/LOCODE

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 005)
<i>Lead</i>	UNLOCODE Expert Group

1.1.11.6 Maintenance of other code related UNECE Recommendations

23. UN/CEFACT maintains and periodically updates a number of Recommendations related to codes. These include:

- UNECE Recommendation No. 3 - ISO Country Code for Representation of Names of Countries;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 5 - Abbreviations of INCOTERMS;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 7 - Numerical Representation of Dates, Time, and Periods of Time;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 8 - Unique Identification Code Methodology - UNIC;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 9 - Alphabetical Code for the Representation of Currencies;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 10 - Codes for the Identification of Ships;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 15 - Simpler Shipping Marks;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 17 - PAYTERMS – Abbreviations for Terms of Payment;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 19 - Codes for Modes of Transport;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 21 - Codes for Passengers, Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 23 - Freight Cost Code - FCC;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 24 - Trade and Transport Status Codes;
- UNECE Recommendation No. 28 - Codes for Types of Means of Transport.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6)
<i>Lead</i>	Forum

1.1.11.7 Maintenance of UNTDED (ISO 7372)

The international standard ISO 7372 was developed by UNECE as the UNTDED (United Nations Trade Data Elements Directory) and adopted by Technical Committee, ISO TC/154. The UNTDED defines data elements for administration, commerce, and industry and is maintained by a joint ISO-UNECE maintenance agency. Under this joint maintenance agency, UN/CEFACT will complete a revision of ISO 7372 through ISO TC/154.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	Completed

<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6)
<i>Lead</i>	ISO TC 154 and Forum

1.2 IMPLEMENTATION/CAPACITY BUILDING - Reducing barriers to trade in goods and services in all countries, and UNECE member States in particular, through greater implementation of international and UN/CEFACT norms, standards, instruments and recommendations, especially in trade facilitation

24. Essentially, all of UN/CEFACT's instruments are tools for trade facilitation implementation. Given the current demand from countries new to trade facilitation, and also the experience gained in implementation over the past decades, UN/CEFACT will expand its range of tools, models and publications that can be used by governments and the trade community for the development and implementation of an integrated approach to trade facilitation along the entire international supply-chain.

25. Trade facilitation implementation is best achieved through a joint effort between government and trade. The classic approach to achieving this collaboration is through the formation of a trade facilitation Pro Committee (UN/CEFACT Recommendation Number 4). It is emphasized that the specific form of the Pro organization is far less important than its function and level of support (both financial and technical) from government and business.

1.2.1 Enhancement of Trade Facilitation and Security

26. Security is playing an increasingly important role in international trade. However, there is a danger in the current environment that unilateral and uncoordinated measures on trade security could emerge. Such measures could impede trade flows and could become a new non-technical barrier to trade, particularly for developing economies and small and medium enterprises. UN/CEFACT will promote the further development of information and documentary standards to support the advance presentation of cargo information, such as the United Nations Layout Key (UNLK), UNEdocs, the United Nations Directories for Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT) and the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE). UN/CEFACT will also promote the establishment of Single Window facilities. The needs and requirements of industry and governments for standards related to supply chain security management will also be explored. Any work emanating from this will be driven by trade requirements and demands and will be coordinated with the World Customs Organizations (WCO) and other relevant organizations.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments, international trade organizations and trade
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004-2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 008)
<i>Lead:</i>	Bureau

1.2.2 Implementation of Trade Facilitation Benchmarking

27. The secretariat, working together with the UN/CEFACT, national trade facilitation promotion organizations and other organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), will assist selected member States to implement benchmarking activities based on the Guide and Recommendation on Trade Facilitation Benchmarking.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and national trade facilitation promotion organizations
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Period of work: 2005-07
Rationale: Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
Lead: Forum – TBG 15

1.2.3 Capacity Building in Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business in the Mediterranean

28. The objective of this project is to increase the competitiveness of companies in the Mediterranean region in regional and global markets. It aims to simplify and harmonize trade procedures throughout the transaction chain; implement automated processes and information technology for administration and commerce; and facilitate the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in electronic business. It focuses on trade among the non-EU Mediterranean countries that are members of UNECE, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia or the Economic Commission for Africa.

29. Under the project, UNECE developed e-learning tools for trade facilitation based on Recommendation 18 (in support of the Mediterranean project). These tools will also be available for training in other areas and projects.

