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COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and
Standardization Policies

Fifteenth session, 24 to 26 October 2005

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the fifteenth session of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation
and Standardization Policies**

**(including information on the Second International Forum on Market Surveillance
and Consumer Protection)**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting on Monday 24 October 2005, at 10 a.m.**

In conjunction with the fifteenth session, a Second International Forum on Market Surveillance and Consumer Protection will be organized during the afternoon of 24 October 2005 and the morning of 25 October 2005.

Documents and registration forms for the session and Forum can be found at:
<http://www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/documents/wp6-05-list.htm>.

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| 1. | Adoption of the agenda | TRADE/WP.6/2005/1 |
| 2. | Election of officers | |
| 3. | Matters arising from the sixtieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe, the ninth session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development, and the external evaluation of the UNECE | ECE/TRADE/360 |

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| 4. | Second UNECE International Forum on Market Surveillance and Consumer Protection | TRADE/WP.6/2005/2
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| 5. | Review of developments in standardization activities and in the field of regulatory cooperation at the international, regional and national levels | TRADE/WP.6/2005/3
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| 6. | Coordination

ECE Standardization List |

ECE/STAND/20/Rev.5
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| 7. | Harmonization/Regulatory Cooperation | |
| | (a) UNECE Recommendation "L"- "International Model for technical harmonization based on good regulatory practice for the preparation, adoption and application of technical regulations via the use of international standards" – regional and sectoral projects | TRADE/WP.6/2005/5 |
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| 8 | Conformity assessment | |
| | (a) Review of developments in conformity assessment at the international, regional and national levels | TRADE/WP.6/2005/6 |
| | (b) Mutual Recognition Agreements | TRADE/WP.6/2005/7 |
| | (c) Accreditation | |
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| | (e) Policy issues related to quality assurance | TRADE/WP.6/2005/9
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| 9. | Market surveillance | TRADE/WP.6/2005/10
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| 11. | Programme of work | TRADE/WP.6/2005/13 |
| 12. | Other business | TRADE/WP.6/2005/14 |
| 13. | Adoption of the report | TRADE/WP.6/2005/15 |

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Provisional timetable for discussion of agenda items	
Day One	Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 4 (Forum)
Day Two	Items 4 (Forum) and 9, 6, 7
Day Three	Items 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13

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ANNOTATIONS

Introduction

1. The provisional agenda has been drawn up by the secretariat on the basis of: (a) the programme of work of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies; (b) relevant discussions or decisions adopted by the Working Party at its fourteenth session (November 2004), the Economic Commission for Europe at its sixtieth session (February 2005) and the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development at its ninth session (May 2005); and (c) the agreements reached by the office bearers of the Working Party at their meeting in April 2005 and by the Bureau of the Working Party (office bearers, coordinators and rapporteurs) at its meeting in June 2005.

Item 1 Adoption of the agenda

2. In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item on the provisional agenda is the adoption of the agenda (TRADE/WP.6/2005/1).

Item 2 Election of officers

3. In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure and established practice, the Working Party is expected to elect a Chair and two vice-chairs. It is recalled that Mr. C. ARVIUS (Sweden), Mr. V. KORESHKOV (Belarus) and Mr. M. PODHORSKY (Slovakia) were elected as Chair and vice-chairs, respectively, at the fourteenth session.

Item 3 Matters arising from the sixtieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe, the ninth session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development, and the external evaluation of the UNECE

4. The secretariat will report orally on the discussions held and decisions adopted by the Commission at its sixtieth session and on the discussions during the ninth session of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (CTIED; May 2005), including on the decision to hold parallel Working Party and CTIED sessions in June 2006. A short report will also be made on the results of the external evaluation of the UNECE. The report of the Committee session will be made available to delegations (ECE/TRADE/360).

Item 4 Second UNECE International Forum on Market Surveillance and Consumer Protection

5. It is recalled that the Working Party has been promoting for many years a regulatory environment which moves the mandatory controls of governments from the pre-market stage to market surveillance. With this in mind, in conjunction with its thirteenth session, the Working Party held a Forum on Market Surveillance on 29 October 2002 (The report of the Forum is contained in document TRADE/WP.6/2002/17), which identified a number of issues of concern to Governments regarding market surveillance, and called for continuing to work on these matters.

6. One of the follow-up recommendations to the 2002 Forum was to establish a new ad hoc group of experts to increase transparency and promote good practices for market surveillance systems. Such a new group was established in September 2003 and it was given the title "Advisory Group on Market Surveillance" (the "MARS" Group).

7. From 2003 to 2005, the "MARS" Group organized three workshops which showed that market surveillance agencies, in particular in transition economies, are facing numerous difficulties in ensuring the protection of consumers/users against dangerous and substandard goods or equipment.

