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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business
Sixth session, 27-30 March 2000

REPORT OF THE SIXTH SESSION

1. The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) held its sixth session in Geneva from 27 to 30 March 2000, under the chairmanship of Mr. Henri Martre.

2. Participants in the meeting included representatives of the following countries: Albania, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States. The European Union (EU) was also represented.

3. The following intergovernmental organizations participated: Bank for International Settlements (BIS), Danube Commission (CD), European Free Trade Association (EFTA), League of Arab States, Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Customs Organization (WCO), and World Trade Organization (WTO).

4. The following United Nations bodies were also represented: United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UN/ODCCP), United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Bank.

5. The following non-governmental organizations participated: United Towns Agency for North-South Cooperation, International Railway Transport Committee (CIT), International Article Numbering Association (EAN), European Electronic Messaging Association (EEMA), International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), International Multimodal

Transport Association (IMTA), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (S.W.I.F.T).

Note: Decisions made during this meeting are shown in boldface type in the current report.

6. Observers present at the invitation of the secretariat included representatives of the Electronic Commerce Code Management Association (ECCMA), the Electronic Commerce Europe Association (ECEA), the Organisation for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), the Taipei EDIFACT Committee, and the Webforce International.

Introductory remarks

7. Mr. Henri Martre, Chairman of UN/CEFACT, opened the meeting by welcoming the delegations, in particular new members of UN/CEFACT. He also expressed his appreciation of the [UN/CEFACT@WORK](#) conference which had shown that the strategic directions of UN/CEFACT's work were in line with international developments. He emphasized the extension of activities towards other modes of electronic exchange of data, and the cooperation with other partner institutions. He pointed out particularly the decision of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to join the MoU ISO-IEC-UN/ECE on electronic business, and the joint work with OASIS on ebXML. UN/CEFACT thus proved its relevance and was well placed to face future challenges.

8. Mr. Hans Hansell, Deputy Director of the UN/ECE Trade Division, welcomed the delegations and informed them about the positive feedback received with regard to the [UN/CEFACT@WORK](#) conference which more than 90 per cent of participants rated as very valuable or valuable.

9. Mr. Yves Berthelot, Executive Secretary of the UN/ECE, also addressed words of welcome to the delegates. The message that he wished to convey was constructed around three main strong points of UN/CEFACT, namely continuity with the work undertaken by UN/CEFACT's predecessor - WP.4; adaptation to new technologies and methods of working; and mutually beneficial cooperation/partnerships with Governments, international organizations and the business community worldwide. In this context, he mentioned the MoU on electronic business that had allowed a move into new areas of activities without having to create new organizations. He also pointed to the need for transfer of the know-how accumulated in UN/CEFACT to economies in transition and developing countries. This would imply taking into account different cultural contexts and adapting UN/CEFACT instruments accordingly. He concluded by thanking the delegates for their commitment and continuous support over the years and wished them every success in their work.

Agenda item 1 - Adoption of the provisional agenda

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/1/Rev.1 Revised provisional agenda for the sixth UN/CEFACT session

10. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT made two suggestions regarding items to be added to the agenda. First, a press release should be drafted to publicize the outcome of the meeting. Second, since the mandate of some officers would expire as of the 2001 Plenary, a formal call should be made during the current meeting requesting heads of delegations to nominate candidates for election to the posts that would become vacant.

11. The Plenary approved the revised provisional agenda (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/1/Rev.1), with amendments proposed by the Chairman of UN/CEFACT.

Agenda item 2 - Confirmation of the report from the UN/CEFACT March 1999 Plenary

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/1999/19 Report of the fifth UN/CEFACT session

12. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT recalled the procedure agreed upon at the September 1998 Plenary with regard to the adoption of the Plenary report. At the end of each session, a summary list of decisions taken would be approved while the full text of the report would be circulated electronically to delegations for a 30-day period for comments. The version of the report incorporating the comments from delegations would then be considered as approved, but this approval would need to be formally confirmed by the Plenary. In accordance with this procedure, he invited the delegations to confirm the approval of the document TRADE/CEFACT/1999/19.

13. The Plenary confirmed the approval of the report of the fifth session of UN/CEFACT (TRADE/CEFACT/1999/19).

Agenda item 3 - UN/CEFACT Steering Group (CSG) Reports

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/2 Report of the Chairman of the CSG
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/3 Report of the CSG March 1999 meeting
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/4 Report of the CSG June 1999 meeting
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/5 Report of the CSG November 1999 meeting

14. The Chairman of the UN/CEFACT Steering Group (CSG) presented the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/2, Report of the Chairman of the CSG, summarizing the activities of the Steering Group during the period following the 1999 Plenary. In the course of his presentation, which was structured so as to reflect the agenda of the Plenary meeting, he pointed to action that the Plenary was invited to take under individual agenda items.

15. He reported in particular on the ebXML initiative undertaken jointly with OASIS and introduced the UN/CEFACT strategy for Electronic Business and new methods of electronic working proposed for UN/CEFACT and its working groups. He noted that a number of Recommendations were proposed for approval or review by the Plenary.

16. With regard to the promotion of UN/CEFACT's work, he felt that one of the difficulties from an external perspective was that the name of the Centre did not clearly indicate the scope of UN/CEFACT's activities. A proposal had therefore been put forward to rename it the "Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business" while keeping the current acronym. The Chairman also acknowledged the contribution in kind by the port of Barcelona to the preparation of a new logo and identity manual for UN/CEFACT and thanked Mr. Santiago Mila, the Chairman of the PROMO Working Group, for his work. In addition, he commended the secretariat on the new look of the UN/CEFACT web site.

17. The CSG Chairman then explained the rationale behind the decision to revise the basic document ruling the functioning of UN/CEFACT, TRADE/R.650. He also informed the meeting that Mr. Klaus-Dieter Naujok would stand down from his post of Standards Liaison Rapporteur and conveyed to him his personal thanks for the work that he had done in this capacity for UN/CEFACT.

