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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

REPORT OF THE UN/CEFACT RAPPORTEURS

Asia

Addendum

International Standards to Paperless Trade

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) under the auspices of the International Trade and Business Processes Group 'Digital Paper' Working Group (TBG2) of the UN/CEFACT Forum organized a two-day capacity building workshop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 19 and 20 February. The workshop focused on the development of Single Windows based on the UNeDocs standard as the stimulation for increased paperless trade in the Asia Pacific Region. It was followed by a three-day technical workshop on the implementation of UNeDocs for Single Windows. UNECE was represented by the Project Coordinators for Trade Facilitation and eBusiness, UN/CEFACT by the Forum Vice-Chair and TBG2 by its Chair.
2. The UNECE capacity building workshop was attended by over 80 participants from 19 countries covering Asia, Europe and Africa. The opening address was given by the Director for the Manufacturing Services & E-Commerce Division of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Malaysia.
3. This workshop brought together key partners for the development of international trade Single Windows. These included the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT), the United Kingdom Office for Simplifying International Trade (SITPRO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), Customs and other governmental bodies, maritime ports, national Single Window and network hubs, the Pan Asian eCommerce Alliance (PAA), software and technology providers and banks.
4. Half a day was devoted to presentations on UNeDocs as a technical framework for cross-border information exchange. The World Customs Organization presented the WCO Standards Framework and welcomed the UNeDocs project as a partner towards the alignment of the two data models, which are both based on the United Nations Trade Data Element Directory (UNTDDED/ISO7372).
5. The Pakistan Government introduced their UNeDocsPK project and calculated that "5,000 exporters of Pakistan will be directly benefited by adopting UNeDocs."
6. The Pan Asian eCommerce Alliance presentation highlighted the synergy between its Single Window developments and the UNeDocs standards platform. They committed to introduce UNeDocs whenever possible and to contribute to its development.
7. A presentation from SITPRO introduced the Asia Europe Alliance for Paperless Trade (ASEAL) project, which is under the auspices of the Asia/European governmental cooperation programme. The ASEAL partners plan to adopt the UNeDocs standard.
8. IATA reported on their e-freight Paperless Trade Project and emphasized the need for a globally coordinated approach. The e-freight project plan requires that pilot trading chains include customs portals, which have implemented the Single Window recommendation based on a mutually consistent framework of UNeDocs and WCO data models.
9. This workshop also included a presentation on a major new European Union (EU) research project being conducted under the EU's Sixth Framework programme. This project is named ITAIDE and its objectives include the development of a canonical data model based on

UN/CEFACT standards and aligned to the WCO data model which can be deployed as the foundation of practical solutions to improve the pan-European interoperability of EU taxation and customs systems. This interoperability is an essential prerequisite to achieve strategic goals for the European e-customs programme such as Authorised Economic Operator and Single Window Access service provisioning for businesses.

10. There was a presentation of an innovative set of commercial pilots in the maritime oil industry to start during the first quarter of 2006. These pilots aim to achieve paperless trading chains from oil supply terminal to delivery terminal and will be meeting the challenges of electronic negotiable Bills of Lading including digital signatures. The manager of these pilots confirmed that this project has adopted UNeDocs for integration purposes.

11. Throughout the workshop, valuable insights were brought to light concerning the benefits that the technical framework can bring to Single Windows implementations. There were interesting presentations on the cost benefits offered by adopting the UNeDocs and WCO standards and on how to develop customization strategies to suit national, regional or industry-based adoption.

12. There were presentations on the UNeDocs United Kingdom National Implementation Project as well as reports from the Senegal and Kenya Single Window project, the Hong Kong SAR DTTN project, the Malaysia E-Document project.

13. The first two days were followed by in-depth implementation workshop led by the project leaders supported by the SITPRO United Kingdom team.

14. This technical workshop introduced the UN/CEFACT data modeling techniques based on UNTDED (ISO 7372:2005) and the UN/CEFACT Core Components Library, and explained the use of these standards to build compliant data models for international trade.

15. During the meeting the participants used these standards to develop a draft UNeDocs Customs Document for the Malaysian Customs Export Declaration. Participants received a briefing on the United Nations Document Toolkit, a trade facilitation tool created by UNECE for the United Nations Regional Commissions to develop electronic trade documents in Portable Document Format (PDF). A draft version of the ASEAN preferential Certificate of Origin (CoO) in interactive PDF was also distributed to the participants.