8. At its fourteenth session, the Working Party decided to organize an international forum in 2005 to bring further the attention of Governments in the UNECE region and to initiate wider discussions on good practices and experience in the market surveillance area.

9. The purpose of the 2005 Forum is to present national approaches to and experiences with market surveillance systems and practices, in general, and also to share practical means of addressing some common horizontal problems in the area of market controls. Such an exchange of views will help, first of all, public authorities from countries in transition and interested developing countries to obtain first hand information on how to ensure, on an appropriate basis, the fulfilment of legitimate objectives (such as the protection of human health or safety, animal or plant life or health, or the environment) without implementing trade restrictive practices.

10. The Forum will provide an opportunity to:

- Receive information on the UNECE's work on market surveillance issues (in the framework of the "MARS" Group)
- Continue an exchange views on market surveillance objectives and on national experiences (including on the scope of market surveillance);
- Present the respective roles of all major players (market surveillance authorities, conformity assessment bodies, industry and consumer organizations) and frameworks for the cooperation/coordination of their activities at national or regional levels;
- Address some typical generic concerns (goods placed on the market without proper documentation, misleading labelling, marking issues, etc.);
- Look into the issue of if and how market controls could contribute to the protection of consumers against counterfeit goods;
- Discuss the role and future of regional information schemes on unsafe goods;
- Exchange views on good practices to be followed in market surveillance activities.

11. Representatives of national regulatory and market surveillance authorities, as well as representatives from international, regional and national bodies involved in conformity assessment activities, consumers/users and business associations from UNECE and other regions will be invited to take part in the discussions.

12. As background documents for this agenda item, the Working Party will have the provisional agenda of the Forum (TRADE/WP.6/2005/2), a paper on consumer policy in some EU member States (TRADE/WP.6/2005/2/Add.1), a paper on misleading marks and claims from CODEX Alimentarius (TRADE/WP.6/2005/2/Add.2), as well as submissions and presentations on national/regional experiences.

13. The Forum will be open to the public. During this time, the Working Party will be in an informal session.

Item 5 Review of developments in standardization activities and in the field of regulatory cooperation at the international, regional and national levels

14. National delegations, international and regional organizations, the European Commission and the Commonwealth of Independent States are invited to report on their standardization and regulatory activities, as well as technical cooperation programmes with other countries or regions.

15. If such information is available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, it will be issued as documents TRADE/WP.6/2005/3 and TRADE/WP.6/2005/3/Add.1.

Item 6 Coordination

UNECE Standardization and Regulatory List

16. It is recalled that after discussions at its eleventh session in 2001, the Working Party adopted the fifth revised version of the ECE Standardization List, which was published in 2002 as ECE/STAND/20/Rev.5.

17. At its thirteenth and fourteenth sessions, the Working Party started discussions on the next revision of the List. The Working Party agreed that there was a logical link between standards and technical regulations in the further development of national and regional work. As a result, the Working Party supported the idea of changing the scope and format of the next (6th) revision of the UNECE List to also include regulatory areas and product sectors where member countries see the need for a trans-national dialogue on regulatory convergence matters. It was hoped that such information might stimulate further regulatory cooperation, thus contributing to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and facilitating market access. The Working Party also invited UNECE member State delegations and the WP.6 network of standards-developing organizations to forward their contributions to the 6th revision of the UNECE Regulatory/Standardization List.

18. National delegations, international and regional standardizing organizations included in the List are invited to provide updated information on their activities in the sectors mentioned in the List and on regulatory priorities where they see a possibility of a regulatory dialogue with representatives from other countries.

19. The Working Party will have before it proposals from delegations and relevant organizations regarding the substance and format of the new List (document TRADE/WP.6/2005/4).

Involving developing countries and countries in transition in the international standardization

20. The Working Party will be informed about a proposal from the WP.6 Bureau on the possible use of the UNECE List as a priority setting instrument (on a regional level) among countries in transition and developing countries and thus providing a practical step toward achieving the wider involvement of developing countries in the work of international standards-setting.

Item 7 Regulatory Cooperation/Harmonization

(a) UNECE Recommendation “L” - “International Model for technical harmonization based on good regulatory practice for the preparation, adoption and application of technical regulations via the use of international standards” and promotion of regulatory cooperation promotion regional and sectoral projects

21. It is recalled that the “International Model” was included as a new UNECE Recommendation (“L”) in the publication of UNECE Recommendations on Standardization Policies (ECE/STAND/17/REV.4); and has also been made available to delegations as a separate document (TRADE/WP.6/2002/7).

22. The Working Party will be informed about the promotion of its regulatory projects and relevant presentations made at the ASEM (Asia-Europe) dialogue on standardization and conformity assessment (Tokyo, Japan, February 2005) and at the ARSO General Assembly (African Regional Organization for Standardization; Accra, Ghana, February 2005).

