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COMMITTEE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE
(Forty-fifth session, 10-12 December 1996)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CEFACT

(The Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration,Commerce and Transport)

Submitted by the Bureau of WP.4

The contents of this document were unanimously approved during the September 1996 session of WP.4 as TRADE/WP.4/R.1234 (RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CEFACT).

GE.96-

Previous Documentation:

TRADE/WP.4/R.1104	Final Re-engineering Report [March 1995]
TRADE/WP.4/R.1127	Note by the French Delegation on the WP.4 Re-engineering Process
TRADE/WP.4/R.1135	Re-engineering Process: Preparation of Documents (submitted by the Australian delegation)
TRADE/WP.4/R.1141	Re-engineering Position Paper
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.16 March 1995	Comments on the Final Re-engineering Report
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.23 March 1995	Comments from the French Delegation on the Final WP.4 Re-engineering Report
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.2 September 1995	Framework for Procedures to “Empower” Technical Groups and to Identify Linkages to the Parent Body
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.23 September 1995	Bureau Proposal on Re-engineering following the September [1995] Heads of Delegation Meeting
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.23/Rev.1 September 1995	Bureau Proposal on Re-engineering following the September 1995] Heads of Delegation Meeting
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.41 and March 1996	Ad Hoc Groups A & B Interim Report: Centre Implementation Centre Work Programme
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.43 March 1996	Ad Hoc Groups C Interim Report: Empowerment
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.75 March 1996	UN/CEFACT/ONU: Programme of Work, Programme de Travail
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.77 the March 1996	September 1995 Decisions on Re-engineering [From Report of 42nd session of WP.4, TRADE/WP.4/193]
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.82 March 1996	CDT Decision on WP.4 Re-engineering [Excerpt from TRADE/ECE/199, the Report of the Forty-fourth session of the Committee on the Development of Trade, December 1995]
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.89 March 1996	Progress with Re-engineering

Introduction

At its December 1995 meeting, the Committee on the Development of Trade (CDT) supported the direction of the WP.4 re-engineering process including the concept of a Centre and its proposed overall structure. Subsequently, the WP.4 ad hoc groups established to consider proposals for the implementation of the Centre and the WP.4 Bureau undertook an extensive consultative process, including the development of written proposals for discussion and comment (see conference room papers TRADE/WP.4/CRP.41 and TRADE/WP.4/CRP.43 from the March 1996 session of WP.4).

The above process resulted in the WP.4 Bureau's "Recommendations for the Establishment of CEFACT" (TRADE/WP.4/R.1234) which, together with a draft corrigendum, was unanimously approved by WP.4 at its September 1996 session. This document combines TRADE/WP.4/R.1234 with the draft corrigendum and, therefore, represents the complete consensus of WP.4 on the establishment of CEFACT (The Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport).

It should be emphasized that, when evaluating comments and arriving at its recommendations, the WP.4 Bureau followed the general principles already adopted in the re-engineering process. These principles being:

- Increased openness and transparency towards Article 11 countries and international organizations;
- Empowerment of technical groups;
- Improved overall efficiency.

In making its recommendations, a number of alternative solutions were considered. However, it is the view of the Bureau that the recommendations which it made, and which WP.4 unanimously approved, fairly represent a balance of all comments. In addition, these recommendations fully support the recent request from the Executive Secretary for increased interaction and involvement with industry and commerce.

Other issues examined by the WP.4 Bureau included the work programme and migration. The framework for the work programme is attached at Annex I. It is fully recognised that this will require further consideration once the Centre has been established. The issue of migration was also examined and a proposal was approved by WP.4 at its September 1996 session (see TRADE/WP.4/CRP.122/Rev.1).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CEFACT

(The Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport)

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Mission Statement

1. The United Nations, through the UN/ECE, supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations, from developed, developing and transitional economies, to exchange products and relevant services effectively. Its principal focus is to facilitate international transactions, through the simplification and harmonisation of procedures and information flows, and so contribute to the growth of global commerce.

This is achieved by:

- analysing and understanding the key elements of international transactions and working for the elimination of constraints;
- developing methods to facilitate transactions, including the relevant use of information technologies;
- promoting both the use of these methods, and associated best practices, through channels such as government, industry and service associations;
- co-ordinating its work with other international organizations such as WTO, WCO, OECD, UNCITRAL and UNCTAD; and
- securing coherence especially in UN/EDIFACT, by co-operating with other interested parties, such as ISO and ITU, in recognition that its work has broad application in the areas beyond global commerce.

NB: The mission statement has already been adopted by WP.4.

Mandate

2. Trade facilitation is central to the remit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and has relevance to the development of world trade. To achieve improved world-wide co-ordination of trade facilitation, the ECE has decided to establish a Centre for facilitation of procedures and practices for administration, commerce and transport (CEFACT). The Centre is mandated to develop and undertake a programme of work that meets current and future demands as required by its mission.

3. The Centre will report to the Committee on Development and Trade (CDT) (See organigram at Annex 1) and, if requested, directly present reports on its activities to the Economic Commission for Europe.

Terms of Reference for CEFACT

The Centre

4. CEFACT shall provide a forum for the work necessary to achieve its mission. It encompasses the formal meetings of the Plenary, its Steering Group, and those meetings of Working Groups held under delegated authority, i.e. empowered groups.