Target Audience: Non-European Union Mediterranean countries, members of UNECE, ESCWA or ECA. Policy makers in Governments and trade in transition and developing economies
Period of work: 2005
Rationale: Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 003)
Lead: UNECE, UNECA, UNESCWA, Bureau

1.2.4 Implementation of Single Window

30. UNECE will work with key strategic partners (WB, WCO, ICC, UN Regional Commissions, etc) to assist selected member States in assessing their need for and approach to the implementation of a Single Window. The “Single Window” environment aims at expediting and simplifying information flows between trade and government and bringing meaningful gains to all parties involved in cross-border trade. Essentially, a “Single Window” is a system that allows traders to lodge information with a single body to fulfil all import- or export-related regulatory requirements.

Target Audience: Governments and Trade in all countries, but with a special focus on transition and developing countries
Period of work: 2005- 2007
Rationale: Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
Lead: UNECE and other UN Agencies, Forum – TBG 15

1.2.5 Capacity Building for Trade Facilitation Organizations (PRO Organizations) in Transition Economies

31. The UNECE will carry out an assessment study of established trade facilitation organizations (PRO organizations) in transition economies in order to determine their current operational status, activity level, resources, funding arrangements. The main purpose of the study will be to identify the lessons learned from current operations and determine future capacity building requirements. Based on the findings, follow-up activities will be implemented to support capacity-building, beginning with a workshop for national trade facilitation organizations that will be held in September 2004.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Organizations and policy makers in Governments in both transition and developing economies
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007)
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
<i>Lead:</i>	UNECE Regional Advisory Services, Bureau

1.2.6 Development of a Guide and formal Recommendation on Trade Facilitation Benchmarking

32. Trade Facilitation Benchmarking relates to the measurement of specific trade facilitation procedures and activities, usually against an agreed standard. Benchmarking allows countries to measure their performance developments over time and against other countries and is an important tool in identifying areas needing attention and improvement. Through the work of the UN/CEFACT, UNECE will develop a “Guide to Trade Facilitation Benchmarking”. Depending on the feedback and the level of interest generated through this guide, UN/CEFACT may develop a formal recommendation on this topic.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and international trade organizations
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
<i>Lead:</i>	Forum – TBG 15

1.2.7 Development of a “Guide to Trade Facilitation Implementation”

33. The secretariat will work together with the UN/CEFACT to develop a, “Guide to Trade Facilitation Implementation”. This will provide countries with a step by step guide to determining where best to simplify and harmonize trade procedures.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and Trade participants in all countries
<i>Period of work:</i>	2006
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
<i>Lead:</i>	Forum – TBG 15

1.2.8 Interregional Partnership for Promoting Trade as an Engine of Growth Through Knowledge Management and Taking Advantage of Information and Communication Technology

34. Capacity Building project to strengthen Trade Facilitation implementation in UN member States. Includes all five Regional Commissions (ECLAC Lead Agency). Through a series of 15 regional and 2 interregional capacity building workshops, the project will

- Enhance the knowledge and understanding of governments and business regarding trade facilitation and the role of ICT
- Enhance the use of ICT by SMEs in trade facilitation, and
- Build national capacities in trade facilitation negotiations.

35. In addition, the project will develop a tool for the alignment of trade documents using the UN Layout Key. A repository of national aligned trade documents will also be established.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Developed, developing and transition economies throughout the world
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4, TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 - 003)
<i>Lead:</i>	UNECLAC, UNECA, UNESCAP, UNESWA, UNECE, Bureau

1.2.9 Support of Trade Facilitation Measures and UN/EDIFACT Implementation in Selected Eastern European Countries

36. Through the joint UNECE – Czech Republic project, “Support of trade facilitation measures and UN/EDIFACT implementation in selected Eastern European Countries,” cooperation has been established with several CIS countries that have contributed to the implementation of UNECE's Recommendations. As an example, the work of the national trade facilitation body in Ukraine recently resulted in the adoption by the Parliament of a law on the “Strategy for Ukraine as a transit country.” To speed up the movement of documents and ensure equivalency between paper and electronic documents, the trade facilitation body has also prepared laws on electronic documents and electronic signature. The former has already been adopted by the Parliament. Activities under the project also included a mission to Uzbekistan to explore the feasibility of establishing a national trade facilitation body.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and trade in selected Eastern European countries
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
<i>Lead:</i>	UNECE Regional Advisory Services, Bureau

