

**REPORT**  
**CEFACT Steering Group (CSG)**

Frankfurt, 25-27 January 1999

This document contains CEFACT/1999/CS016, Report from the CSG Meeting in Frankfurt, 25-27 January 1999. The report is for information.
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**SOURCE:** CSG  
**STATUS:** Committee Report  
**ACTION:** For general circulation  
Present:

Chairman: Ray Walker

Secretary: Hans A Hansell

E. Deeg

C. Wolf

E. Peeters

P Georget

A. De Lijster

R van Kuik

C. Wallén-Rahlén

B. Georgiev

Ms. A. Sirzea

K. Itoh

S. Mila

P. Guldentops

D. Marsh

D. Dobbing

K. Naujok

**Invited participants:**

Mr. Arjoca

Barry Keogh 26-27/1

**Introductory note**

1. To encourage the greatest possible openness in the process and input into its decisions and recommendations, the CSG encourages a wide circulation of its reports. Further information about CEFACT and its steering group can be obtained at the following Internet WWW address: <http://www.unece.org/cefact>.

**Planning for the 1999 March Plenary.**

2. It was decided that the CSG Chairman would develop a proposal in his report to the Plenary relating to the issuance of CEFACT documents on the basis on a one-yearly meeting.
3. The CSG decided not to propose any changes to R650 at the upcoming Plenary session and to wait for the plenary session in the year 2000.
4. The CSG discussed the CEFACT nominations/elections of officers. It was noted that re-nominations for three of the present vice-chairs were forthcoming; however, the CSG noted that it would also encourage a nomination from North America.
5. It was decided to send out a letter to HoDs to inform them of these nominations. It was agreed that the letter should be sent by the secretariat and should cover the nomination procedures for the CSG as contained in CEFACT/1999/CS008.
6. The CSG discussed the seminar planned the week of the CEFACT plenary. It agreed to change the structure of the seminar so that it would now take place on the Monday 15 March followed by the CEFACT Plenary on 16 March and the morning of 17 March. The target audience would be Heads of Delegations and Permanent Missions in Geneva.

## **Reports from Mandated Groups**

### **Legal Working Group**

7. Mr. Marsh gave a report on the activities of the Legal Working Group. He mentioned that the group comprised 50 members, 20 of which actively participated in the work. He further explained that the first item on the work programme was a draft “Electronic Commerce Agreement” document. This document would shortly be circulated for comments.
8. Mr. Marsh also informed the CSG that the LWG was on close contact with the legal working group in AFACT and that they were planning to produce a series of common guidelines.
9. Mr. Marsh paid tribute to Ms. Anne Troye-Walker who was resigning as chairperson and Legal Rapporteur. He mentioned that the group was considering appointing Rob van Esch as Legal Rapporteur and David Marsh as Chairman.
10. The CSG decided that the term ” Legal Liaison Rapporteur” be used in future and approved the LWG Terms of Reference with this modification.

### **Code Working Group**

11. Mr. Dobbing informed the CSG that the Code Working Group comprised 17 members. He reported that the revised Recommendation No.16 was being published and that a new recommendation, Recommendation No. 29 dealing with “ Types of Means of Transports”, was being developed. He mentioned that Recommendation No. 20, Units of Measure was being revised and that the CDWG would progress this revision to become an ISO standard. He mentioned the possibility of splitting Recommendation No. 21, Types of packages, into two recommendations and revising Recommendation No. 24, Transport Status Codes. He also informed the CSG that the group was working on a new recommendation, Recommendation No. 30, recommending a set of codes for goods and commodities based on the Harmonised System (HS). A draft document was to be presented at the CEFACT Plenary.

### **International Trade Procedures Working Group**

12. The Chairman of the CSG explained that in view of the resignation of the Chairman (Mr. Battersby), the Chief of the Trade Facilitation Secretariat, Mr. Hansell, had exceptionally been requested to chair the meeting on 13-15 January 1999. Mr. Hansell reported on the meeting and explained that four revised or new recommendations had been agreed upon for submission to the Plenary in March. These were Recommendation No. 4 on the Establishment of Trade Facilitation Bodies, Recommendation No.12 on Maritime Transport Documents, Recommendation No. 15 on Simpler Shipping Marks and a new Recommendation on Pre Shipment Inspection PSI. He notified his decision to transfer its framework

activity, ITT, to the BPAWG and emphasised the urgent need for a new chairman and for the renewal of the work programme.