5. Participants in the Plenary of the Centre shall include ECE member states, other UN member states, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations recognised by ECOSOC.

6. The Plenary shall have the executive responsibility for the strategy, policy and resources necessary to carry out the Centre's mission. It shall develop and maintain a work programme and ensure the efficient and effective functioning of the activities of the Centre. It shall be the final arbiter of any appeal originating from a Working Group.

Rules of procedure and empowerment

7. The Plenary of the Centre shall develop rules of procedure for its work and shall elect a Chair and other officers according to these rules.

8. Working groups shall be empowered to undertake specialised activities of a non policy nature agreed to in the Work Programme approved by the Plenary. Empowerment is the delegation of official authority and responsibility to a Working Group of the Centre to enable that Group to perform the functions within its mandate. This delegation shall be accomplished through well defined terms of reference describing the deliverables and the methods to be used for their development.

9. Once a Working Group has been empowered, the role of the Plenary and the Steering Group shall be to support the progression of the work rather than focusing on the detailed aspects of control.

Co-operation with other bodies

10. As stated in its mission, the Centre shall co-ordinate its work with other organizations and, in particular, it shall ensure that practical work on specific tasks is undertaken in the appropriate forum and shall avoid duplication of work.

Recommendations

11. The Centre shall make recommendations directly to governments and report these to the Committee on the Development of Trade.

Dissemination and promotion

12. The Centre shall disseminate, encourage and promote the implementation of its recommendations and other deliverables among users in co-operation with national governments, inter-governmental organizations and organizations representing industry and commerce.

Secretariat

13. Following the decision of the Economic Commission for Europe, the Executive Secretary of the Commission will place at the disposal of the Plenary, staff and facilities to assist it in the accomplishment of its mission and work programme, within existing UN/ECE resources.

Resources

14. The Centre shall consider all proposals for specific tasks with due regard to the need to establish appropriate priorities within available resources. Where appropriate, the Centre will seek to obtain extra-budgetary resources.

The Plenary

15. The Plenary shall have the executive responsibility for the strategy, policy and resources necessary to carry out the Centre's mission. It shall develop and maintain a work programme and ensure the efficient and effective functioning of the activities of the Centre. It shall be the final arbiter of any appeal originating from a Working Group.

16. The Plenary shall approve the mandates for all Permanent Working Groups. In addition; the Plenary may, in its own right, establish and mandate new Permanent and Ad hoc Working Groups.

The Officers

17. The Plenary shall elect a Chair and 5 Vice Chairs. A nomination process may be established to propose candidates for election to the Plenary positions.

18. The Chair and two Vice Chairs shall be nominated by Member States of the ECE;

19. Two Vice Chairs shall be nominated by Article 11 States;

20. One Vice Chair shall be nominated by the Inter-Governmental organisations and Non-Governmental organisations recognised by ECOSOC.

21. All officers shall be elected for a 2 year term of office, renewable for one additional 2 year term. After 4 continuous years in office, an Officer shall stand down but would be eligible for re-election after a period of 2 years out of office.

Collective Responsibilities of the Officers

22. The collective responsibilities of the Officers shall include:

- Overseeing effective implementation of the Centre's agreed work programme;
- Co-ordinating with other international bodies and, where appropriate, ensuring contributions to their work programmes;
- Representing the interests of the Centre: within the ECE, especially to the Committee for the Development of Trade and to the Commission; to other UN Agencies and Regional Commissions e.g. ESCAP; and with other relevant external bodies e.g. WTO, WCO and ISO;
- Promoting and encouraging the implementation of the Centre's Recommendations and the results of its work to all nations trading internationally, especially to those with economies in transition. Further, and where appropriate, supporting relevant national initiatives.
- Preparing the Plenary session in conjunction with the Steering Group.

Additional Responsibilities of the Chair

23. In addition to these collective responsibilities, the Chair of the Plenary shall have the following additional responsibilities:

- to work with all delegations to ensure, in an impartial and consensual manner, effective decision taking by the Plenary;
- to allocate amongst the Vice Chairs the collective responsibilities of the Officers according to their special interests and skills (the allocation of responsibilities shall be reported to, and where appropriate endorsed by, the Plenary);
- after consultation with the Plenary Vice Chairs and delegations, to nominate one of the Vice Chairs to be the Chair of the Steering Group. This nomination shall be confirmed by the Plenary.

Other Plenary Appointments

24. The Plenary may appoint Rapporteurs to undertake functional and representational tasks, including related work with the Secretariat, in any area of the Centre's mission. This shall be done according to an agreed mandate specifying a Rapporteur's role, responsibilities, duration of the appointment and reporting relationships.

25. Once a mandate has been agreed by the Plenary, Rapporteurs may be nominated by any Plenary delegation.

Frequency of Meetings

26. The Plenary shall meet once a year for a period of 5 days according to the schedule established in its procedures. This meeting shall be held prior to the annual session of the Committee on the Development of Trade.

27. However, the Bureau recognising the need to ensure a smooth and orderly migration, considers it advisable that the Plenary meet for up to three days, twice a year, during 1997 and 1998 (see Annex II).

The Steering Group

28. The Steering Group (SG) is responsible for providing the interface between the Plenary and the Working Groups. Annex III outlines a probable operational interface between the Plenary, the Steering Group and the Working Groups.