18. In respect of cooperation with other international organizations, the CSG Chairman mentioned the long-standing close relations with regional commissions which looked towards UN/ECE for guidance and expertise. He then noted the positive experience of cooperation between UN/CEFACT and the Asia Pacific Council for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce and Transport (AFACT) which also took place at the level of some Working Groups that had established AFACT subgroups. The experience of cooperation with the WTO was equally positive, especially as the work of the ITPWG was gathering momentum. The Chairman also thanked UNCTAD for the presentation at the [UN/CEFACT@WORK](#) conference and noted the excellent cooperation between the two bodies whereby UN/CEFACT developed standards and UNCTAD implemented them. In relation to the World Customs Organization, he expressed the intention of both organizations to make their relationship closer and stronger. To this end, a proposal was put forward to the Plenary to develop a MoU between the two organizations. Finally, the Chairman noted with appreciation that the ITU had joined the Memorandum of Understanding IEC-ISO-UN/ECE.

19. He concluded by expressing his satisfaction about the fact that the secretariat was fully staffed and working effectively although concerns remained about travel budget.

20. **The Plenary noted the report of the Chairman of the CSG (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/2), as well as reports from CSG meetings held in March 1999 (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/3), June 1999 (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/4) and November 1999 (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/5).**

Agenda item 4: Programme of work and progress reports from mandated groups

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/6	Report of the ITPWG
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/7	Report of the UN/EDIFACT Working Group
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/8	Creating an Efficient Environment for Trade and Transport
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/9	Electronic commerce and the simplification of administrative constraints
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/14	Report of the BPAWG
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/19	Report of the Legal Working Group
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/21	UN/CEFACT's strategy for Electronic Business
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/22	UN/CEFACT's open development process for technical specifications
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/23	Intersessional approval of documents
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/24	Simple Electronic Business Standards
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/26	Model Code of Conduct for Electronic Commerce
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.1	Report on the progress with the ebXML Initiative
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.5	TMWG report to the UN/CEFACT Plenary
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.7	Report of the CDWG to the UN/CEFACT Plenary

21. Mr. Alex de Lijster, Vice Chairman of the International Trade Procedures Working Group (ITPWG), introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/6, Report of the ITPWG. The Group had been successfully re-launched in September 1999, had re-considered its priorities and had revised its mandate. Among the top priorities of the Group were the revision of Recommendation No. 18, Facilitation measures related to international trade procedures, and the update of the Compendium of Trade Facilitation Recommendations. Work was also under way on the revision of Recommendations No. 8, Unique Identification Code Methodology, No. 11, Documentary aspects of the International transport of dangerous goods and No. 12, Measures to facilitate maritime transport documents procedures, as well as on a set of guidelines to Recommendation No. 1, United Nations Layout Key for trade documents. It was also considering whether to initiate work on developing a trade facilitation index.

22. The Vice Chairman of the ITPWG noted the good cooperation with other working groups, in particular the Business Process Analysis Working Group (BPAWG) and the Codes Working Group (CDWG), and stressed the need for the Group to expand its range of skills and geographic coverage. He hoped that the new electronic methods of working could be instrumental in achieving these objectives.

23. The Plenary noted the report of the International Trade Procedures Working Group and approved its revised mandate, as contained in Annex B to the CSG Chairman's report.

24. The presentation of the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/7, Report of the UN/EDIFACT Working Group (EWG), was preceded by thanks from the UN/CEFACT Chairman to Mr. Barry Keogh, the resigning Chairman of the EWG, for the work that he had done for UN/CEFACT and congratulations to Mr. Pierre Georget on his election to the EWG Chairman.

25. Mr. Keogh, while introducing the EWG report, said that he was pleased with the increasing interest of customers in the Group's work. This was documented by the growing number of participants at EWG meetings, which had significantly increased over the last year. Among the main activities undertaken since the 1999 Plenary were the production of the 00B directory, creation of a new working group on environmental management and safety, transfer of the work previously conducted by the Simple EDI Working Group (SIMAC) to the T8 Implementation/ Harmonization Group, and the adoption of the Unified Modelling Language (UML) as a norm for the UN/EDIFACT modelling process, which was done in close cooperation with the Techniques and Methodologies Working Group (TMWG) and the BPAWG. He also noted the launching of the ebXML initiative during the EWG meeting in Canberra in September 1999, and the very efficient directory production process where the time required for processing Directory Maintenance Requests had been reduced to four months. In this context, he expressed his special thanks to the Technical Assessment Team, and in particular to Mr. Harry Featherstone. He then concluded by wishing the new Chairman of the EWG every success.

26. Mr Pierre Georget then noted that he was taking over the Group in an excellent shape, as documented by the number of UN/EDIFACT users which represented some 500,000 companies worldwide. The use of the standard was growing not only in Europe and North America but also in other parts of the

world. Over the years, the EWG had developed a capability to respond effectively to user requests regarding the directories. The adoption of the UML technology would further enhance the services provided to users by improving the quality of the business information stored within the directories. The cooperation with ebXML was very important to keep up with new technologies.

27. The UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Asia invited delegations to the meeting being organized by AFACT on EDIFACT standards, to be held in Taipei from 4 to 8 September 2000.

28. Following a query by the delegation of Italy regarding the source of the data for the estimated number of UN/EDIFACT users, the EWG Chairman informed that the figures mentioned were based on sectoral analyses. A more detailed review was planned to be undertaken by the EWG.

29. The Plenary expressed its appreciation and gratitude for the valuable contribution to the work of UN/CEFACT of the retiring Chairman of the UN/EDIFACT Working Group (EWG), Mr. Barry Keogh, and congratulated Mr. Pierre Georget on his election as the EWG Chairman.

30. The Plenary noted the report from the UN/EDIFACT Working Group (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/7).

31. The representative of UNCTAD noted that at the 1999 Plenary, UN/CEFACT had approved a revision of Recommendation No. 4, National Trade Facilitation Bodies. The document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/8, Creating an Efficient Environment for Trade and Transport, had been submitted by UNCTAD to the 1999 Plenary as an informal paper. As a consequence, it had been suggested that it be formally approved at the current Plenary with a view to becoming guidelines to Recommendation No. 4.