### **Business Process Analysis Working Group**

13. The Chairman of the CSG informed the meeting of the resignation of the Chairperson, Ms. I. Navarro. Mr. M. Doran, Chief Executive of SITPRO, had accepted to act as Chairman of the group. The CSG noted the transfer of the framework activities from the ITPWG to the BPAWG and endorsed a close co-operation with the TMWG on the modelling activities.

### **UN/EDIFACT Working Group**

14. Mr. Keogh informed the CSG that the EWG Management Team would hold a management meeting back to back with the CSG meeting and discuss a range of strategic issues. It was decided that in the UN/EDIFACT 99.B Directory, no syntax information should appear together with the directories on the diskette used to distribute the directory. In order to identify future releases of the syntax, the JSWG recognised that there was a need to add a data element to the UNB. It was agreed to issue a technical corrigendum related to the UNB segment in the syntax, to include the addition of such a single data element.
15. The CSG agreed to a request by the JSWG to have all syntax documents (ISO 9735, Versions 1-4, including service directories), made available on its own web site. The JSWG has received an offer for a contribution in kind from GEFAG for the creation and hosting of the JSWG Website. The CSG took note of this offer.

### **Electronic Commerce Ad Hoc Group**

16. The CSG Chairman (also Chairman of the ECA-ad hoc group) reported that work was progressing on an information paper, which he hoped would be ready for the CEFACT Plenary in March.

**Ad Hoc Working Group On Simple-EDI and Web Based EDI**

17. Mr. de Lijster introduced the report from SIMAC. He summarised the recommendation and pointed out that based on the findings of SIMAC, further work was needed to promote the work of SIMPLE-EDI- and to propose these ideas as practical solutions for SME's. This was a particularly pertinent task for the BPAWG and EWG. He mentioned that the UNLK was a good basis for a simple electronic message and that the report highlighted the need for the use of a global repository for the developments around XML/EDI. Some members of the CSG commented that this report was a good start but that more work was required and recommendations needed to be more specific. The CSG Chairman thanked Mr. de Lijster and the group for their work.
18. Following the recommendations of the SIMAC report, it was decided to further develop a plan for future actions in this field and to set up a subgroup comprising Mr. Keogh, Mr. Georget, Mr. Naujok and Mr. de Lijster with Mr. Guldentops as Chairman. The group was asked to identify strategies for the continuation of work in this area and propose actions to develop strategies for the next steps of Simple-EDI. The group was also asked to draft a statement on the future of XML EDI in the context of our work detailing advantages and disadvantages as well as criteria for a possible repository. It was agreed that the group would submit its proposed statement to the CSG meeting preceding the CEFACT Plenary in March.

**XML/EDI - a repository**

19. Mr. Guldentops presented a report on how to manage the challenge that XMI EDI presents. He suggested the possibility of producing an XML opportunity analysis. Mr. Naujok made a presentation on the development of XML and its relationship with other EDI solutions. He underlined the necessity of a basic repository to allow XML to become functional. Mr. Naujok also explained that there might be a possibility to use XML to represent a document aligned to the UNLK. However, it was unclear how much work was involved to this end. He pointed out that the alignment of TDED and UNTDID was a prerequisite.

**Consistency between UNTDED and UN/EDIFACT**

20. The CSG discussed the consistency between UNTDED and UNTDID. The CSG decided that Mr. Naujok and Mr. Dobbing would make a report on differences and future ways to solve these issues.. The secretariat was requested to supply an electronic version of TDED.

**Terms of reference for UN/CEFACT Legal Rapporteurs**

21. The CSG discussed the role of the legal rapporteurs and the relation between the Rapporteur and the LWG Chairperson. It was agreed that the rapporteur should represent UN/CEFACT's interests and serve as the UN/CEFACT focal points for information. The Rapporteurs should also act as ex-officio members of the LWG Steering Committee. The mandate for the Legal Liaison rapporteur was approved with minor changes.

**Request for Expression of Interest CEFACT Publications on CD ROM.**

22. Mr. Dobbing suggested the production of a CD containing Trade Facilitation material and directories produced outside the UN organisation. Mr. Hansell demonstrated a prototype CD containing trade facilitation information (TRAFIX) that has been produced by the UN Sales Section. It was agreed to proceed with the Trafrix CD. The CSG agreed to seek legal guidance on the copyright issue before going ahead with the call for tender to produce a CD outside the UN structure.

**Year 2000 issue - possible warning reference use of early syntax versions**

23. The CSG discussed the year 2000 issue and decided to ask Mr. Dobbing to revise the earlier statement on the year 2000 issue and to inform the CEFACT plenary.

**Promotion including development of website**

24. The CSG participated in the meeting of the Promotion Advisory Ad Hoc Working Group. It was agreed to develop a Communications plan as proposed by the PROMO Group.