29. The Steering Group's mandate and terms of reference shall be approved by the Plenary, and reviewed every two years. Initially, the Steering Group's responsibilities shall include:

- monitoring progress on the approved work programme for the Centre;
- for UN/EDIFACT directories, providing confirmation to the UN secretariat that the relevant procedures have been followed and a clean audit report has been received. This confirmation shall allow the secretariat to publish the directories.
- managing, on behalf of the Plenary, any MoU with an external organization, e.g. the MoU with the ISO;

- approving the establishment of ad hoc working groups to accomplish specific tasks within a specified time scale where the tasks relate to the requirements of the approved work programme (their establishment to be reported to the Plenary);

- giving provisional approval for the establishment of new permanent working groups where their activity is consistent with the requirements of the approved work programme (this provisional approval is subject to confirmation by the Plenary);

- endorsing the terms of reference for Working Groups;

- recommending to the Plenary new work items, including the mandates and terms of reference for the related working group;

- reviewing, at least annually, the progress towards deliverables of the permanent working groups as specified in their mandates and terms of reference.

30. A written report shall be made to the Plenary at each of its sessions.

Membership

31. The Steering Group shall comprise the Chair and 15 elected members. The members shall be elected for a two year term of office and shall be eligible for re-election for further terms of office without restriction. Officers of the Plenary are ex officio members in a consultative capacity.

32. The elected members shall reflect a balance between the main areas of the approved work programme. Initially, the main areas of the Centre's work programme are:

- Facilitation of Procedures;
- EDI and UN/EDIFACT;
- Areas of Joint Interest.

Accordingly, for the first two years, there shall be five members from each of the above areas**.** However, following the initial 2 year period, the review of the Steering Group's mandate and terms of reference (see paragraph 29) shall include a review of membership to consider the possible inclusion of representatives from mandated permanent Working Groups on the Steering Group.

33. A nomination process may be established to propose candidates for election to the Steering Group. The candidates shall be nominated by Plenary delegations, with the prime criteria for nomination being management/functional expertise.

Chair

34. The Chair of the Plenary shall, after consultation with all the Plenary Vice Chairs and delegations, nominate one of the Vice Chairs to be the Chair of the Steering Group. This nomination shall be confirmed by the Plenary.

35. The key responsibility of the Chair of the Steering Group shall be to strive to ensure a consensual and balanced approach to all items in the work programme approved by the Plenary.

36. The Chair of the Steering Group shall submit a written report to each session of the Plenary on the Steering Group's activities and on other relevant issues relating to the operation of mandated Working Groups. This report shall include the reasons for the rejection of any request for a mandate and shall also identify those Working Groups which have been consistently unable to reach a consensus.

Voting

37. The preferred way of reaching decisions shall be consensus. However, the Chair shall have the authority to call for a vote if, in his view, consensus can not be reached on a particular issue at more than 2 consecutive Steering Group meetings. Under these circumstances, the Chair shall give 4 weeks notice of the intention to call for a vote and notify all the other officers of the Plenary and the Secretariat. All elected Steering Group members shall be entitled to vote, by proxy if necessary. For a decision to be approved, 75% of the votes cast shall be required. A minimum of 8 votes cast shall constitute a valid vote and abstentions shall not count as votes.

38. The Chair and ex-officio members shall not have a vote.

Frequency and Organisation of Meetings

39. The Steering Group shall meet up to 4 times a year for not less than 3 days. Wherever possible, to facilitate preparation of the plenary, the meetings shall be held back-to-back with inter-session meetings of the Officers of the Plenary. If required, emergency meetings may also be scheduled.

40. The dates of the Steering Group meetings shall be agreed 18 months in advance on a rolling basis. The agenda for each meeting shall be circulated at least 4 weeks in advance of each meeting and, where possible, should be agreed at conclusion of the previous meeting.

41. The agenda of each meeting shall be circulated to all Steering Group members, the Officers of the Plenary and the Chairs of the Permanent Working Groups. It shall also be made available electronically on the UN server.

42. All meetings shall be minuted by the Centre's Secretariat. To ensure as much transparency as possible, it is recommended that the minutes of the Steering Group be published in the 3 official languages of the ECE and made available electronically on the UN server.

Empowerment of Working Groups

Categories of Working Groups

43. There shall be two categories of Working Groups:

44. Permanent Working Groups (PWGs) which are those with a mandate to undertake a long-term programme of work.

45. Ad hoc Groups (ACGs) which are those established to accomplish a specific task within a short term time scale such as a group established to review a code list in, say, a 12 month period.

Principles of Empowerment

46. All Working Groups must have a mandate, terms of reference, a work schedule indicating the timing of key deliverables and provide a statement of resource requirements accompanied by a plan for how they are to be provided.

47. The mandate is the agreement between the Plenary and the Working Group on overall objectives (scope and purpose), key deliverables and delegated responsibilities.

