



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

SYMPOSIUM

TRADE RULES, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS: DIFFERENT LEVELS OF RULE-MAKING AND THEIR IMPACT

23 October 2007

Salle XII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Background An enabling regulatory environment for growth is one that meets a society's specific development needs while, at the same time, remaining aligned with the rules, regulations, standards and best practice developed by the WTO and other international and regional organizations.

Purpose The Symposium will explore the different levels of rulemaking governing the production and exchange of products and services and how to best use them in order to encourage economic growth. "Levels" refers to both the substance of rulemaking (as in the differences between standards, rules and regulations) and the geographic coverage (national, regional and international).

Experts will also discuss how technical cooperation can help developing countries and countries with economies in transition to improve their regulatory environment for trade.

The Symposium is part of the follow-up to the Workshop on "International Standards in the Multilateral Trading System" organized by the UNECE Secretariat as part of the Public Forum of the World Trade Organization, on 25 September 2006. Participants in that Workshop had called for further consultations on these matters in the context of WTO and at other international forums.

Topics for discussion

- How can developing countries and countries with economies in transition successfully adapt international standards to their own development needs?
- How can consistency between regional and international standards be promoted so as to minimize the strain on developing countries' producers entering the international markets?
- Improving the regulatory framework for trade in developing and transition economies via technical cooperation.

Audience The Symposium will attract rule-makers, and specifically Members of Parliament, as well as government officials and their diplomatic representatives in Geneva. It will also draw on the expertise of the Geneva-based rulemaking and development institutions and international organizations. The business community and the civil society will also be invited to bring their expertise to the debate.

If you are interested in participating in the Symposium, please register by completing the registration form available at the web address:

<http://www.unece.org/trade/ct/welcome.htm>

For more information, kindly contact: Ms. Lorenza Jachia, Coordinator

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PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Chairperson: **His Excellency Mr. Georgi Avramchev**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the United Nations Office at Geneva

Session I 10.00 – 12.00 hrs

Different levels of rulemaking: Promoting consistency while meeting different needs

Rules and standards are drawn up simultaneously at different levels: nationally, regionally, and internationally. When managed successfully, this interaction allows the implementation at a local level of ground-breaking research incorporated in standards and can become an engine of growth and development. At the same time, the existence of different processes may lead to fragmentation, making it more difficult for small and medium-sized enterprises from developing countries and countries with economies in transition to enter international markets because of the need to deal with different sets of rules.

- Speakers:**
- **Mr. Paolo Garonna**, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE
 - **Prof. Colin Kirkpatrick**, Hallsworth Professor of Development Economics, Co-Director, Regulation Research Programme, Centre on Regulation and Competition, and Director, Impact Assessment Research Centre, University of Manchester, United Kingdom
 - **Mr. Kevin A. McKinley**, Deputy Secretary-General, International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
 - **Mr. Bardo Gavazzoli Schettini**, Corporate Policy Manager, Directorate Corporate, European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC)

Session II 12:00 – 13:00 hrs

Successfully implementing international standards: The case of agricultural produce

Implementing international agricultural quality standards can bring challenges and opportunities. For the importer, these standards reduce transaction costs and rejection rates. For the exporter, they open up markets and reduce risk, but they also form a complex web of obligations.

- Speakers:**
- **Ms. Ulrike Bickelmann**, Head of Inspection Service, Federal Bureau for Food and Agriculture, Germany, and Chairperson, Specialized Section on Standardization of Fresh Fruit and Vegetables, UNECE
 - **Mr. Tom Heilandt**, Senior Food Standards Officer, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - **Ms. J. M. Wessels**, National Department of Agriculture, South Africa

Session III 15:00 – 18:00 hrs

Towards a better regulatory environment in developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Technical assistance projects can help developing countries and countries with economies in transition successfully adapt their legislation, regulations and infrastructure to international standards. The private sector also has a pivotal role to play in the process. At the same time, the standard-setting process itself needs to become more inclusive and take into account the concerns of countries at different levels of development.

- Speakers:**
- **Ms. Andreja Marusic**, Secretary-Team Leader, Council for Regulatory Reform, Serbia
 - **Mr. Christian Robin**, Programme Manager, Trade Promotion Division, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), Switzerland
 - **Mr. Eugeniu Osmochescu**, Head, Regulatory Impact Analysis Secretariat, Jacobs and Associates, World Bank Competitiveness Enhancement Project Implementation Unit, Moldova
 - Representative of the World Customs Organization (WCO)
 - **Mr. Roger Pochtier**, Standards & Regulations Manager, Caterpillar
 - **Mr. Anton V. Zubikhin**, Secretary-in-Charge, Committee for Technical Regulation, Standardization and Conformity Assessment of Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, Russian Federation

Note: Each session will be followed by a short debate.