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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

Meeting of Experts on Data Elements  
and Automatic Data Interchange (GE.1)  
(Fifty-fifth session, 19-20 March 1997)

**REPORT OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION OF  
THE MEETING OF EXPERTS ON DATA ELEMENTS  
AND AUTOMATIC DATA INTERCHANGE**

1. GE.1 held its fifty-fifth session in Geneva from 19-20 March 1997 under the chairmanship of Mr. R. WALKER (United Kingdom) and the vice-chairmanship of Mr. Claude Chiaramonti (France) and Mr. Harvey Bates (Australia).

2. Participants in the meeting included representatives from:

The following countries:

Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

The European Union (EU)

The following inter-governmental organizations:

European Free Trade Association (EFTA), World Customs Organization (WCO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO)

The following UN bodies:

United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

And the following non-governmental organizations:

Comité International des Transports Ferroviaires (CIT), European Electronic Messaging Association (EEMA), International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Article Numbering Association (EAN), International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (S.W.I.F.T.) and the United Towns Agency for North-South Cooperation.

3. Observers to the meeting, present at the invitation of the secretariat, included representatives from: The European Board for EDI/EC Standardization, the International Federation of Inspection Agencies (IFIA) and the North American Trade Procedures Organization (NATPRO).

#### **Item 1 - Adoption of the agenda**

Documents:

- TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/105 Report of the 54th session of GE.1
- TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/106/Rev.1 Provisional Agenda of the Fifty-fifth Session of the Meeting of Experts on Data Elements and Automatic Data Interchange

4. The provisional agenda (TRADE/WP.4/GE.1/106/Rev.1) was adopted with the agreement to consider agenda item 11 "Legal/commercial aspects of trade facilitation" at a joint session of GE.1 and GE.2. The report of the joint session shall be annexed to the reports of the fifty-fifth sessions of GE.1 and GE.2.

5. The Chair opened the session by informing the meeting that this would be his last meeting as Chair, since he was resigning in order to allow the CEFACT Steering Group to designate a new Chair to lead GE.1 during the migration of its work programme to the new CEFACT structures.

#### **Item 2 - Migration to CEFACT**

Documents:

- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123 The Chair's Report on the Activities of the ESG
- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135 Report from the UN/EDIFACT Steering Group (ESG) January 1997 Meeting

6. The Chair introduced this item by inviting delegates to refer to paragraphs 4 through 12 and annexes A and B of TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135 (Report from the UN/EDIFACT Steering Group (ESG) January 1997 Meeting) and appendix 1 of TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123 (The Chair's Report on the Activities of the ESG). He then proposed to deal with this item in three parts:

- 1) The addition to the CEFACT work programme outlined in paragraph 12 of TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135;

2) Mandates for the JRT and UN/EDIFACT related technical work as described in paragraph 5 and annex A of TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135. The ESG had decided to draft two mandates covering both the work of the JRT and that of associated groups which currently report directly to GE.1.

3) Mandates for joint/common activities between UN/EDIFACT and other trade facilitation areas as described in paragraph 6 and annex B of TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135. Based on discussions, mandates were developed for a Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMF) and a Process Analysis and Design Group (PAD). These mandates were for consideration by the CEFACT Steering Group (CSG).

7. In addition, a matrix had been prepared indicating where the ESG saw existing GE.1 and GE.2 groups fitting into the new structure (see annex C to TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135).

8. The Chairman noted that the Regional Rapporteur's role had been critical to the success of the standard and had resulted in countries outside of the ECE becoming directly involved in the work. This approach had been particularly successful in Asia and, more recently, in Latin America.

9. He indicated, however, that the establishment of CEFACT with its principle of empowering Working Groups provided a unique opportunity to fundamentally review the current regional structure with the objectives of maintaining its strengths and improving the efficiency of the overall process.

10. The Chair then invited comments from the delegations.

#### ADDITION TO THE CEFACT WORK PROGRAMME

11. Many delegations expressed their support for the proposed addition to the CEFACT work programme. However, it was suggested that the first bullet point be broadened to the "Use of EDI and Electronic Commerce over open networks, such as the Internet."