48. Terms of reference shall identify timeframes for deliverables, and reporting procedures and mechanisms.

49. Permanent working groups shall have detailed operating procedures appropriate to their function(s) which shall be lodged with the secretariat who shall make them publicly available;

50. Groups must be driven and supported by relevant users and open to all organisations and bodies recognised by the Plenary;

51. Consensus is the normal way to achieve agreements. Voting may be employed when consensus cannot be attained.

Procedures for Empowerment

Permanent Working Groups

52. A request to establish a new Working Group, or to revise the terms of reference of an existing Working Group, must be formally submitted to the Steering Group for consideration. When the Steering Group is satisfied that the proposal falls within the framework of the Centre's agreed work programme and is also satisfied with the mandate and the resource plan, it may give provisional approval for establishment of the group and forward the request to the Plenary for final approval. A request for empowerment for a new Working Group can be made by any delegation or already empowered CEFACT Working Group. The Steering Group may also prepare and submit a request for empowerment for a new Working Group directly to the Plenary.

Ad hoc Working Groups

53. A request to establish a new ad hoc group must be formally submitted to the Steering Group for consideration. When the Steering Group is satisfied that the proposal falls within the framework of the Centre's agreed work programme and is also satisfied with the mandate, terms of reference and the resource plan, it may give approval for establishment of the group. A request for empowerment for a new Ad hoc Working Group can be made by any delegation. The Steering Group may, of its own volition, also decide to establish an Ad hoc Working Group.

All Groups

54. The Steering Group and/or Plenary shall evaluate each request to establish and empower a Group. The Steering Group and/or the Plenary shall either:

- approve the mandate with or without modification; or
- reject the mandate and provide reasons why it cannot approve the request; or
- defer its decision to a specified future meeting and request further development of the draft mandate.

55. The Steering Group and/or Plenary may also choose to consult with the Officers and/or members of Groups already empowered before reaching a decision on the empowerment of a new group. If the Steering Group rejects the request for a mandate, the requester shall have the right to appeal to the Plenary.

Mandate

56. The mandate for empowerment of a Working Group may be prepared by an existing group, the Steering Group, or the Plenary. All mandates must specify:

- the overall objectives of the work (scope and purpose);
- the key deliverables;
- the geographical focus, i.e. global, regional or national;
- the functional expertise for membership;
- any request for delegated responsibilities.

The mandate must be accompanied by a statement of resource requirements.

57. The Steering Group and/or Plenary may recommend specific international or intergovernmental organizations that should be invited to participate in the work, or with whom co-operation/liaison should be undertaken.

58. On approval, the mandate constitutes the agreement between the Plenary and the Working Group.

Statement of Resource Requirements

59. The statement of resource requirements shall be accompanied by a plan of how they are to be provided. In particular, the statement and the plan must indicate whether any Centre resources are required, apart from those needed for the preparation of documentation for the Centre.

Terms of Reference

60. Within 6 months of approval of its mandate, a Working Group shall submit its terms of reference to the Steering Group for endorsement.

61. Terms of Reference must include a business plan which shall cover the following:

- a definition of the specific technical issue(s) to be addressed;
- a detailed description of the proposed deliverables;
- the proposed membership;
- the administrative team structure of the Group;
- a time schedule and milestones for completion of its function(s);
- proposals for liaison with other Working Groups and any external organizations.

Deliverables

62. A Group's key deliverables are defined in its mandate. All of a Group's deliverables shall be defined, in detail, in the Group's terms of reference. The deliverables for a Group may be any deliverable under the responsibility of the Plenary, e.g. the UN/TDID or proposals for UN Recommendations.

Additional Responsibilities

63. When developing a Group's terms of reference, the requester(s) are expected to consult with relevant community members. When necessary, members may be added to assist in the development of the terms of reference. Community members are defined to be potential or actual participants in the Group.

Working Group Procedures

64. Following the approval of its mandate, and within 6 months, a Working Group shall lodge its procedures with the ECE secretariat. If voting is envisaged, the procedures should demonstrate that consensus is a prime goal and shall be strived for; but if a vote is to be taken, then, as a minimum, the majority in favour of a particular decision shall not be less than 2/3 of the votes cast. Results of such votes shall be recorded in the minutes and advised to the ECE secretariat. Working Groups shall, where required by the Steering Group, take action to harmonize their procedures around a model set provided by the ECE secretariat.

65. If a Working Group revises its procedures, the revised procedures must be lodged with the ECE secretariat within 30 days of their revision.

66. The ECE secretariat shall make electronically available to members of the Centre the procedures for all Working Groups.

Organisation and Administration

67. Each group must have defined members and an administrative team.

68. A Group may propose, depending upon its mandate, an organization that includes a general assembly, a steering committee, a management board, sub-groups, supporting teams, and observers.

69. The rules and conditions for membership of a Group must be defined in its terms of reference.

70. Participation in Group meetings shall be open to members that have fulfilled the defined membership rules. Contributions from non-members, including individuals, shall be encouraged and considered in the work of the Group.

71. Only Group members are entitled to participate in the decision-making procedures of the Group. Voting rights shall be limited to members of the Group.

72. Administrative positions (i.e. The Officers of the Group) must be filled prior to the start of work by the Group. This may be accomplished at the first meeting.

73. Only members of the Group can nominate, be nominated and be elected to serve as Officers of the Group.

74. Where appropriate, meeting registration fees will be determined by the Officers of the Group and the reasons for these fees shall be defined in the terms of reference for the Group, for example, to cover meeting costs.

75. If agreed under the mandate, the Officers of the Group have the authority to establish sub-groups or supporting teams and to determine the terms of reference for such groups or teams.

76. A Group organises its own relationships with external organisations as specified in its mandate and terms of reference.