23. As a result of discussions at ARSO, it was recommended to work toward the establishment of a standards-receptive environment (for example, through the use of the “International Model”) in the African region.

24. The Working Party will be updated on the activities of the Team of Specialists on STandardization And Regulatory Techniques (“START” Team) to assist with initiatives based on the “International Model” that come from interested parties (e.g. regulatory authorities, industry, standardizers) and regions.

25. The Working Party will be updated on relevant developments with regard to its request to the secretariat to investigate the possibility of working together with other United Nations regional commissions, and other organizations, to promote the “International Model” on a more global basis.

(b) Regional projects

26. The Working Party will be informed about the status of regional projects in the CIS (namely on the status of a CIS agreement on harmonization of technical regulations) and in the Balkans (UNECE/SIDA “South-East Europe Regulatory Project”).

(c) Sectoral projects

27. The Working Party will be informed about the current status of its “sectoral initiatives” in the areas of telecommunications and earth-moving machinery.

28. Regarding the “UNECE Telecom Initiative” project, it is recalled that at its thirteenth session the Working Party endorsed the establishment of a Telecom Task Force. The Working Party will be informed about the current status of the project. (for more information on the project please visit the WP.6 webpage at: http://www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/sectoral/telecom/tele_cros.htm)

29. Regarding the “UNECE Earth-Moving Machinery Initiative”, it is recalled that at its fourteenth session, the Working Party considered and endorsed a proposal from industry representatives for draft Common Regulatory Objectives (CROs) that they had prepared following the principles of the “International Model”. The Working Party also invited responsible national authorities in UNECE member States to inform the secretariat of their interest in participating in a regulatory convergence dialogue on the basis of the proposals prepared by the industry.

30. The Working Party will be informed about the current status of the project, including a presentation on regulatory cooperation made at the ISO TC 127 meeting in Beijing in May 2005 and the Working Party’s contacts with regulators in the Russian Federation and other CIS countries (for more information on the project please visit the WP.6 webpage at: http://www.unece.org/trade/ctied/wp6/sectoral/earth-moving/earth_bkgrd.htm)

31. The status of the Working Party regulatory convergence regional and sectoral projects will be highlighted in document TRADE/WP.6/2005/5.

32. The Working Party will be informed about a new proposal from the Russian union of oil and gas pipeline constructors related to the development of a new Russian technical regulation for safety requirements to be applied to pipelines. It was suggested that this might be a new project with an invitation to interested UNECE member countries to cooperate in developing common requirements according to the “International Model”. A preliminary presentation was made at the “START “ Team meeting on 15 June 2005 in Geneva where it was suggested to submit it for further consideration to the Working Party session in October 2005. Such a proposal will be available as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/5/Add.1.

Item 8 Conformity assessment

(a) Review of developments in conformity assessment at the international, regional and national levels

33. National delegations, international and regional organizations are invited to report on trade-related aspects of developments in conformity assessment at the international, regional and national levels. International organizations are also invited to provide an update on the current situation with regard to international guides, standards, etc. If such information is available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, it will be issued as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/6.

(b) Mutual recognition agreements

34. It is recalled that the Working Party at its fourteenth session decided to initiate an information exchange on the state of play regarding government mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) where UNECE member countries are parties.

35. Delegations were invited to provide the secretariat with information on government MRAs where their countries were engaged - according to the template agreed at the session (document TRADE/WP.6/2004/8) and the Rapporteur on MRAs was asked to collect and analyse this information in order to present the outcome, which will be available as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/7, if the information is received sufficiently in advance of the meeting.

(c) Accreditation

36. National delegations, international and regional organizations are invited to report on developments in accreditation area at the international, regional and national levels. International organizations are also invited to provide an update on current developments.

(d) Other issues

Environmental management systems

37. It is recalled that at its previous sessions the Working Party discussed issues related to the emergence of new environment-related technical barriers to trade and invited delegations to submit relevant information for further discussion.

38. If such information is available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, it will be included in document TRADE/WP.6/2005/8.

Forestry

39. At its thirteenth session, the Working Party agreed on a proposal to organize a joint workshop on forest certification in cooperation with the UNECE Timber Committee.

40. Interested delegates are informed that the policy forum "Forest Certification – Do governments have a role?" will take place on 29 September 2005 in conjunction with the annual UNECE Timber Committee session (Geneva, 27-30 September 2005). (for more information visit website (<http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/Welcome.html>)). The Working Party will be informed about the discussions and the results of this event.

Organic agriculture

41. The latest developments with regard to the activities of the UNCTAD/FAO/IFOAM International Task Force on Harmonization in organic agriculture will be presented for consideration by the Working Party. It is recalled that according to information presented at the fourteenth session, the UNECE "International Model" was considered by the Task Force as a possible instrument in the efforts to find long-term international arrangements in this sector.