32. The Plenary endorsed the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/8, Creating an Efficient Environment for Trade and Transport, which would serve as guidelines to Recommendation No. 4, National Trade Facilitation Bodies. It was requested that the secretariat look into the possibility of translating the document into French and Russian.

33. The CSG Chairman, while introducing the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/9, Electronic commerce and the simplification of administrative constraints, noted its value as an information paper, particularly for countries newly entering this area, such as developing countries and countries in transition. The paper summarized the findings of the Electronic Commerce Ad hoc Working Group (ECAWG). The CSG Chairman commended the work of Messrs. Emile Peeters and Jean Kubler who had prepared the paper.

34. Mr. Kubler of the UN/CEFACT secretariat noted that the report was based on a number of documents published in EWG and UN/CEFACT that had been restructured to improve readability for non-experts. He thanked particularly the delegations of Sweden and the United States for their contribution to the preparation of the document.

35. Mr. Peeters of the Electronic Commerce Europe Association, who had acted as coordinator of the work on the report, suggested that the document be published and circulated widely, under a slightly modified title,

Electronic commerce and electronic business - the simplification of administrative constraints. The change in the title of the document was supported by the delegation of Ireland.

36. The representative of the Bank for International Settlements proposed that the document be also published electronically on the web and updated periodically so as to keep pace with technological developments. The proposal to have the report as a "living" electronic document was supported by the delegations of Switzerland and Ireland.

37. The delegations of Switzerland and France felt it would be useful to have the document translated into French. The delegation of Belarus made the same request as regards translation into Russian. These proposals were supported by the delegation of Belgium. It was noted that the translation would help identify equivalents in terminology in the other languages.

38. The Plenary took note of the document summarizing the findings of the Electronic Commerce ad hoc Working Group (ECAWG)(TRADE/CEFACT/2000/9) and agreed that it should be re-named Electronic Commerce/Electronic Business - the Simplification of Administrative Constraints. The Plenary requested that the secretariat feature the document prominently on the UN/CEFACT web site, and examine the possibility of publishing it in a booklet version, as well as the possibility of translating it into French and Russian. The Plenary also suggested that the secretariat and the CSG ensure regular updates of the report that would keep it abreast of the most recent technological developments. To this end, the secretariat would set up a forum on the UN/CEFACT web site that would serve to generate discussion and collect proposals for updates. Finally, since the ECAWG had fulfilled the objectives that it had been set up to achieve, the Plenary decided to disband it.

39. Mr. Michael Doran, Chairman of the BPAWG, introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/14, Report of the BPAWG. He expressed satisfaction that a number of speakers at the conference had underlined the need for simpler business models. The first deliverable of the Group, contained in the annex to the document, was an interim report on the application of the UN/CEFACT Unified Modelling Methodology to the international supply chain. The model was structured into BUY, SHIP and PAY processes and involved clusters such as Customer, Supplier, Intermediary and Authority.

40. He then noted with appreciation the good cooperation with other UN/CEFACT Working Groups. In particular, he reported on the joint meetings held with the Purchasing Sub-Working Group of EWG, and the attendance of the ITPWG representatives at the last two BPAWG meetings. He also thanked the TMWG for their work on the development of the Unified Modelling Methodology. He believed that the BPAWG required active participation of other regions. To this end, after the establishment of a European regional sub-group, efforts were being made to set up a regional sub-group in AFACT countries.

41. Finally, he made an appeal for more secretariat support so that the BPAWG can progress in its work.

42. The EWG Chairman noted that the EWG supported the work of BPAWG which they considered particularly useful for the modelling work of EWG.

43. The Plenary noted the report of the Business Process Analysis Working Group (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/14).

44. Mr. David Marsh, Vice Chairman of the Legal Working Group (LWG), provided the meeting with an update on the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/19, Report of the LWG. He reported in particular on the last meeting of the Group held on 6 and 7 March 2000 in Geneva. While he paid tribute to the role of UNCITRAL in the area of national legislation, he stressed that the main focus of the LWG was on the development of practical solutions for businesses. A concrete example of such a tool was the Recommendation on Electronic Commerce Agreement developed by the Group. A new work item would be a Recommendation on the Code of Conduct for Electronic Commerce, building on the excellent work done in the Netherlands. It was intended to submit this Recommendation to the next Plenary. Among other items being examined by the Group were model terms for certification authorities and criteria for cross-border recognition of electronic signatures. The Group had also provided comments on the proposal by the ITPWG to develop a Recommendation on the National Electronic Business Framework.

45. Two regional sub-groups had been set up, namely in the Asia-Pacific region under AFACT, and in North America. The LWG Vice Chairman concluded by commending the secretariat on the support provided to the Group.

46. The delegation of Poland expressed its full support for the items currently on the work programme of the LWG. Its results were perceived as very instrumental for governments in changing their methods of working from paper-based to electronic ones.

47. The delegation of India commended the LWG and raised the issue to what extent the technology needed to be included in e-commerce legislation. The LWG Vice Chairman noted that since technology became outdated quickly, it might be more judicious not to specify technical solutions in legislation.

48. The Plenary noted the report of the Legal Working Group (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/19).

49. The delegate of the Netherlands introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/26, Model Code of Conduct for Electronic Commerce. He believed that a combination of regulation and self-regulation would create a good level of trust in electronic business. He then explained that the document provided a checklist of items that needed to be addressed to create trust among parties. The principles on which it was based were reliability, transparency, confidentiality and privacy.

50. The document did not include provisions for enforcement since it was felt that it was up to the parties using the Code of Conduct to define appropriate enforcement mechanisms. The LWG Vice Chairman said that the analysis of the issue had started in the LWG and that a potential UN/CEFACT Recommendation would need to be able to provide guidance on this type of protection.

51. The delegate of the Netherlands concluded by inviting the delegations to send their comments on the Code of Conduct either through the secretariat or the LWG.

52. The Plenary congratulated the Netherlands on the quality of their work and noted the report Model Code of Conduct for Electronic Commerce (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/26). It would now be further considered by the LWG.