77. Officers of the Plenary are ex-officio observers of any Group established by the Plenary and are also entitled to participate in any meetings of the Group.

Linkages Between Working Groups and the Plenary

78. The linkage between the Working Groups and the Plenary is a key function of the Steering Group.

79. The Steering Group or the Plenary may nominate an observer to participate in a Group.

80. Officers of the Plenary are ex-officio observers to any Group established by the Plenary and are entitled to participate in any meetings of the Group.

81. The work and direction of the Permanent Working Groups shall be reviewed by the Steering Group on a regular basis (at least annually) with the Chair of the Working Group being invited to make a presentation. The Chair of the Steering Group will report the result of these reviews to the Plenary

82. The annual review shall include a review of the Working Group's terms of reference, which may result in a request for modification or dissolution.

83. Delays in meeting target delivery dates shall be advised by a Working Group to the Steering Group as soon as a delay is identified.

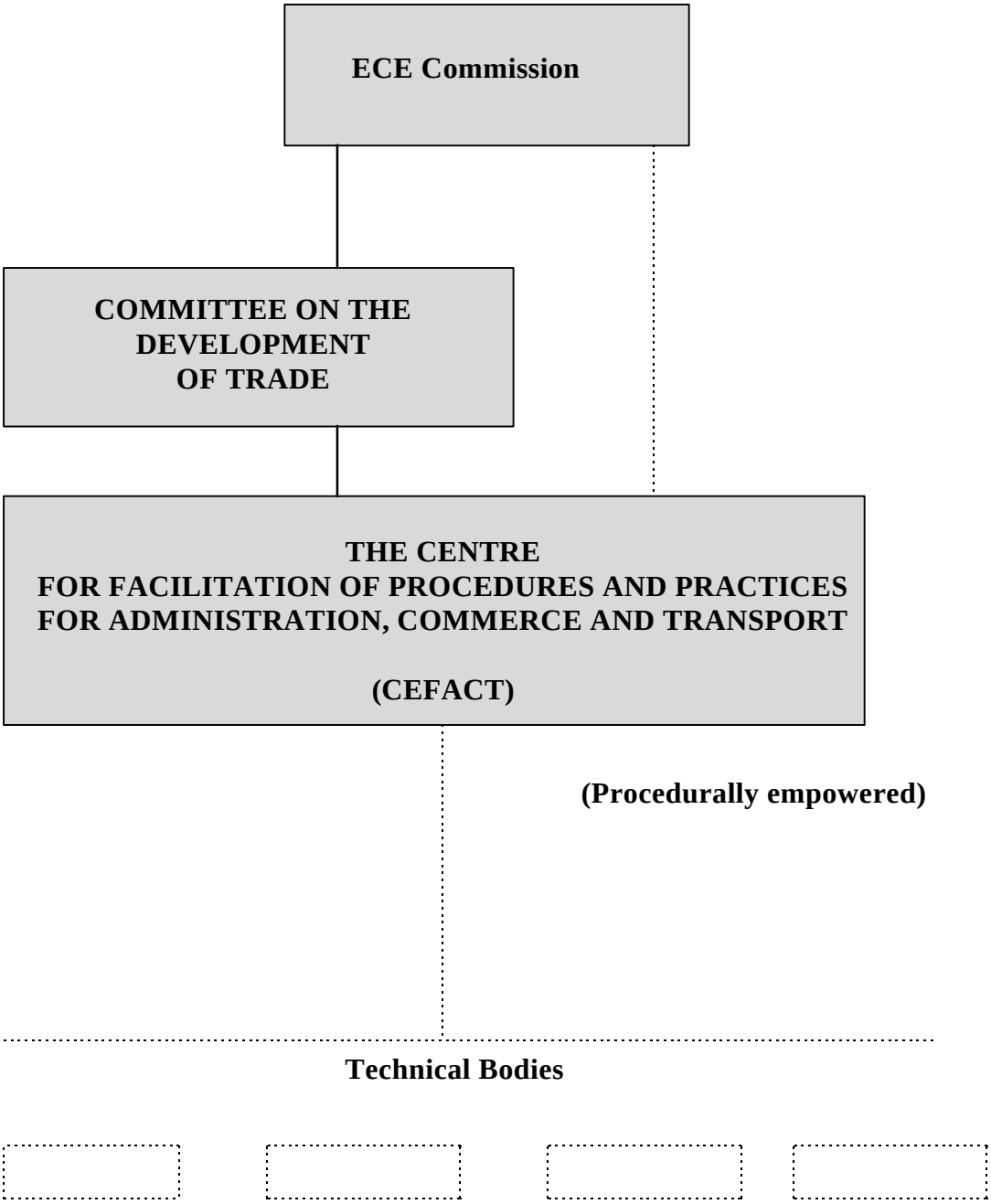
84. The Chair of a Permanent Working Group shall, after notification to the Chair of the Steering Group**,** have the right to attend any Steering Group meeting in a consultative capacity. Rapporteurs shall also have the same right.

Next Steps

85. If the above recommendations are accepted and a decision is taken to proceed with the establishment of the Centre, detailed procedures for the operation of the Centre shall be developed.

ANNEX I

Organigram UN/ECE
Trade Facilitation Activities



ANNEX II

Framework for the Work Programme

Introduction

One of the Centre's key tasks is the development of a work programme and this must be the first priority of the Centre once it is formed and officers are elected.