1.2.10 Support for Trade and Transport Facilitation in the transition economies and sub-regional initiatives, such as SECI, the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, SPECA, and others

37. Through the office of the Regional Adviser for Trade Facilitation, the Trade Development and Timber Division provides advice to UNECE Member States on trade, trade facilitation and e-business issues, works closely with and actively supports initiatives undertaken by SECI, and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe (SP), TTFSE, SPECA, and other organizations/institutions/initiatives.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments and trade in South-east Europe
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.4)
<i>Lead:</i>	UNECE Regional Advisory Services, Bureau

1.3 POLICY - Facilitating trade policy development through the provision of an open international platform for the exchange of views, particularly for the benefit of countries with economies in transition

38. Developing and contributing to trade and economic policy is a major activity of UNECE's Trade Development and Timber Division. This work includes initiatives on information and communication technologies for development, contributions to sustainable development, work related to EU enlargement, and important policy developments in standardization and trade facilitation. The major activities that will be carried out in the planning period are outlined below.

1.3.1 Development of the UN/CEFACT Trade Facilitation Strategy

39. Trade facilitation aims to make trade transaction processes easier, more efficient and more cost effective.

40. This generally involves:

- simplifying and harmonizing overall trade procedures (and where possible and desirable, the elimination of unnecessary ones);
- simplifying, standardizing and harmonizing the many documents required for a trade transaction;

- simplifying and co-ordinating administrative procedures at border crossings, especially those related to Customs but also including other agencies such as Health, Safety and Security;
- enhancing the flow of information that controls the goods throughout the transaction process (through the application of information and communication technology, the standardization of electronic data elements, etc);
- simplifying payment systems to ensure that the transaction is completed and the seller gets paid².
- enhancing trust assessment through a better exchange of information.

41. Applying this total trade transaction approach, UN/CEFACT defines trade facilitation as “the simplification, standardization and harmonization of procedures and associated information flows required to move goods from seller to buyer and to make payment”³. Within this definition, procedures are the activities, practices and formalities required for the movement of goods in international trade. Information flows include both data and documents. This view of trade facilitation encompasses both the cross border and other processes involved in international trade as already described.

42. The complexity and cost of the trade transaction process deters many potential exporters and importers, and especially small and medium enterprises, from entering the global market place. This is especially the case in developing and transition economies, particularly landlocked countries and countries distant from their main markets. UN/CEFACT's standards, recommendations and tools can assist countries and companies to overcome these constraints.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6)
<i>Lead</i>	Bureau

1.3.2 Development of the UN/CEFACT Electronic Business Strategy

43. UN/CEFACT's vision is to provide “simple, transparent and effective processes for global commerce”. It's principal focus is to facilitate international transactions, through the simplification and harmonization of processes, procedures and information flows to enable sustainable global commerce. UN/CEFACT's strategy to achieve this is 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 processes, procedures and transactions, including the relevant use of information technologies. This e-Business strategy will focus on leveraging the “information technologies” that constitute its corpus and collaborating with other standards development efforts in order to deliver a cohesive set of standards, guidelines and recommendations.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Business and Governments worldwide
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005
<i>Rationale:</i>	Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7)
<i>Lead</i>	Bureau

² Improvements in the transport infrastructure are also an important element in reducing the transaction cost of trade, and a combined trade and transport approach to facilitation is clearly desirable. However, UN/CEFACT focuses on some of the procedural and information flow elements of transport while overall transport procedures and infrastructure is handled by UNECE's Transport Division and the associated committees, such as the Inland Transport Committee (ITC).

³ This definition was adopted from various documents issued by the predecessor of UN/CEFACT, the UNECE Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4). UN/CEFACT has used this definition, or minor variations thereof, in most of its documents.

1.3.3 Trade Facilitation within the WTO Framework

44. UN/CEFACT will support UNECE in ensuring that its instruments are fully considered in the WTO negotiations on trade facilitation and are utilized to the fullest extent possible in any related outcome.