53. The Deputy Director of the Trade Division introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/23, Intersessional approval of documents. He pointed out that since 1999 there had only been one UN/CEFACT Plenary session per year, it was important to have a mechanism that would enable to take decision in between Plenary meetings. The proposal was to use electronic means to consult the delegations. He also explained details of the procedure, in particular the two-month period for comments, and the related follow-up.

54. The representative of the World Customs Organization (WCO) expressed concern regarding one aspect of the proposed procedure, namely that a proposal would be considered as being supported by delegations if they did not respond within the two-month period reserved for comments. He suggested that the wording should be "an absence of objections from delegations" rather than "an absence of response". The UN/CEFACT Chairman suggested that

also the UN/CEFACT Chairman and the CSG Chairman be consulted before a document was submitted for intersessional approval.

55. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT and the delegation of Belgium then proposed that documents approved through the intersessional process be considered as provisionally approved until a subsequent approval by the Plenary. The delegation of France requested that such provisionally approved document be only approved by the Plenary if available in the official languages of the UN/ECE. The delegation of the United States of America suggested that the proposed procedure be used on an interim basis and be changed should it not prove effective.

56. The Plenary approved the procedure for the intersessional approval of documents as outlined in the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/23, with the following amendments: (a) the UN/CEFACT Chairman and the CSG Chairman should be consulted before the document is submitted for intersessional approval; (b) if no objections are raised by delegations within the two-month period for comments, the document should be considered as provisionally approved, but this approval should further be confirmed by the Plenary; (c) the document should be translated into the three official UN/ECE languages before being confirmed by the Plenary. This procedure would be used on a trial basis and be subject to a revision.

57. Mr. Klaus Dieter Naujok, Standards Liaison Rapporteur, introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/22, UN/CEFACT open development process for technical specifications. The main advantage of use of electronic means such as e-mail and the web site was to reach a wider audience and speed up the work. The CSG Chairman recalled that the proposal had first been presented last year and had gathered a great deal of support. The next step now would be to discuss its implementation with the UN/CEFACT Working Groups. Further he thought that a general version of the paper should be produced to guide the development of non-technical documents.

58. The delegation of Ireland supported the concept of the document and requested that heads of delegation be also given the opportunity to participate in the development process.

59. The Plenary approved the document UN/CEFACT's open development process for technical specifications (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/22), with the amendment proposed by the delegation of Ireland to the effect that heads of delegation would be involved in the development process.

60. The CSG Chairman presented the report TRADE/CEFACT/2000/21, UN/CEFACT's strategy for Electronic Business, that had been prepared upon the request of the last Plenary meeting, and noted that it reflected trends in business process and information modelling, as well as technology developments such as XML and Simple EDI.

61. The delegation of Switzerland suggested that it would be useful to have a consolidated package of documents related to the UN/CEFACT strategy. The document under discussion should be part of the package. This proposal was supported by the Chairman of UN/CEFACT and the Chair of the CSG.

62. The Plenary approved the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/21 UN/CEFACT's strategy for Electronic Business.

63. The delegate of the United Kingdom introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/24, Simple Electronic Business Standards. He noted that the approach was built on Simple EDI (The term simpl-EDI was also being replaced by Simpl-eb) and the results of previous work undertaken within UN/CEFACT. He also stressed the need for standards to cover the whole value chain, to be independent of syntax and technology and to suit all IT applications. The delegation of the United Kingdom then asked for the support of other delegations and especially of the EWG and TMWG to complete the work presented in the document as quickly as possible and offered to find joint means to actively and promptly pursue this work. The objective of the UK was to ensure that EDI work covering EDIFACT and including EANCOM, XML work (eb.XML) and IT applications share the same business meaning across all key value chains.

64. The EWG and TMWG Chairmen welcomed the document and undertook to analyze it further and to explore ways and means of incorporating the work of the United Kingdom in this area after the resources and priorities were assessed within their respective working groups. The delegation of France commended the quality of the document and noted that it would be useful to have a translation into French.

65. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/24, Simple Electronic Business Standards, congratulated the United Kingdom on the quality of the work and requested that the CSG work with the EWG and TMWG to explore the feasibility of incorporating the work initiated by the United Kingdom.

66. The CSG Chairman introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.1, Progress with the ebXML Initiative, and gave a brief overview of main developments in the initiative since its inception, as well as future plans. The launching of the initiative had been widely welcomed by industry and received considerable attention from the press. A large number of experts with a mix of expertise in EDI and XML were taking part in the work of the eight working groups established and more than 800 participants had registered with the ebXML initiative listserver.

67. Mr. Bill Smith, President of OASIS, welcomed the opportunity to attend the UN/CEFACT Plenary meeting and noted that OASIS was committed to interoperable standards. He also stressed that XML should provide a tool for SMEs that would enable them to engage in electronic business.

68. In response to the request by the delegation of France regarding the need for periodic reports on the web about the development of the Initiative, Mr. Klaus-Dieter Naujok, Chairman of the ebXML initiative, noted that all the information was available on the ebXML web site (<http://www.ebxml.org>) which was also accessible from the web page of UN/CEFACT (<http://www.uncefact.org>).

69. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.1, Progress with the ebXML Initiative, and approved the main direction of the joint project with OASIS.

70. Mr. Klaus Naujok, Chairman of the Techniques and Methodologies Working Group (TMWG), reported on the work of the Group, summarized in the

document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.5, Report of the TMWG. Since the last UN/CEFACT session, TMWG had met three times. The priority work item for TMWG was the progression of N090 - UN/CEFACT's Unified Process for Business Process Modelling. The document was intended for experts knowledgeable in UML modelling and the TMWG would draft a separate high-level document for business domain experts. In this context, the TMWG Chairman welcomed the decision of EWG to adopt the UML modelling approach for their work. The Group had also drafted a recommendation for the launching of the ebXML initiative which had been circulated to heads of delegations. In response to a CSG request, TMWG had reviewed the documents of ISO TC154/WG1, and would forward the results of the analysis undertaken to the CSG.

