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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

Seventh session
Geneva, 5-7 December 2012
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Rules of Procedure of CECI

DISCUSSION ON RULES OF PROCEDURE

Conference room paper submitted by the Secretariat

Executive Summary

The present paper briefs the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration on the discussions of the Committee's Bureau on its own rules of procedure, as requested by the Committee at its 6th session in 2011, and on the status of the discussions at the UNECE Executive Committee on Guidelines for Procedures and Practices of UNECE Bodies.

1. Introduction

At its sixth session held on 30 November-2 December 2011, the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration had received a proposal by a delegation that the Committee should establish rules and procedures for the preparation of the CECI sessions. The Committee agreed that this issue would be examined by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat, and that the position of the Bureau on this issue would be communicated to the seventh CECI session (ECE/CECI/2011/2, p.11, para. 65). Accordingly, the Bureau met in June 2012 to discuss this matter.

Since then, member States have engaged in informal discussions at the Executive Committee of ECE on a set of Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for UNECE Bodies, to be

included as an annex to the outcome document of the Review of the 2005 UNECE Reform. These guidelines, once agreed, will inform the future preparation of the rules and procedures to be adopted by the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration.

2. Results of the discussions of the Bureau of CECI on its rules and procedures

The Bureau of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration has reflected on the following items to be considered in the Committee's rules and procedures:

- Terms of reference of the Committee
- Membership and participation in the work of the committee
- Officers
- Sessions
- Subsidiary bodies
- Secretariat

On membership and participation in the work of the Committee, the Bureau affirmed the need to have clear procedures for establishing the official status of delegates. It contemplated a distinction between members of the Committee, which would be representatives of UNECE member States nominated by their Governments, and entities which would be allowed to participate in its sessions with consultative or observer status only. The latter would include: representatives of UN Member States not members of UNECE, UN agencies and international organizations, non-governmental organizations accredited with ECOSOC, and representatives of the business and academic communities.

The Bureau discussed the rules for the nomination and election of bureau members and affirmed the prerogative of member States to make nominations. It also discussed the frequency of its sessions (annually unless decided otherwise by the Committee) and recurrent agenda items, including a discussion on the biennial programme of work in line with the United Nations budget cycle. The Bureau reaffirmed the principle of consensual decision-making wherever feasible and referred to the Chapter on Voting in the Rules of Procedure of the UNECE, should voting be necessary.

The Bureau discussed the right of the Committee to recommend the establishment of Teams of Specialists or other subsidiary bodies, in accordance with existing guidelines for the establishment of such bodies, to fulfil particular objectives in accordance with the terms of reference created for them. It identified the Economic Cooperation and Integration Division as the division within the UNECE to provide secretariat support to the Committee and its Teams of Specialists, including the implementation of the programme of work of the Committee.

3. Status of the discussions at the Executive Committee on the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for UNECE Bodies

The Executive Committee is developing a set of guidelines for sectoral committees and their subsidiary bodies that cover the following points:

- General principles
- Rules of procedures
- Communication with member States
- Accreditation process for participants/ representatives to intergovernmental bodies
- Nomination and election of chairpersons and other members of bureaux of intergovernmental bodies
- Functions of bureaux
- Procedures for adopting of decisions and reports of inter-governmental bodies

The latest draft of the Guidelines will be made available during the CECI session.

4. The Way Forward

The Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for UNECE Bodies will be included as an annex in the outcome document of the review of the 2005 UNECE reform. The outcome document is expected to be adopted at the next session of the Economic Commission for Europe in April 2013. Without prejudice to the decisions to be taken by the Commission as a result of the Review, the secretariat will brief the Committee and its Bureau on the Guidelines. The Bureau in consultation with the secretariat will then develop draft Rules of Procedure for the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration accordingly and will present these for adoption at the 8th session of the Committee.