**UN Database and Automation**

25. The CSG discussed the UN/EDIFACT Directory production, the UN reference database and the automation of DMR's. It noted the excellent work of Ms. Pemberton on the automation of DMR's and underlined the need for this project to be completed. Following a clean audit statement of the UN/EDIFACT 99.A directory, the CSG approved it and requested its publication by the secretariat.

**Secretariat Resources and Allocation**

26. Mr. Hansell reported on the resource situation in the UN secretariat. He explained that during the past six months, the UN/EDIFACT Directory Production Team had been severely under-resourced due to two vacancies (the team comprises three staff). He also explained that one of the vacant posts had recently been filled and that the last vacancy was expected to be filled in the spring of 1999. The post of Trade Facilitation officer was temporarily been filled by Mr. Rasmussen pending the recruitment of a regular staff member. He then mentioned that the 1999 travel budget

for the secretariat had been cut down due to events beyond its control.

## **ISO**

27. The CSG Chairman reported on the MoU management meeting in Concord which included participants from the UN/ECE, ISO/IEC, Cals International and Nato Cals. He explained that the meeting had been constructive and that the release of the security parts of version 4 of the UN/EDIFACT syntax (ISO 9735) had been approved.
28. The CSG Chairman confirmed that the ISO/TC 154 Secretariat would be filled by Switzerland and the secretariat will be farmed out to the UN/ECE secretariat.

## **Co-ordination with International organisations - WTO, OECD and UNCTAD**

29. The good working relationship with UNCTAD had recently been evidenced with the UN/ECE participation in the UNCTAD Conference in Lyon, "Partners for Development", on 9-13 November. The CSG Chairman had participated in several sessions. The UN Secretariat had contributed to some sessions and had manned an exhibition stand.
30. The CSG was informed that the CSG Chair and the Chief of the UN Trade Facilitation Section had participated in the OECD Ministerial conference on Electronic Commerce in Ottawa 7-9 October 1998, which had conveyed a good visibility to CEFACT.
31. It was mentioned that in preparation for the next WTO trade negotiating round, informal discussions were held at WTO on trade facilitation. The CSG Chairman and Ms. Wallén-Rahlén reported on the ongoing information discussions with WTO in order to analyse its role in trade facilitation and to assess the potential scope for binding rules in this area. CEFACT has participated in the WTO meetings through the chairman and Mr. Hansell as observers.
32. To follow up on Trade Facilitation activities in WTO, it was agreed to establish a small internal group under the Chairmanship of Ms. Rahlen to co-ordinate the preparation of a possible role for UN/CEFACT as a provider of technical expertise. It was agreed that the group would comprise Ms. Wallén-Rahlén, Mr. de Lijster, Mr. Van Kuik, Mr. Walker, Mr. Wolf and Mr. Hansell.

**Rolling 18 -month list of meeting dates**

33. The current meeting schedule was agreed as follows:

1999 March 14, starting at 16:00 in Geneva.

1999 June 21, starting at 14:00 June 25, in Geneva.

1999 November 22 through November 26, in Brussels, subject to confirmation

2000 July 31 through August 4, location to be confirmed

2000 November 20 through November 24, location to be confirmed

**Any Other Business**

34. A proposal for a new set of information documents, reports for information was approved.
35. It was confirmed that Mr. Keogh and Mr. Georget were responsible for the questions related to multilingualism.
36. Mr. de Lijster informed the CSG of the ongoing work on the development of recommendation on 'Harmonised System for the Coding of Goods and Commodities'
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## **Annex 1**

### **Draft Mandate for Legal Liaison Rapporteurs**

The UN/CEFACT Legal Liaison Rapporteurs shall:

- where appropriate represent, or ensure the representation, of UN/CEFACT's interests and views in other relevant work being carried out internationally especially in UNCITRAL, UNCTAD and the ICC;
- recommend and monitor other external liaisons for either the Plenary or the Legal Working Group (LWG) relevant to UN/CEFACT's interest in legal matters;
- act as ex-officio members of the LWG Steering Committee and actively participate and contribute to the work of the LWG.

### **Reporting Relationships**

The Rapporteurs shall serve as the UN/CEFACT focal points for information about these liaisons to the Plenary, CSG and the Legal Working Group and shall provide to the CSG regular reports regarding relevant external developments. The Rapporteurs, if not CSG members, shall be entitled to attend the CSG as observers.

In addition, the Rapporteurs shall submit a summary report of their activities to each Plenary session of UN/CEFACT.

### **Duration of Appointment**

Initially for three years, thereafter renewable every two years.