71. He also informed the Plenary that the current officers of the TMWG, namely Peter Wilson (Vice Chairman), Christian Huemer (Secretary) and himself (Chairman) had been re-elected for another term of office 2000-2001. He then noted that increased demand for output from the TMWG combined with limited resources available were putting at risk the timely delivery of results. He therefore urged the heads of delegation to nominate new members that would actively participate in the work of the Group.

72. The former EWG Chairman thanked the TMWG for the assistance provided to the EWG.

73. The Plenary took note of the report from the Techniques and Methodologies Working Group (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.5) and the re-election of its officers, commended the Group on the work in the area of UML modelling and invited heads of delegation to increase the resources available for the Group's work.

74. Mr. David Dobbins, Chairman of the CDWG, introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.7, Report of the CDWG, and reported on the progress of the work of the Group. Two sub-groups had been established within the CDWG, namely on the revision of Recommendation No. 20, Codes for units of measure used in international trade, and Recommendation No. 16, UN/LOCODE - Code for ports and other locations. The revised text of Recommendation No. 20 should be available at the end of 2000 or early 2001. The Group had submitted six Recommendations to the Plenary, out of which three for approval and three for information and noting. The Group had also been the first one to undergo the annual review process by the CSG. The representation of experts from the international trade and transportation field was crucial for the Group and the CDWG Chairman encouraged the delegations to nominate new members for the Group.

75. In response to a query by the delegation of the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), the secretariat informed the Plenary that the new code list for Recommendation No. 16 was available through the UN/CEFACT web site.

76. The delegation of Sweden felt that the report on Recommendation No. 30 was misleading with regard to the description of the content and that it gave the impression that there was a consensus in the Working Group to propose adoption of the recommendation, which was not the case. The delegations of Japan and Switzerland commended the productivity of the CDWG and thanked the Group and its Chairman for their work. The delegate of Switzerland suggested that the text of Recommendations be kept separate

from the voluminous and fast-changing code tables. He also requested a specification regarding the interface with the Data Maintenance Requests of UN/EDIFACT. The delegate of Belgium felt that the approval of codes by the Plenary would be an excessively heavy process.

77. The CDWG Chairman and the CSG Chairman explained the procedure adopted by the 1999 Plenary meeting to the effect that the text of Recommendations would be approved by the Plenary meeting whereas the changes in code lists were delegated to the CDWG. For this reason, since all the Recommendations submitted by the CDWG to the 2000 Plenary comprised changes in the text, or a completely new text in the case of Recommendation No. 30, the three Recommendations needed to undergo the Plenary approval process. Concerning the interface with the DMRs, the CDWG Chairman noted that these requests could be submitted to the EWG entry points, but also directly to the secretariat of the CDWG.

78. The Plenary noted the report of the Codes Working Group (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.7) and congratulated the Group on its achievements.

Agenda item 5 - Approval of Recommendations

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/10	Draft Rec. No.5 Abbreviations of INCOTERMS
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/11	Draft Rec. No. 24 Trade and Transport Status Codes
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/12	Draft Rec. No. 30 The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System for the Coding of Goods and Commodities
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/25	Draft Rec. No. 31 Electronic Commerce Agreement
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/28	Draft Rec. No. 19 Codes for Modes of Transport
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/29	Draft Rec. No. 28 Codes for Types of Means of Transport
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/30	Draft Rec. No. 21 Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.4	Comments from FIATA on Draft Rec. 30

79. The CDWG Chairman introduced the revision of Recommendation No. 5, Abbreviations of INCOTERMS, as contained in the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/10. The Recommendation had been developed in conjunction with the release of INCOTERMS 2000 by the International Chamber of Commerce. He then informed the meeting that on page 4 of the document, the words in parentheses after the name of the delivery term "Delivered ex quay" should be deleted.

80. The Plenary approved the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/10, Recommendation No. No. 5, Abbreviations of INCOTERMS, including the correction proposed by the CDWG Chairman.

81. The CDWG Chairman introduced the revised recommendation No. 24, Trade and Transport Status Codes (document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/11) and summarized the main changes that had been made as compared with the previous version. These related to additions of new codes, changes in indicators and the name of the Recommendation itself that had been made in order to better reflect the nature of the Recommendation. He also proposed a correction in the change indicator attributed to the code value name 56.

82. The Plenary approved the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/11, Recommendation No. 24, Trade and Transport Status Codes, including the correction proposed by the CDWG Chairman.

83. The CDWG Chairman introduced the proposed new Recommendation No. 30, The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System for the Coding of Goods and Commodities. The Recommendation was meant to encourage the use of the Harmonized System for more general trade and transport purposes. Consultations with heads of delegations had taken place over the last year and the CDWG had considered all the comments received. However, since a number of additional comments had been received after the initial consultation period, he felt that in-depth analysis of these comments by the Group was needed. For this reason, he did not seek approval of the current text of the Recommendation from this Plenary and invited delegations to participate in further work on the Recommendation. It was intended that the Recommendation be reviewed by the CDWG, open for another public comment period of two months and then possibly submitted for intersessional Plenary approval before the end of 2000.

84. The WCO delegate agreed that more analysis was needed on the issue. In relation to the information at the UN/CEFACT Conference about the work on a commodity code supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), he also voiced a concern about the proliferation of UN-supported commodity codes. The delegate of the Netherlands expressed appreciation for the work of the CDWG, as well as support by his delegation for the development of uniform codes. The delegate of Switzerland noted the importance of reaching a consensus before submitting a Recommendation for Plenary approval.

85. The Plenary noted the draft document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/12, Recommendation No. 30, The Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System for the Coding of Goods and Commodities. It also took note of the proposal by the Chairman of the CDWG relating to the procedure and timetable for the preparation of a final text.

86. The CDWG Chairman introduced the new draft Recommendation No. 28, Codes for Types of Means of Transport (document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/29), the revised Recommendation No. 21, Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/30) and the revised Recommendation No. 19, Codes for Modes of Transport (TRADE/CEFACT/2000/28). The two-month public comment period for all these documents had started on 21 February

and would end on 14 April 2000. Subsequently, the intention was to approve the Recommendations using the intersessional approval process.

87. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/29, Recommendation No. 28, Codes for Types of Means of Transport.

88. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/30, Recommendation No. 21, Codes for Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials.

89. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/28, Recommendation No. 19, Codes for Modes of Transport.

90. The Vice Chairman of the Legal Working Group introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/25, Recommendation No. 31, Electronic Commerce Agreement. The Recommendation, which was the first deliverable of the Legal Working Group, was built on the work previously done in relation to Recommendation No. 26, Commercial use of interchange agreements for Electronic Data Interchange, extending its scope towards other means of electronic communication and thus bridging the gap between the EDI and open e-business environments. The objective was to provide a template with a checklist of issues to be addressed so that even parties without previous relations could engage in secure electronic transactions. While the main focus of the Recommendation was on business-to-business relations, it was also applicable to business-to-consumer and business-to-administration situations.

91. The LWG Vice Chairman noted the useful feedback on the text of the Recommendation received from LWG subgroups, UNCTAD, UNCITRAL, the International Chamber of Commerce, and JASTPRO. Following a question of the delegation of France, he also reported that valuable support had been received from the European Commission. The Recommendation was formally supported by delegations of Japan and Poland, which commended the work of the LWG.

92. The Plenary approved the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/25, Recommendation No. 31, Electronic Commerce Agreement.

Agenda item 6 - Strategy for the promotion of UN/CEFACT objectives

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/13 A strategy for the promotion of UN/CEFACT's objectives

93. The Chairman of the CSG explained that the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/13, A strategy for the promotion of UN/CEFACT objectives, was meant to trigger discussions on the issue and that it needed further elaboration. He noted the importance of a clear identity for UN/CEFACT, a part of which was also related to its name. In this context, he introduced the proposal to change the name of UN/CEFACT into the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business in order to better reflect the scope of the Centre's work. The acronym UN/CEFACT would remain unchanged. With a view to strengthening the links with industry, the CSG Chairman also introduced the concept for further development of a Business Advisory

Council for UN/CEFACT. Finally, he noted with appreciation the work done by the secretariat on the enhancement of the UN/CEFACT web site.

94. The Chairman of the Promotion Group presented the new identity manual for a consistent use of the UN logo, developed with a contribution in kind from the Port of Barcelona. He then thanked the UN/ECE secretariat for their support. Finally, he suggested that upon the completion of the identity manual the PROMO Group be integrated as a sub-group into the CSG. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT felt that this might not be feasible and suggested that the CSG further look into the matter.

95. The delegate of Switzerland noted that some of the proposals put forward in the report went beyond promotion and touched upon the strategy of UN/CEFACT as such. He suggested that the strategic issues contained in the report be put before the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (CTIED). The UN/CEFACT Chairman stressed that the Centre worked as a part of the United Nations and within its established practices.

96. The delegation of France emphasized the need to respect United Nations rules with regard to the use of the United Nations logo. The secretariat undertook to ensure full conformity with United Nations rules.

97. The delegations of Ireland and Japan supported the concept of the change of the logo and name of UN/CEFACT.

98. The Webforce International offered their support in promoting UN/CEFACT on their Internet TV channel. The UN/CEFACT Chairman thanked for the proposal and noted that modalities needed to be further discussed.

99. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT and the delegation of Japan expressed their thanks to the Chairman of the PROMO Group for his work.

100. The Plenary approved the change in the name of UN/CEFACT into the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business.

101. The Plenary approved the identity manual and the logo of UN/CEFACT, as contained in the annex to the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/13.

102. The above decisions will be submitted to the Committee for endorsement.

103. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT felt that a very detailed proposal for the creation of the Business Advisory Council would need to be developed for consideration by the next Plenary.

104. The Plenary mandated the CSG and the PROMO Group to develop the ideas outlined in the report further. In particular, a proposal should be prepared for the discussion at the next Plenary regarding the creation of the Business Advisory Council for UN/CEFACT.

Agenda item 7 - Proposal for the revision of R.650

Documents:

TRADE/R.650/Rev.1 The mandate, terms of reference and procedures
for UN/CEFACT

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/27 Proposed changes to TRADE/R.650

105. The CSG Chairman introduced the documents TRADE/R.650/Rev. 1, The mandate, terms of reference and procedures for UN/CEFACT, and TRADE/CEFACT/2000/27, Proposed changes to TRADE/R.650. He explained the rationale for amending TRADE/R.650, described the types of changes proposed, and provided details of individual changes contained in the document. He also noted that the revised document would be submitted for approval to the parent body of UN/CEFACT, the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. The delegate of Switzerland suggested that the document submitted to the Committee should also comprise relevant elements from documents TRADE/CEFACT/2000/13 "Promotion of UN/CEFACT objectives" and TRADE/CEFACT/2000/23 "Intersessional approval of documents". Therefore, an option would be for the CSG to prepare a consolidated document for the UN/CEFACT 2001 Plenary.

106. The delegation of France shared the view that the intersessional approval should become part of the revised TRADE/R.650, and proposed also an amendment to the text of section 1.5 of UN/CEFACT's mission statement concerning interoperability. A point was also made regarding the definition of consensus in the proposed paragraph 36 where it was felt that the two-third majority should rather be classified as qualified majority than a consensus.

107. Discussion also took place about the proposed paragraph 29, namely the possibility of reflecting in the reports of the CSG Chair the views of CSG members that might diverge from those of the CSG Chair. It was felt that such a possibility should be embodied in the text of the paragraph.

108. The proposal to lift the restriction on the number of terms of office for Plenary officers, as contained in the revised paragraph 21, was supported by the delegations of the United States of America, Sweden, Australia and Canada. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT proposed an addition to paragraph 21 to the effect that in the election or re-election process, due consideration would be given to consistency, continuity and clarity in the work of UN/CEFACT.

109. With regard to the role of the Committee in respect of amendments to R.650, it was proposed that such amendments be submitted for endorsement. This proposal would be reflected in the text of the proposed paragraph 86.

110. The Plenary approved the documents TRADE/R.650/Rev.1, The mandate, terms of reference and procedures for UN/CEFACT, and TRADE/CEFACT/2000/27, Proposed changes to TRADE/R.650, with amendments and additions proposed by the various delegations, namely an amendment to section 1.5, an addition to paragraph 21, amendments to the proposed paragraphs 29 and 36, and a modification in the wording of paragraph 86, as detailed above.

