ANNEX 2

Terms of reference

Ad Hoc TEAM of SPECIALISTS on STANDARDIZATION and REGULATORY TECHNIQUES ("START" Team)

Adopted 1 December 1999
Revised 28 March 2001

Establishment of the "START" Team

The establishment of the START Team was suggested at the UNECE International workshop on implementation and use of international standards (18 May 1999, Geneva) which was organized in conjunction with the ninth session of the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (17-19 May 1999, Geneva). The Working Party supported and approved this proposal. The establishment of the Team was endorsed by the third session of the UNECE Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (6-10 June 1999) to which the Working Party is reporting.

Objectives

The general task of the Team is to contribute to the activities of the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (WP.6) aimed at creating conditions conducive to the development and promotion of global trade and economic cooperation.

The specific task of the Team is to examine the possibilities for reducing non-tariff barriers to trade by limiting the content of related regulations to the essential requirements for meeting regulatory objectives and using reference to international standards as the preferred means for setting out detailed requirements, including conformity assessment requirements.

The Team works under the guidance of the UNECE Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies (WP.6), in accordance with terms of reference adopted by WP.6 and reports to it. Any reports and recommendations of the Team have preliminary and unofficial character and are subject to endorsement by WP.6.

Composition of the Team, its membership and participation in its meetings

The Team is composed of experts with the collective expertise to address the specific task defined for it.

The Team is composed of the members of the enlarged Bureau of the WP.6 (including coordinators and rapporteurs) and of specialists appointed by UNECE member-states and invited by the Team.

The Team is open to participation by experts from interested UN member states and international organizations as well as to representatives of the private sector as observers in their personal capacity. The Team works on the understanding that final recommendations and proposals of the Team will be endorsed by the Working Party 6 as an inter-governmental body.
The Team can establish sub-groups of specialists to prepare projects requiring specific expertise, which are expected to become a part of general activities of the Team.

The UNECE secretariat provides necessary support to the Team and its sub-groups within available resources.

**Reporting**

The Team reports to the Working Party on Technical Harmonization and Standardization Policies.

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ANNEX 3

“START” Team contacts for possible cross-sectoral initiatives

At its seventh meeting in March 2001 the Team decided to explore the possibilities for sectoral applications of the principles and mechanisms proposed in the “International Model”.

The purpose of process initiated by the Team is to identify potential sectors where lack of regulatory harmonization creates obstacles to trade and where governments and companies recognize that there is a need for regulatory convergence.

The Team believes that in such identified sectors the Working Party might wish to propose to interested governments that they could explore the feasibility of initiating a dialogue on regulatory convergence either by using mechanisms as suggested in the “Model” or by other tools. In any case, the Team is confident that, should governments agree to it, such an initiative will help facilitate international trade in the particular sector under discussion.

Here is a summary of main actions taken in this respect.

Cross sectoral initiatives at the UNECE secretariat

In June 2001, the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (CTIED) considered WP.6’s work on the “International Model”, found it useful, and endorsed the proposal from the Working Party’s Bureau concerning future work on this project.

This proposal was addressed to UNECE subsidiary bodies and asked them to explore the possibility of using the principles suggested in the “International Model” in their area of competence.

In view of the positive reaction from the CTIED to the project of the “International Model”, the START Team decided to study the experience of UNECE subsidiary bodies engaged in the elaboration of standards, recommendations and technical regulations. With this in mind, the START Team had meetings and discussions with secretaries of three UN bodies, namely UN/CEFACT (Center for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business), the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (Working Party 29) and the Working Party on Transport of Dangerous Goods (Working Party 15).

CEFACT

In the area of electronic business, UNECE (UN/CEFACT) is preparing voluntary standards and recommendations. According to secretariat, there are no problems in this area which are due to mandatory technical regulations applied by governments. It was decided that a presentation of UN/CEFACT activities and of possible areas of cooperation with Working Party 6 would be made during the Working Party 6 session in October 2001.

Vehicle regulations

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) constitutes a unique world forum for the preparation and implementation of technical regulations through an international agreement. The technical regulations, including safety and environmental requirements, are elaborated primarily at WP.29 as governments are reluctant to allow standardizers to establish safety and environmental requirements and set their limits.
In the opinion of the members of the Team, the example of the motor vehicle parts sector handled by WP.29 showed that, in theory, such regulations could have been facilitated through a wider use of international standards in technical regulations elaborated by WP.29 (114 regulations at present). Some of the principles as proposed in the “International Model”, in the opinion of the START Team, could have been used (subject to interest of governments) in WP.29; thus it might become one of the potential pilot projects for the “International Model”.

Transport of dangerous goods

The experience of Working Party 15 provides an example of a body with a dual function, namely responsible for preparation of international technical regulations under the UN and control over their implementation in UNECE member countries. It also provides good examples of how standards are referenced in technical regulations elaborated by this Working Party. In the opinion of experts of the Team some of the mechanisms proposed in the “Model” have been already used in the activities of Working Party 15 which should prove that they could be used in other sectors as well.

The Team decided to continue its contacts with UNECE secretariat and its subsidiary bodies with the view to explore the possibility and an interest from them in initiating a pilot project based on mechanisms and principles of the “International Model”.

Other sectoral activities.

It is recalled that in June 2000 an expert meeting was organized by Working Party 6, in Geneva to which a number of international organizations and representatives of the business sector were invited. During discussions at that meeting three potential sectors in which according to companies, there was a need for regulatory convergence were identified namely: earth moving machinery, lifts and electrotechnical goods.

During 2001, the START team continued consultations with representatives of these three sectors with a view to identifying companies and governments which would be interested in regulatory convergence and the use of international standards with a view to facilitating international trade.

Telecom sector.

In 2001, the OECD prepared an interim report on telecommunications terminal equipment. This report mentioned three sub sectors where international harmonization was feasible (electrical safety, EMC and radio interference).

As a result of discussions at the START Team with representatives of ITU (International Telecommunication Union) secretariat, a letter from the UNECE Executive Secretary was prepared and sent to the ITU Secretary General informing ITU about the “International Model” project and suggesting that ITU should consider the possibility of using the principles of the “International Model” in relevant areas of ITU’s activities. A letter was also sent to the OECD informing it about the UNECE’s contacts with ITU.

The response from ITU mentioned two areas of ITU activities which are relevant to the “International Model” project namely ITU-T (Standarization) and ITU-R (Radiocommunications). In the area of standardization, contacts with ITU-Study Group 5 which deals with protection against electromagnetic environment effects were proposed. And in the radiocommunications sector, contacts with ITU-R Study Groups were proposed.

In September 2001, the WP.6 secretary made a presentation on the “International Model” project to the ITU-R Study Group 6 which decided to send information on the “Model” to its delegates for information and with the view to explore potential interest in collaboration with the UNECE on this matter.

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