Target Audience: Transition and developing economies
Period of work: 2004- 2007
Rationale: Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – 5.3.1)
Lead: UNECE, Bureau

1.3.4 Contribution to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for development

45. The Trade Development and Timber Division acts as the secretariat for the UNECE Information Society Team. The Division provides support to special UN ICT initiatives, including acting as the focal point for the United Nations ICT Task Force, and provides input to the UN-wide process for the 2005 World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

46. Specific activities will include: participation in the High-Level Organizing Committee (HLSOC); participation in the three PrepCom meetings for the Summit; liaison with the WSIS Executive Secretariat regarding the possible organization of preparatory meetings and side events at the Tunis Summit; helping to organize one or two sub-regional meetings; possible work on a joint project with the other regional commissions; liaison with other regional commissions; and preparation of contributions by the UNECE Executive Secretary and senior management to the WSIS debate.

Target Audience: All UNECE public/private sector
Period of work: 2005 - 2007
Rationale: Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7 – 006)
Lead: Bureau

1.3.5 Contributions to Sustainable Development

47. Trade and Sustainable Development is an important element of UNECE's Trade Development Strategic Action Plan for 2004-05. UN/CEFACT's work in trade facilitation helps to promote sustainable economic and social development by encouraging more efficient use of resources at any given level of trade transactions, primarily in the areas of transport and paper use. This work also enhances the sustainable participation of SMEs in trade by reducing procedural and cost barriers. Therefore, the work contributes to the WSSD goals of enhancing the capacities of developing countries to benefit from liberalized trade opportunities and narrowing the digital divide.

48. In environmental/hazardous goods control, trade facilitation makes possible improved tracking and handling as well as reduced border-crossing delays, thus contributing to the WSSD goal of preventing damage resulting from the trans-boundary movement of such goods.

Target Audience: Governments and trade
Period of work: 2004- 2007
Rationale: Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6)
Lead: Forum

1.3.6 Development of Trade Facilitation Policy and Undertaking Relevant Research

49. UN/CEFACT prepares policy papers on key trade topics for discussion at high-level meetings throughout the planning period. For example, papers on trade security and the income distribution impact of Trade Facilitation were prepared for the May 2003 International Forum on trade facilitation. Possible other areas for research and policy development include:

- Strategies and approaches for implementing trade facilitation in transition economies
- Establishing a UN/CEFACT Trade Facilitation Policy Group
- Facilitating trade in services
- Capacity-building and implementation of trade facilitation within the WTO
- 20 years of trade facilitation PRO organizations – current practices, lessons learned and future requirements
- Measuring trade facilitation implementation
- Trade facilitation strategies for landlocked countries
- Public/private sector models for implementing trade facilitation
- Options for funding trade facilitation implementation
- Regional versus global approaches to trade facilitation implementation
- Benefits and costs of trade facilitation
- Trade facilitation and development
- Trade facilitation case studies in transition and developing economies – lessons learned and recommendations for the future
- Cooperation with the UNECE Working party on Customs questions affecting transport (WP.30) Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the computerization of the TIR procedure

50. As this is a large agenda, UN/CEFACT will necessarily be highly selective in its approach to these topics.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Various
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6)
<i>Lead:</i>	Bureau

1.4 PROMOTION -Promoting the value and effectiveness of trade facilitation instruments and standards in trade and economic development

51. There is a pressing need for greater awareness and understanding of the benefits, implications and available resources for trade facilitation and e-business implementation. Clearly, more must be done to sensitise policy makers to the core issues involved, as well as to the strategies and approaches for implementation. UNECE plans to undertake the following projects to address this need:

52.

1.4.1 International Forums on Trade Facilitation

53. Building on its expertise in trade facilitation in organizing such events and on the created network of contacts, UN/CEFACT will host trade facilitation forums in 2005 and 07. They will focus on the opportunity for policy debate and formulating solutions for cooperation between countries on different level of development, between the public and private sectors, between the business community and civil society.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments, business organizations, trade practitioners, trade-related international organizations, and trade negotiators
<i>Period of work:</i>	2005 and 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7)
<i>Lead:</i>	Bureau

1.4.2 UN/CEFACT Promotion and Communications

54. At its meeting in May 2004, the Bureau established a Marketing Portfolio to promote UN/CEFACT deliverables, monitoring implementation, collecting feedback and requirements and developing capacity-building/technical presentations.

<i>Target Audience:</i>	Governments, permanent missions, delegations, business community, international organizations
<i>Period of work:</i>	2004- 2007
<i>Rationale:</i>	Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (TRADE/CEFACT/2005/6 – TRADE/CEFACT/2005/7)
<i>Lead:</i>	Bureau