Agenda item 8 - Reports from UN/CEFACT Rapporteurs, and related matters

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/16 Report from the UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Asia

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.2 Report from the UN/CEFACT Joint Legal Rapporteur

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.6 Report of the UN/CEFACT Standards Liaison Rapporteur

111. Mr. Kenji Itoh, the UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Asia, presented the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/16, Report from the UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Asia, and briefed the Plenary about meetings that had taken place in the course of the last year, as well as about the by-laws adopted by AFACT, the change of its acronym into Asia-Pacific Council for the Facilitation of Practices and Procedures for Administration, Commerce and Transport and the fact that Australia had joined AFACT as its thirteenth member.

112. The Plenary noted the report by the UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Asia, TRADE/CEFACT/2000/16, and congratulated AFACT on their activities.

113. The UN/CEFACT Legal Liaison Rapporteur, in presenting the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.2, Report from the UN/CEFACT Joint Legal Rapporteur, reported on activities conducted in relation to individual countries, such as Sri Lanka, India, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom. He also provided details about cooperation with international organizations, in particular UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, and the ICC. In addition, he particularly noted the good collaboration with the AFACT Legal Working Group. In order to reinforce the legal work within UN/CEFACT, he invited delegations to appoint new members to the Legal Working Group. Finally, he paid tribute to the support provided by the secretariat.

114. The Plenary noted the report by the UN/CEFACT Joint Legal Rapporteur, TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.2, and encouraged delegations to appoint members to the LWG.

115. The UN/CEFACT Standards Liaison Rapporteur introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.6, Report of the Standards Liaison Rapporteur. He specifically mentioned the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding IEC-ISO-ITU-UN/ECE by the four international standardization organizations and two user groups. Further he informed the Plenary that the Business Object Summit that should have taken place in Geneva on 16 and 17 May, would be postponed and possibly attached to a related meeting of JTC1. He also reported on the activities related to the ebXML initiative and touched upon the work proposed by the ISO TC154 in this area.

116. He then informed the Plenary that due to his other professional obligations he would have to resign from the post of the Standards Liaison Rapporteur, and made a proposal as regards his successor, Mr. Claude Hamon. Mr. Hamon was the head of the delegation of France, active within the JTC1 environment, member of the CEN/ISSS Board and member of the Board of EDIFRANCE.

117. The delegation of ISO congratulated the Standards Liaison Rapporteur on his work.

118. The representative of the Basic Semantics Register (BSR) reported on the status of the project. The BSR addressed the business need for a common semantics for electronic commerce. The work was based on a multilingual approach. The BSR was started in three languages (English, German and French) and additional languages would be welcome. The objective was to assist countries in participating on an equal footing in international electronic interchanges. The BSR was currently being developed by ISO TC 154 with open access for other groups and communities working on semantics. For example, BSR experts participated actively in the ebXML project. The next step would be the launching of a web site with the prototype tool for the management and the dissemination of the BSR. Further information could be obtained by contacting Mr. A. Chapdaniel (alain.chapdaniel@actimum.com).

119. The TC154 Chairman confirmed the commitment of ISO to cooperation with UN/CEFACT and informed the Plenary that the next meeting of TC154 would be hosted by the Czech Republic.

120. The Chairman of the CSG agreed that multilingualism was very important. A report by TMWG on this issue would be discussed at the next CSG meeting in May 2000. The CSG Chairman was in favour of close and effective cooperation with TC154.

121. The UN/CEFACT Chairman congratulated Mr. Klaus-Dieter Naujok on his work as a Standards Liaison Rapporteur and opened the nomination process for his successor. The delegation of Canada nominated Mr. Claude Hamon of France and the nomination was supported by the delegation of Brazil. There were no other candidates and Mr. Hamon was appointed as a Standards Liaison Rapporteur. He subsequently thanked the Plenary for their confidence, as well as the assistance offered by the former Rapporteur for early stages of his work.

122. The Plenary noted the report by the UN/CEFACT Standards Liaison Rapporteur, TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.6, as well as the fact that the Rapporteur had fulfilled the mission he had been entrusted with at the last Plenary with regard to W3C. This had led to the ebXML initiative. The meeting then expressed its gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Klaus-Dieter Naujok, who was stepping down as a Rapporteur, for his valuable contribution to the work of UN/CEFACT.

123. The Plenary appointed Mr. Claude Hamon of France as a Standards Liaison Rapporteur.

Agenda item 9 - Reports from regional bodies and initiatives, as well as regional advisors

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/17	Technical assistance provided by the Czech Republic in the area of trade facilitation
TRADE/CEFACT/2000/18	Report of the 5th Meeting of SECI

124. The delegation of the Czech Republic reported on technical assistance provided to selected eastern European countries, in particular to Ukraine

and Belarus, in the area of trade facilitation (document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/17). The objective of the project, started in 1997, was to increase the number of countries with an effective trade facilitation structure. Following an evaluation of the project's achievements, the Government of the Czech Republic decided to extend it for another two years and to involve additional interested countries from southeast Europe. The delegate of the Czech Republic then thanked the UN/ECE secretariat for its support in the implementation of the project.

125. The delegate of Ukraine expressed her appreciation to the Czech trade facilitation body, FITPRO, for the effective assistance in furthering trade facilitation in Ukraine. In the framework of the above project, a working group on trade facilitation had been established in Ukraine that promoted the use of international standards and best practices for trade facilitation as contained in UN/CEFACT's Recommendations. A number of laws had been passed or were under preparation, with a view to facilitating transit of goods and the use of electronic documents in transport and trade. The country would also adhere to the Kyoto Convention.

126. The delegate of Belarus associated herself with thanks to FITPRO and UN/CEFACT and reported on the signature of a formal agreement on cooperation in trade facilitation in the framework of the project, and the adoption by the Government of Belarus of an export promotion programme where trade facilitation and electronic business were also included.

127. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/17, as well as oral reports from the delegations of Ukraine and Belarus, and congratulated them on their achievements.