The work programme shall allow for continuity between the existing WP.4 work programme and that of CEFACT. This requires that it build upon the existing work programme: eliminating those elements which are no longer relevant and, where appropriate, revising existing elements, and incorporating new ones. In developing this work programme the Centre must consider both the rapid development of information technology and the availability of resources.

In all areas of its work programme the Centre shall evaluate and take into special consideration the needs of countries with economies in transition. It shall also provide support to and co-ordinate with agencies working with developing countries and countries in transition in the area of trade (for example, the other UN Regional Commissions, UNCTAD, ITC and the WTO).

Framework

The following activities should be taken into account in the development of CEFACT's work programme.

1) Analyze, review and model the key elements of international transactions in commerce, transport and administration, with particular emphasis on their information content and the communication methods used (for example, paper or UN/EDIFACT).

2) Provide a forum for institutional co-operation in formulating and implementing international trade facilitation strategies and for reconciling official governmental and commercial requirements.

3) Develop recommendations which simplify, harmonize or eliminate practices and procedures used in international transactions. Then publish, promote and report on the use of such recommendations.

4) Ensure that UN/EDIFACT and related activities effectively serve the facilitation requirements of international trade, administration, commerce and transport. In particular, respond to any requests for message development or maintenance coming out of the work on the International Trade Transaction Model ~~(i.e. the work undertaken under 1.1 above).~~ Where appropriate, this work may be done through the development of model scenarios and, based upon these scenarios, recommended message implementation guidelines, message subsets or document layout keys.

5) Identify and evaluate legal constraints that affect :

- procedures and practices in international administrative commercial and transport transactions ; and
- the use of tools for facilitating international trade.

6) Propose and recommend practical solutions to these legal constraints, when appropriate in co-operation with organizations such as the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

7) Promote the development of international trade facilitation initiatives as well as related initiatives covered by the work of the Centre.

8) Promote and support the establishment and ongoing activities of national trade facilitation organizations in all countries, taking advantage of the best tools and practices currently in use in the world. This shall be done in co-operation with the UN Regional Commissions and UNCTAD.

9) Maintain close liaison with national trade facilitation organizations in order to better understand their trade facilitation needs, encourage co-operation in trade facilitation and improve the flow of trade facilitation information to all countries.

10) Taking into account the developments in the field of information technology, identify electronic information exchange needs in the areas of administration, commerce and transport. As part of this work :

- Review, monitor and evaluate the world-wide use of electronic exchange of data in order to better understand the opportunities for EDI in the world and in the multi-sectoral business environment. In particular, monitor the results of business procedures based upon EDI.

- Identify potential new requirements for world and multi-sectoral EDI harmonization activities and work for their development.

- Monitor developments in information technology which are likely to facilitate information exchange in administration, commerce and transport, notably in an international context.

11) Maintain and develop the UN/EDIFACT standard, update the UN/EDIFACT directories and related deliverables accordingly, analyze supporting requirements and, based upon scenarios/models, define interchange profiles capable of meeting these needs through a sequence of UN/EDIFACT messages and, to that end :

- Identify, promote and, where appropriate, propose information technology developments and initiatives which are likely to bring practical results to the exchange of information in international administration, commerce and transport.

- Provide an open forum for the continued development of UN/EDIFACT and all its components, in a global, multi-sectoral and coherent manner.

- Produce directories and related documents/products for users of UN/EDIFACT.

12) Promote UN/EDIFACT through the compilation of relevant information about the use of UN/EDIFACT and, to that end :

- Promote and administer the use of UN/EDIFACT as a global standard.

- Identify and evaluate legal constraints on the electronic facilitation of administration, commerce and transport, including the use of EDI in the context of international and inter-sectoral trade.

