



**D. Continuation of the general segment –
Overview of United Nations Centre for
Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business
activities**

OIOS Evaluation of SPs 4 & 6

Challenges arising from the “Liquidity Crisis”



UNECE



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Key Findings of the Evaluation



The work of ECTD was considered **aligned with its mandate** and:

- **Largely responded** to specific Member States' (MS) requests.
- Had **found its niche** in a crowded space of trade & economic cooperation, leveraging its comparative advantages towards strengthening MS' economic cooperation & integration.
- **Provides a regional platform** for international policy dialogue & exchange of best practices among countries in the UNECE region.
- **Acts as a convening "power"**, bringing governments together to build consensus on frameworks, norms, standards & agreements on economic cooperation & trade.
- Is seen as a **reliable source of technical assistance** to specific needs of MS.

However:

- Functions & workstreams were still **being clarified** (diversity of UNECE membership).
- There was a **lack of overall strategy & synergetic approach** for the two SPs.

Four Recommendations by OIOS (accepted by ECTD)

Establish a technical cooperation request tracking mechanism	Develop a division-wide integrated strategic plan	Develop divisional action plans to operationalize UNECE strategies on resource mobilization, partnerships, and technical cooperation	Ensure integration of gender, environment, disability inclusion, and human rights considerations in its various workstreams
Online tool to track all technical cooperation requests by the PMSSD, being rolled out across UNECE, including in ECTD.	Piloting division-wide response to cross-cutting priority themes.	Implementation linked to recommendations 1 and 2.	Work of ToS for Sustainable Value Chains for the Circular Economy (textiles, CRMs, agri-food).
Summaries of TA requests to respective normative meetings.	Expanding cooperation across SPs and across Sections and hosting inter-governmental events to facilitate cross-fertilization (Regional Conference of Circular Economy on 26 June)		Sustainability Pledge expanded to over 100 pledges from 750+ industry actors in the textiles and clothing sector. Toolbox was tested in 20 blockchain pilots across 23 countries.
			Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development and with experts on Business and Human Rights).

Challenges arising from the “Liquidity Crisis”



Reduction in the number of parliamentary documents (SP 4 and SP 6)

Delayed publication of standards

- UN/LOCODE Updates (SP 6)
- Reduced regularity of annual release of the UN/LOCODE updates (from twice a year to once a year). Concerns recorded in report of annual UN/LOCODE AG meeting (April 2024).

Delays in addressing IT challenges (SP 4 and SP 6)

- Broken links on the ECTD website.

Delays in publication of UNECE parts of UN-wide documents (SP 6)

- The UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation.

Capacity-building

- The timely updating of XB budgets was affected, creating delays, undermining the timely implementation of CB activities (and related official documents).

Lack of travel budget

- ECTD was unable to finance the participation of speakers inter-governmental/expert deliberations, which affected the quality of deliberations.
- ECTD was unable to participate in major events, including:
 - UNCTAD WIF, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Oct. 2023.
 - WTO Ministerial, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Feb./March 2024.
 - CoP 28, Dubai, UAE, Nov.-Dec. 2023.
 - UNCTAD Global Supply Chain Forum, Bridgetown, Barbados, May 2024 (XB).

FOLLOW-UP TO THE EVALUATION OF THE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION SUBPROGRAMME AND THE TRADE SUBPROGRAMME BY THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT

Proposed Plenary decision:

Plenary decision 24-15 to be noted:

- The Plenary welcomed the report on progress made on implementing the recommendations of the evaluation of subprogramme 4 and subprogramme 6 (implemented by the ECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, (ECTD)) undertaken by the Office of Internal Oversight (OIOS) ([ECE Executive Committee informal document no. 2023/21](#)), notably on a technical cooperation request tracking mechanism.
- The Plenary also invited its Bureau to work with the secretariat on the implementation of the recommendations and to report back in 2025; and called on member States and development partners to work with the secretariat in support of the implementation of the ECE strategies on resource mobilization, partnerships, and technical cooperation.