12. The delegate from EEMA further suggested that reference be made to EDI "Lite" and the delegate from the Netherlands, while supporting the proposal, wished to stress that the backbone of CEFACT's work programme, in whatever area, must be trade facilitation.

#### MANDATES FOR THE JRT AND UN/EDIFACT RELATED TECHNICAL WORK

13. The delegate from EEMA questioned whether or not allowing Working Groups to establish sub-groups and administrative teams without requiring approval by the Steering Group would lead to duplication and an excessive number of sub-groups.

14. The delegate from Switzerland suggested that it was important to define needs, objectives and priorities and then to assign individuals and groups to meet those rather than simply transforming existing groups into new ones. This included being sufficiently adventurous to consider removing some existing groups as well as the establishment of new ones.

15. The delegate from the European Community questioned the future of the ESG, and asked whether it was to disappear or to be transformed into another group. The Chair responded by indicating that the ESG would be dissolved as soon as the migration process for UN/EDIFACT activities had been completed and management responsibilities could be assumed by the relevant empowered groups.

16. The delegate from France supported the proposed mandates and the suggested changes to the methods for selecting delegates to Working Groups, provided that the procedures for these groups only allowed decisions to be made on documents distributed prior to a meeting, in order to allow for adequate consultation. She also emphasized the need to assign the responsibility for "selling" trade facilitation work and new methodologies. She suggested that this might be a new role for rapporteurs. With regard to the matrix in annex C in TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135, she also noted that it was important to point out that while part or all of a current group might be included in a new group, this must not imply a simple transfer, but rather their incorporation into a larger, more structured framework.

#### MANDATES FOR JOINT/COMMON ACTIVITIES BETWEEN UN/EDIFACT AND OTHER TRADE FACILITATION AREAS

17. It was noted that extensive discussion of the draft mandate for the Process Analysis and Design Group (PAD) had been made during GE.2 and that it was not necessary to repeat this discussion.

18. The delegates from Australia and Iran questioned whether the Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMF) was not just a re-naming of AC.1. The Chair of AC.1 indicated that the current AC.1 group was planning to only be involved in the research aspect of TMF, while BIM was interested in the feasibility part. In addition, AC.1 had recommended the establishment of still a third sub-group which would be responsible for the development of training and educational materials to ensure the implementation of technologies which had passed both the research and feasibility stages.

#### CONCLUSION

19. A number of delegations had requested that the two CRPs in question be combined and published as an R document. The Chair then reminded them that these were only drafts for information and consultation which would be discussed in more detail by the Regions and during the Singapore JRT. However, he did undertake to have the ESG produce a consolidated document, including any changes coming out of the Singapore JRT, for the September session.

**Item 3 - Technical issues and reports from UN/EDIFACT standing technical groups**

Documents:

- TRADE/WP.4/R.840/Rev.3 UN/EDIFACT Message Design Rules for Batch EDI
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1023/Rev.3 The UN/EDIFACT Rules for Presentation of Standardized Message and Directories
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1023/Rev.3/Corr.1 Corrigendum to Rules of Presentation of Standardized Message and Directories
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1186/Rev.1 Syntax and Service Report Message(CONTRL)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1186/Rev.1/Corr.1 Corrigendum to Syntax and Service Report Message (CONTRL)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1241/Corr.1 Corrigendum to UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 1, Syntax rules common to all parts, together with syntax directories for each of the parts
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1243/Corr.1 Corrigendum to UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 3, Syntax Rules specific to interactive EDI
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1244 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 4, Syntax and service report message for batch EDI
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1245/Rev.1 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 5, Security rules for batch EDI (authenticity, integrity and non-repudiation of origin)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1246/Rev.1 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 6, Secure authentication and acknowledgement message (message type = AUTACK)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1249 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 9, Security key and certificate management message (message type = KEYMAN)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1251/Rev.1 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 7, Security rules for batch EDI (Confidentiality)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1265 Syntax Development Group Executive Summary Report
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1266 Ad-Hoc Group 1, Chairman's Report
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1267 Report to GE.1 from Message Design Rules Group
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1284 Application Level Syntax Rules, Part 10, Security rules for interactive EDI
- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.134 German Position on TRADE/WP.4/R.840/Rev.3 (Message Design Rules)