128. The Deputy Director of the Trade Division, on behalf of the UN/ECE regional advisor for trade facilitation, introduced the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/18, Report of the 5th meeting of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI). He pointed out that SECI continued to be a strong advocate and agent for trade facilitation in southeast Europe, in conjunction with the Stability Pact, and that the UN/ECE was involved in both. He then described the main achievements of the initiative in the area of border crossing facilitation, briefed the meeting on the setting up of trade facilitation committees (PRO-committees) in SECI member countries, as well as their association into SECIPRO, gave details of the World Bank project Trade and Transport Facilitation in Southeast Europe and the creation of the SECI Crime Centre in Bucharest. Finally, he invited the interested delegations to consult the web site of SECIPRO <http://www.unece.org/secipro>.

129. The Plenary noted the report TRADE/CEFACT/2000/18, Report of the 5th Meeting of SECI.

Agenda item 10 - Cooperation with other international organizations

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/31

Memorandum of understanding IEC-ISO-ITU-UN/ECE

130. When introducing the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/31, Memorandum of Understanding IEC-ISO-ITU-UN/ECE, the CSG Chairman noted the signature of the MoU on the 24 March 2000 as an important milestone bringing together all four international standard-setting organizations in the area of electronic business.

131. The Chairman of UN/CEFACT stressed that the MoU also provided a mechanism for international user groups to join the MoU, and invited delegations to identify additional users groups to be included in the MoU.

132. The Plenary noted the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/31, welcomed the decision of the ITU to sign the Memorandum of Understanding IEC-ISO-UN/ECE and invited international user groups to join the MoU.

133. The Deputy Director of the Trade Division gave an oral report on the secretariat's cooperation with other international bodies. He particularly mentioned the fruitful cooperation with UNCTAD in the framework of the International Trade Procedures Working Group and in the organization of workshops in the Middle East and potentially also in Africa, in cooperation with the respective regional commissions of the United Nations. Further he gave details of cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Customs Organization (WCO).

134. The Plenary noted the oral report from the secretariat about the cooperation of UN/CEFACT with other international organizations.

135. The CSG Chairman suggested that the most appropriate means to enhance cooperation with the WCO and the WTO would be a Memorandum of Understanding that would help consolidate the working relationships with those two partner organizations. This view was supported by the delegate of the WCO, who informed the Plenary that the issue would also be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Permanent Technical Committee of the WCO. He further reported on the revision of the Kyoto Convention as an important step forward in trade facilitation efforts worldwide and invited the Plenary to support an early ratification of the Convention by member countries.

136. The Plenary noted the proposal by the CSG to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Customs Organization and mandated the CSG to enter into discussions with that organization and to develop a draft MoU for consideration by the Plenary.

137. The Plenary took note of the information about the revision of the Kyoto Convention and adopted the following resolution to support its early implementation: "The UN/CEFACT Plenary resolves that the revised Convention of the World Customs Organization on simplification and harmonization of customs procedures (Kyoto Convention) is an important contribution to the achievement of UN/CEFACT's trade facilitation objectives. Consequently, the UN/CEFACT Plenary encourages the widest possible acceptance and the earliest possible implementation of the revised Kyoto Convention."

138. The Plenary requested that the possibility of a Memorandum of Understanding with the WTO be explored.

Agenda item 11 - Other business

Documents:

TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.3 EFTA Trader's ABC CD-ROM, A Trade
Facilitation Manual

139. The delegate of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) reported on the work of the EFTA Group of Experts on Efficient Trade Procedures that had developed a manual on trade facilitation. The description of the content of the manual was contained in the document TRADE/CEFACT/2000/CRP.3 and the CD-ROM with the manual was available from UN/CEFACT and EFTA secretariats.

140. The Plenary noted with appreciation the work done by the EFTA countries on the preparation of the CD-ROM on trade facilitation.

141. The Plenary took note of the fact that the mandates of Plenary officers and CSG members would expire in March 2001 and requested that delegations propose candidates for these posts.

142. The Plenary agreed that a press release about the UN/CEFACT Plenary would be issued.

Agenda item 12 - Adoption of the report

Action:

143. The Plenary approved the list of decisions taken during the meeting.

144. The Chairman thanked the translators, the secretariat, the working groups and, in particular, the delegates.

145. The secretariat then informed the delegates about the following deadlines for the submission of documents for the next Plenary:

Deadlines

<u>Translation</u>	<u>Issuance as an official paper</u>	<u>Issuance as an informal paper</u>	<u>UN/CEFACT 2001 Plenary beginning</u>
8 January 2001	5 February 2001	26 February 2001	26 March 2001

146. UN/CEFACT noted the following meeting dates:

UN/CEFACT Plenary session 26-29 March 2001, Geneva

UN/CEFACT Steering Group	31 March 2000, Geneva 22-25 May 2000, Geneva 28-31 August 2000, Geneva 20-23 November 2000, location to be confirmed 30 March 2001, Geneva 21-24 May 2001, location to be confirmed
AFACT/EDIFACT meeting UN/EDIFACT Working Group (EWG)	4-8 September 2000, Taipei 19-23 March 2001, New Orleans, the United States of America
Business Process Analysis Working Group (BPAWG) AFACT/Business Process Analysis Meeting	26 May 2000, Geneva 4-8 September 2000, Taipei
Codes Working Group (CDWG)	15 May 2000 (UN/LOCODE), Geneva 16-18 May 2000, Geneva 27 November 2000 (UN/LOCODE), Geneva 28-29 November 2000, Geneva
International Trade Procedures Working Group (ITPWG)	3-5 April 2000, Geneva 4-6 September 2000, Geneva 6-8 December 2000, Geneva
Legal Working Group (LWG)	26-28 June 2000, Geneva 25-27 September 2000, location to be confirmed 11-13 December 2000, location to be confirmed 5-7 March 2001, location to be confirmed
Techniques and Methodologies Working Group (TMWG)	17-21 July 2000, Minneapolis, the United States of America 30 October-3 November 2000, Tokyo

147. Contact information for the working groups can be found below.

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