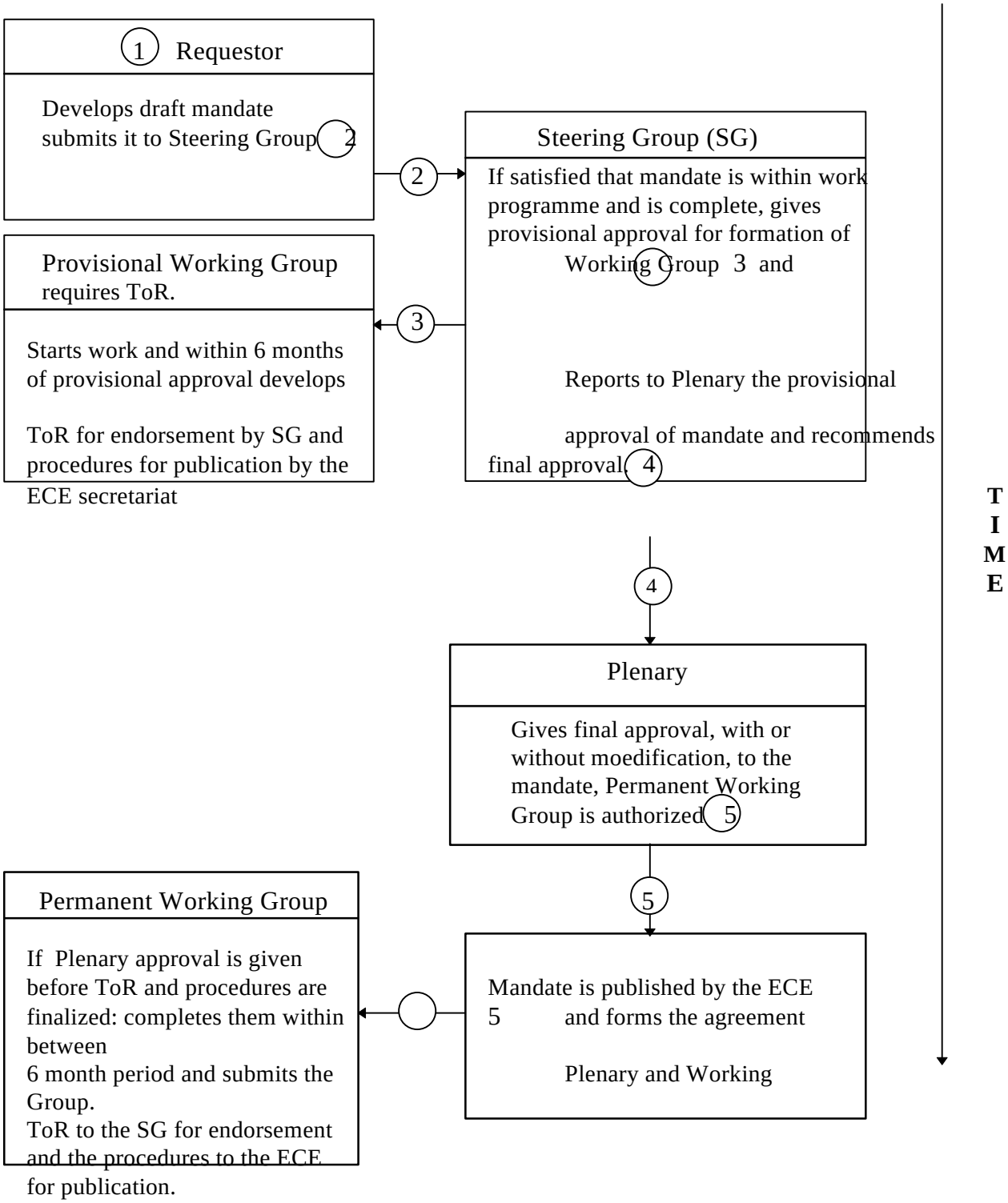
- Propose practical solutions to these legal constraints, when appropriate in co-operation with organizations such as the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Annex III

Probable Working Relationships Between the Plenary, the Steering Group and the Working Groups

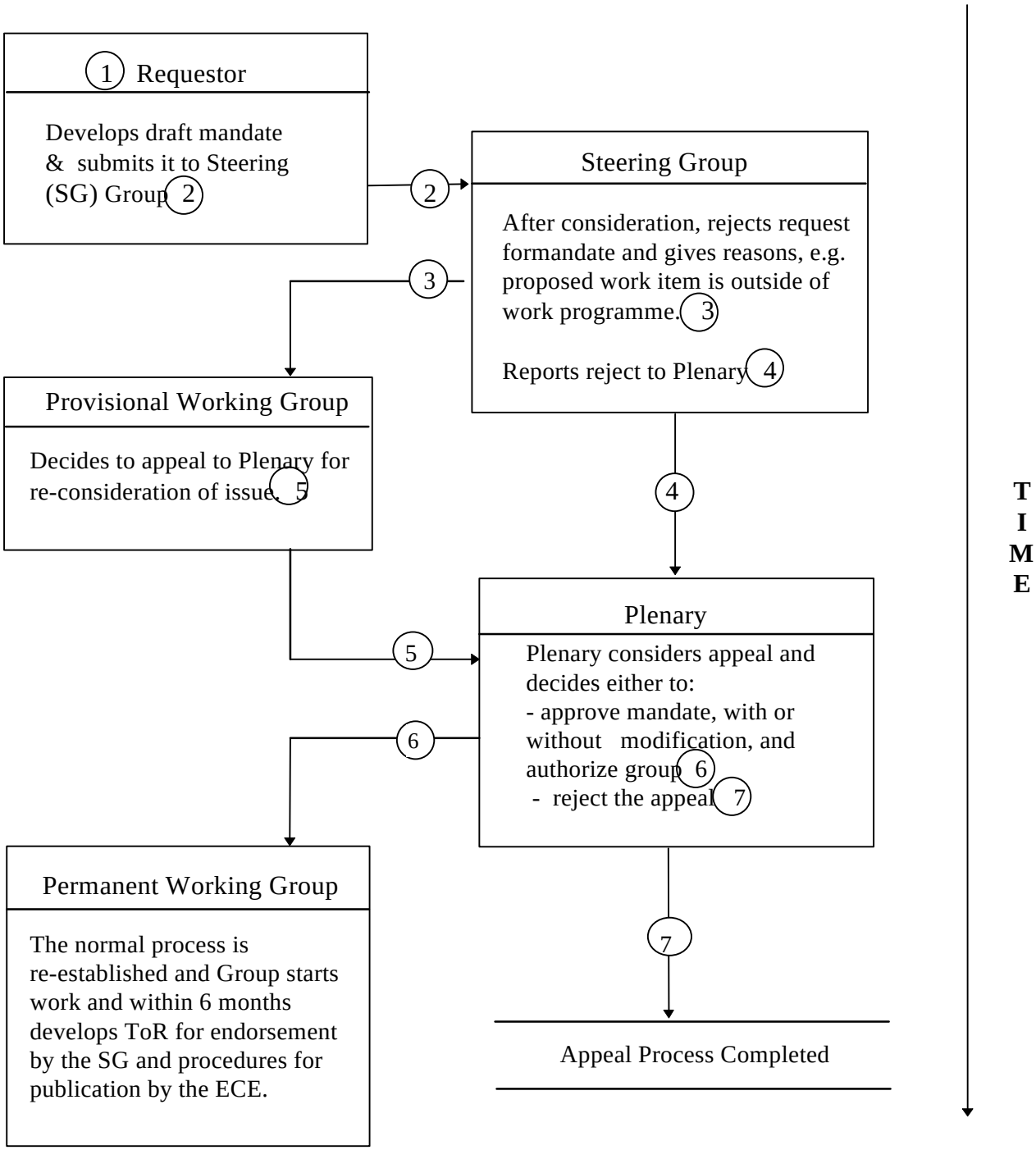
PROBABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS Annex III

