



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
9 June 2020

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Informal virtual consultations

Geneva (online) 29 June 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the provisional agenda

Informal virtual consultations

Provisional agenda

The informal consultation will be held as a virtual Webex meeting; connection information will be provided separately. The meeting will start at 10:00 CET (Geneva-time) on Monday, 29 June 2020.

Note

Pursuant to the special procedures during the COVID-19 period and following consultations with the Chair the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards (SCTCS), this meeting is aimed at moving forward business-critical decisions in order to ensure that the work of the SCTCS can continue in the coming months. This meeting does not replace the sixth session of the SCTCS; best efforts will be made to reschedule this session later in 2020. Any agreements resulting from this consultation and any subsequent silence procedure decisions will be recorded on the next available, official session.

All documents for discussion will be prepared in the three official languages of ECE.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the provisional agenda.
2. Matters arising.
3. Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade.
4. Programme of work.
5. Arrangements to move forward with the silence procedure for business-critical decisions.
6. Other business.
7. Closing

II. Annotations

Item 1. Adoption of the provisional agenda

1. Delegates are invited to adopt the provisional agenda.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
Provisional agenda	ECE/CTCS/2020/INF.1	Decision

Item 2. Matters arising

2. Under this item, the secretariat will report on matters arising from the 2019 meetings of the Economic Commission for Europe Executive Committee (EXCOM) and the Secretary General's reform for repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the ECE Executive Secretary's nexus initiative. This includes preparations underway for contributing to the 69th session of the ECE, which has been designated to focus on "Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the ECE region".

Item 3. Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade

(a) Study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Serbia

3. Delegates will be briefed about preparations underway for finalizing the ECE study of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Serbia. The study was conducted in 2019 using the ECE evaluation methodology, titled "Assessing regulatory and procedural measures in trade: an evaluation methodology", which was extended to capture the impact of non-tariff measures on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

4. The study captures both behind and at-the-border regulatory and procedural barriers to trade, highlights their impact on transaction costs in terms of both time and money. It also highlights the implication of these barriers for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provides detailed recommendations.

(b) Ongoing work

5. Delegates will be briefed on the ECE's survey-based assessments of the impact of the COVID-induced economic crisis on the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)

end-to-end supply chain operations. This work is being undertaken as part of the Trade Subprogramme with funds from the United Nations Development Account. It is meant to ensure a solid, information-rich and facts-based understanding of the pandemic's impact on different economic actors, including MSMEs, is an essential step for designing targeted measures that are effective in rebuilding stronger and more resilient economies in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Item 4. Programme of work

(a) Updates from subsidiary bodies

6. The secretariat will introduce the report of the annual session of Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2019/2) and present its programme of work (ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2019/5) including a briefing on aligning WP.6 activities with the SDGs and on Gender Responsive Standards. The secretariat will also summarize the main findings of the on the evaluation of ECE's support to the advancement of Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies.

7. The Working Party will present for approval the extension of the Group of Experts on Managing Risks in Regulatory Systems, the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance, and the ad hoc Team of Specialists on Standardization and Regulatory Techniques (START Team).

8. The secretariat will introduce the report of the annual session of Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2019/2. Consistent with the nature of its work, the "Revised Programme of work of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards 2019-2020" contained in document ECE/CTCS/2019/11 is biannual and was approved by the 5th session of the Steering Committee in 2019.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
Report of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies on its twenty-ninth session	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2019/2	For agreement
Draft Programme of Work of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies for 2020	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2019/5	For agreement
Report on the evaluation of UNECE's support to the advancement of Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies	ECE/CTCS/WP.6/2019/4	Information
Report of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards on its seventy-fifth session	ECE/CTCS/WP.7/2019/2	For agreement

(b) Trade subprogramme's programme of work for 2021

9. The secretariat will present the trade subprogramme's draft programme of work for 2021, which is based on the trade subprogramme's draft proposed programme budget for 2021. Sections on UN/CEFACT are for information only.

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
Programme of work of the Trade subprogramme for 2021	ECE/CTCS/2020/INF.2	For agreement

Item 5. Arrangements to move forward with the silence procedure for business-critical decisions

10. Following discussions during this informal virtual consultation, delegates are invited to authorize the SCTCS Chair to request EXCOM approval for the use of decision-making through silence procedure, on an exceptional basis and for the business-critical issues, in line with the modalities defined in the EXCOM "Special procedures during the COVID-19 period" and the "Arrangements for business-critical decisions in order to ensure the continued governance of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards during the COVID-19 period".

<i>Title of document</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>For information/decision</i>
Special procedures during the COVID-19 period	EXCOM document of 6 April 2020	Information
Arrangements for business-critical decisions in order to ensure the continued governance of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards during the COVID-19 period	EXCOM document of 20 May 2020	Information
Arrangements to move forward with the silence procedure for business-critical decisions	ECE/CTCS/2020/INF.3	For agreement

Item 6. Other business

11. Delegates will be invited to raise other issues not addressed during the informal consultations.

Item 7. Closing