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”

Ms. Elisabeth Türk
Director of the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division
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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>recommendation</th>
<th>action</th>
<th>integration</th>
<th>additional notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish a technical cooperation request tracking mechanism</td>
<td>Develop a division-wide integrated strategic plan</td>
<td>Develop divisional action plans to operationalize UNECE strategies on resource mobilization, partnerships, and technical cooperation</td>
<td>Ensure integration of gender, environment, disability inclusion, and human rights considerations in its various workstreams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piloting division-wide response to cross-cutting priority themes.</td>
<td>Implementation linked to recommendations 1 and 2.</td>
<td>Work of ToS for Sustainable Value Chains for the Circular Economy (textiles, CRMs, agri-food).</td>
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<td>Expanding cooperation across SPs and across Sections and hosting inter-governmental events to facilitate cross-fertilization (Regional Conference of Circular Economy on 26 June)</td>
<td></td>
<td>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.</td>
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</table>
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:
  - WTO Ministerial, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Feb./March 2024.
  - 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.