42. If information on the Working Party joint activities in forestry and organic agriculture are available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, it will be issued as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/8.

(e) Policy issues related to quality assurance

43. It is recalled that in conjunction with its fourteenth session an International Workshop on "Best Practices for National Quality Award Schemes" was organized in cooperation with the Team of Specialists on Quality Management Systems (the "QMS" Team).

44. The Working Party will consider national experiences in areas of quality and environmental management systems and possibilities of the Working Party further working with networks that were formed under the Team of Specialists on Quality Management Systems (the "QMS" Team) taking into consideration available resources.

45. National delegations and international and regional organizations are invited to report on their experience in introducing and implementing quality policy and environmental management schemes and programmes.

46. The Rapporteurs on Quality will analyse the information provided and prepare proposals, as appropriate.

47. Following discussions by the Working Party on a possible use of quality assurance systems in public administration the Working Party will have before it a document from UNIDO suggesting approaches on the use of ISO 9001-2000 in public companies. (TRADE/WP.6/2005/9 and TRADE/WP.6/2005/9/Add.1).

Item 9 Market surveillance

48. The Working Party will consider the outcome of and possible follow-up to the second UNECE International Forum on Market Surveillance and Consumer Protection to be held in conjunction with the session.

49. The Working Party will be updated on the activities of the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance ("MARS" Group), and will receive a report on its joint meeting with representatives of CEFTA countries' market surveillance authorities, which was held in Slovakia in April 2005 at the invitation of the Government of Slovakia (document TRADE/WP.6/2005/10).

50. During its workshops in 2004 and 2005 the "MARS" Group discussed, inter-alia, the experience of certain UNECE member States with cooperation between market surveillance agencies and private companies in the fight against consumer fraud by spotting counterfeits during normal market control inspections. These experiences will be summarized in a new draft recommendation which will be presented to the Working Party for consideration and approval (the draft of this recommendation, as preliminarily agreed upon by the "MARS" Group will be reproduced as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/10/Add.1).

51. It is recalled that at its fourteenth session, the Working Party discussed modalities for cooperation with the Nordic Council in market surveillance related activities, including drawing up general guidelines on market surveillance experience in the Nordic countries. If such draft guidelines are available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, they will be issued as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/11.

Item 10 Metrology

52. National delegations and international and regional organizations are invited to report on relevant developments in the metrology area. If such information is available sufficiently in advance of the meeting, it will be issued as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/12

53. The Rapporteurs for Metrology will analyse the information provided and prepare proposals, as appropriate.

Item 11 Programme of work

54. It is recalled that, at its thirteenth session, the Working Party also agreed to link the revision of its programme of work (and prioritization of the programme elements) to the UNECE budget cycle and to decide on its work programme on a two-yearly basis with regard to updates agreed during its sessions.

55. At the April 2005 meeting of office bearers of the Working Party it was suggested to continue the process of restructuring of the Working Party work which started with the change of mandate and the name of the Working Party at its thirteenth session. The current stage of UNECE reform necessitates further strategic thinking of the Working Party's role and future work. With this in mind, a paper has been prepared on the Working Party's vision, strategic direction and work programme (document TRADE/WP.6/2005/13). The programme of work will be linked with the UN budget cycle and submitted for discussion and decision at the current session.

56. The Working Party will also discuss the organization of an in-depth review with member States of its work and priorities.

Item 12 Other business

57. The Working Party will consider the work of its coordinators and rapporteurs and decide on their future tasks and scope of activities.

58. It is recalled that in accordance with recommendations from the Commission and the CTIED on the establishment and functioning of ad hoc teams/groups of experts within UNECE, the Subsidiary Bodies should regularly consider the mandates and duration of their ad hoc groups.

59. The Working Party will continue the existing practice of considering reports from its ad hoc groups at each annual session, which will allow it to monitor and, if necessary, revise their activities.

60. During its fifteenth session, the Working Party will review the mandate, the work accomplished and, if required, future work plans for the "MARS" Group.

61. The Working Party will be informed about tentative dates for its meetings in June 2006, including the proposed UNECE Forum on Regulatory Cooperation to be organized in cooperation with the UNECE Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (TRADE/WP.6/2005/14).

Item 13 Adoption of the report

62. It is recalled that at its thirteenth session, the Working Party agreed that during its annual session it would only approve a list of main decisions, on the understanding that the descriptive part of the annual report would be drafted by the secretariat, in consultation with the office bearers, taking into account the contributions made during the session.

63. The Working Party will therefore approve a list of the main decisions taken at the session. The final report will be published as document TRADE/WP.6/2005/15.

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