3.1 Formation of a Permanent Working Group - Normal Process



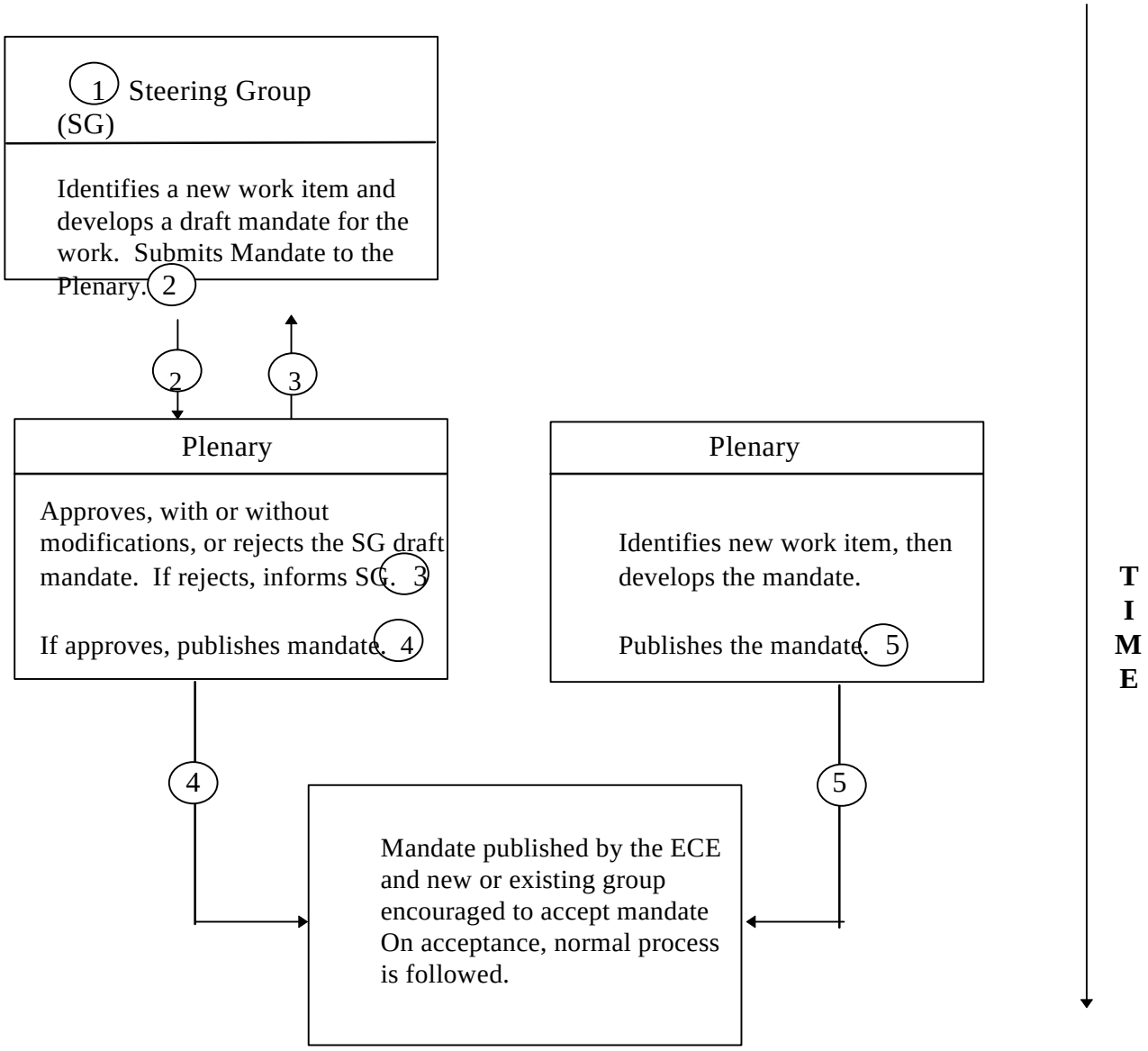
PROBABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS Annex III

3.2 Formation of a Permanent Working Group - Appeal Process



PROBABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS
Annex III

3.3 Steering Group Proposes or Plenary Creates Mandate for a New Work Item



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