MESSAGE DESIGN RULES

20. The Chair of the Message Design Rules Group introduced TRADE/WP.4/R.840/Rev.3 (Message Design Rules for Batch EDI) and TRADE/WP.4/R.1267 (Report from the Chair of the MDR Group). A request had been received to carry forward to the next session the approval of TRADE/WP.4/R.840/Rev.3 in order to take account of submissions and comments received from delegations (see Trade/WP.4/CRP.125 and TRADE/WP.4/CRP.134). Further, a proposal was made that issues raised by these submissions be resolved in consultation with the JRT at Singapore and a final version of the Message Design Rules for Batch EDI covering Version 3 of the Syntax be submitted for approval to the September 1997 session of GE.1.

21. The GE.1 Chair stressed the importance of the Message Design Rules and expressed appreciation of the work that had been progressed by a small group of dedicated experts over the past three years. The Message Design Rules had been subject to a full review process and it was now time draw an end to further review cycles and finalize this document. However, the Chair also noted the need to have the requirements for Version 4 of the syntax, including interactive UN/EDIFACT, incorporated in the Message Design Rules. **Accordingly, the following proposal for two courses of action was made and accepted by the meeting.**

1) To finalise the Message Design Rules for Batch EDI covering Version 3 of the Syntax at the Singapore JRT, and to submit these by 15 June 1997 for approval at the September 1997 session of GE.1. At that session, delegations would be requested to either approve or to reject this document without further modification. The present Message Design Rules Group would be disbanded following this action. Furthermore, subject to GE.1 approval, the implementation strategy would be determined in consultation with the Chairs of the Regional Technical Assessment Groups.

2) To authorize the ESG, as part of the migration process outlined in TRADE/WP.4/CRP.122/Rev.1, to establish a new group as a matter of urgency to develop a complimentary set of Message Design Rules covering Version 4 (batch and interactive) of the Syntax. This new group would be tasked to deliver these rules for CEFACT approval by September 1998, allotting appropriate time for Regional review. Account would need to be taken of the migration to CEFACT and this new group, including its terms of reference and reporting mechanisms, would need to be incorporated into the appropriate CEFACT structure.

#### SYNTAX DEVELOPMENT GROUP (SDG)

22. The SDG Chair introduced TRADE/WP.4/R.1265 (Syntax Development Group (SDG), Executive Summary), containing brief recommendations for the documents discussed below and a report of their last meeting. He further noted that, in the interim, the name of the joint ECE/ISO Syntax Group had been changed from the Joint UN/ISO Syntax Working Group (JSWG) to the Joint UN/ISO Syntax Development Group (JSDG).

23. The SDG Chair also informed the meeting that ISO had set the end of September 1997 as the final deadline for the submission of any additional parts to version 4 of the EDIFACT syntax.

#### VERSION 3 OF THE UN/EDIFACT SYNTAX

24. In order to correct some editorial errors in the previous version, and to reformat the message documentation according to the layout in TRADE/WP.4/CRP.1023/Rev.3, the SDG had revised the Control (CONTRL) message for version 3 of the EDIFACT syntax. **As recommended by the SDG, GE.1 approved the revised CONTRL message as found in documents TRADE/WP.4/R.1186/Rev.1 and TRADE/WP.4/R.1186/Rev./Corr.1.**

VERSION 4 OF THE UN/EDIFACT SYNTAX

UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Parts 1 and 3

25. As agreed during the September 1996 session, the following corrigenda to parts 1 and 3 of the syntax had been produced and forwarded to the ISO Central Secretariat. The corrigendum for Part 3 had been distributed in September 1996 as TRADE/WP.4/CRP.117.

- TRADE/WP.4/R.1241/Corr.1: Corrigendum to UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 1, Syntax rules common to all parts, together with syntax directories for each of the parts
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1243/Corr.1: Corrigendum to UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 3, Syntax rules specific to interactive EDI

**GE.1 noted these documents.**

UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Parts 5 and 6

26. As approved during the September 1996 session, the following parts of version 4 of the UN/EDIFACT syntax had been delivered to ISO Central Secretariat for fast-track processing after final editorial changes by the SDG.

- UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 5, Security rules for batch EDI (authenticity, integrity and non-repudiation of origin)(TRADE/WP.4/R.1245/Rev.1);
- UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 6, Secure authentication and acknowledgement message (message type - AUTACK)(TRADE/WP.4/R.1246/Rev.1).

**GE.1 noted these documents.**

UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 9

27. **GE.1 approved Part 9 as found in the following document for forwarding into the ISO fast track procedure as an existing standard:**

- TRADE/WP.4/R.1249: UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 9, Security key and certificate management message (message type = KEYMAN)

UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Parts 4, 7 and 10

- TRADE/WP.4/R.1244: UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 4 - Syntax and service report message for batch EDI (message type = CONTRL)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1251/Rev.1: Draft UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 7 - Security rules for batch EDI (confidentiality)
- TRADE/WP.4/R.1284: Draft UN/EDIFACT Syntax, Part 10, Security rules for interactive EDI

28. While the SDG had submitted Part 4 for approval, the delegate from the United Kingdom requested more time to review the document, due to late distribution.

29. **GE.1 requested that the SDG finalize the above documents at its next meeting in May 1997 taking into account comments they receive.** The final documents must be submitted to the UN/ECE secretariat no later than 15 June 1997 for publication as "R" documents for approval at the September 1997 session. After approval, they will be immediately submitted into the ISO fast-track process. Comments on these documents should be send to the SDG no later than 30 April 1997, the e-mail address for comments can be found at the end of this document.

30. The SDG Chair further requested that interested groups at the Singapore JRT review TRADE/WP.4/R.1251/Rev.1 and TRADE/WP.4/R.1284 in order to also submit their comments prior to the end of April 1997.

31. The delegate from Canada requested a matrix outlining the current status of all parts of version 4 of the syntax, which the SDG Chair undertook to prepare and which can be found in Annex B to this report.

UN/EDIFACT RULES FOR PRESENTATION OF STANDARDIZED MESSAGE AND DIRECTORIES DOCUMENTATION AND REVISED UN/EDIFACT DIRECTORY VERSION/RELEASE PROCEDURES

32. The secretariat introduced TRADE/WP.4/CRP.1023/Rev.3 and TRADE/WP.4/CRP.1023/Rev.3/Corr.1 (UN/EDIFACT Rules for Presentation of Standardized Message and Directories Documentation) noting that while it accurately reflected the layout used in the D.97A directory, it had not yet been possible, for technical and resource reasons, to incorporate the cross-referencing previously requested by GE.1. This would be done in a subsequent revision. Nonetheless, it was necessary to publish a version 3 in order to officially document the D.97A layout. Delegates from both the United Kingdom and IATA congratulated the authors on the quality of this document.

33. The delegate from IATA recognized the need for standard documentation, but suggested that templates be made available to users to facilitate conformance with the standard layout. In addition, they believed that message branching diagrams should remain in the document since many users found them helpful. The Chair noted that this was an excellent idea, and suggested that IATA consider either developing these templates in cooperation with the secretariat, or assist in securing the necessary resources to do so.

34. **GE.1 then approved TRADE/WP.4/CRP.1023/Rev.3 and TRADE/WP.4/CRP.1023/Rev.3/Corr.1 and thanked the editor, Mike Conroy, and EDIFRANCE for the very valuable contribution in kind which they had made in preparing this highly detailed and technical document.**

AD HOC GROUP 1 (AC.1) REPORT

35. The AC.1 Chair reported that AC.1 had developed a "Reference Guide" to the work of AC.1. Work on this document had been finalized during the week prior to this session of GE.1. The document itself would first be presented, to open the discussion, at the Singapore JRT and then would be published for the next GE.1 session.

36. This "Reference Guide" summarized the status of the research conducted by AC.1 to this point. It would be updated periodically as progress was made in the programme of work. The document contained sections on the use of new and evolving technologies as alternatives for progressing message development to the next generation of EDI. Having reviewed these technologies, they believed Object-Oriented Technology (OOT) to be one of the most promising concepts in recent years to support this evolution.

37. In order to include all aspects and relationships of the various IDEF Modelling techniques used, it had been necessary to select a business scenario example and AC.1 had chosen that of ordering goods from a catalogue.

38. In order to allow JRT members to understand and help AC.1 in its work, an issue list had also been prepared (see annex A, page 4 of TRADE/WP.4/R.1266). During the JRT, AC.1 would hold an open session to allow participants to either obtain clarification or make contributions.

39. During the work on the Reference Guide, AC.1 had identified the following issue relating to message development:

There is a view that if there is a business model showing both the conceptual view of the data and the relationships between the data, then whatever message is produced based on that model, will be the definitive answer. This would lead to the conclusion that every specific model would produce many specific segments.

A more appropriate way forward might be to adopt a layered approach by changing all of the current message design groups into business modelling groups, and establishing a model review panel and a single message production group. (The premise being that each group would have the required skills and tools to perform the tasks.) A similar recommendation was made a few years ago in TRADE/WP.4/R.909.

40. At this time, AC.1 had no specific recommendation on this issue, other than to draw it to the attention of GE.1 and its UN/EDIFACT Rapporteurs. It further urged that both should address this issue either via the JRT or by passing it to the Steering Group. AC.1 only raised the issue now in order to provide an input prior to the re-organization of the new, empowered JRT structure, rather than after.

41. **GE.1 then noted the AC.1 report (TRADE/WP.4/R.1266).**

#### **Item 4 - UN/EDIFACT policy and promotion**

##### UN/ECE RECOMMENDATION NUMBER 25

42. The secretariat informed the meeting that following WP.4's decision during the September 1996 session, the secretariat had submitted Recommendation 25 (Use of UN/EDIFACT) to the Committee on the Development of Trade for approval and subsequent submission to the ECE and then ECOSOC for endorsement. The Committee had endorsed Recommendation 25 during its forty-fifth session in December 1996 and the secretariat was now in the process of submitting the Recommendation to the Commission and ECOSOC.

**Item 5 - Reports from UN/EDIFACT Steering Group and UN/EDIFACT Rapporteurs**

Documents:

- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123 The Chair's Report on the Activities of the ESG
- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.124 Recent Developments in UN/EDIFACT: Regional Reports

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN UN/EDIFACT: REGIONAL REPORTS

43. The Chair introduced TRADE/WP.4/CRP.124 (Recent Developments in UN/EDIFACT: Regional Reports) and invited comments.

44. The Asia EDIFACT Rapporteur called delegates' attention to the recent addition of Indonesia as the 11th member of the ASEB.

45. The French delegation then informed GE.1 of a national development, the Prime Minister having written to all government agencies during January 1997 requesting that they actively implement EDI using the UN/EDIFACT standard. A copy of that letter is available from the secretariat.

46. In conclusion, the Chair congratulated the PAEB for the increased participation of Latin American countries as reflected by the large number of national contributions from that area included in the PAEB report.

47. **GE.1 noted document TRADE/WP.4/CRP.124 (Recent developments in UN/EDIFACT: regional reports) which the Regional EDIFACT Rapporteurs had submitted for information.**

CONFIRMATION OF REGIONAL RAPPORTEURS

48. The Chair recalled that, at its September 1996 session, WP.4 had decided that during the migration to CEFACT, current structures should stay in place until new structures had been agreed upon and implemented. **In this context, the Chairman requested confirmation of the following Rapporteurs, or their successors, which GE.1 then approved:**

- UN/EDIFACT RAPPORTEURS

Mr. K. Itoh (Japan)	for the Asia EDIFACT Board (ASEB)
Mr. H. Bates (Australia)	for the Australia/New Zealand EDIFACT Board (ANZEB)
Mr. B. Georgiev (Bulgaria)	for the Central and Eastern European EDIFACT Board (CEEB)
Mr. T. Wheel (United States)	for the Pan American EDIFACT Board (PAEB)
Mr. R. Power (Ireland)	for the Western European Region (WEEB)

49. The Chair and GE.1 then welcomed the new PAEB Rapporteur and thanked the outgoing Rapporteur, Mr. R. Colcher (Brazil), in particular for his work in increasing participation within Latin America.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EDIFACT STEERING GROUP (ESG)

50. The Chair of the EDIFACT Steering Group (ESG) introduced his report to GE.1 (TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123). He noted that the part of the report covering migration to CEFACT had been dealt with under agenda item 2 and that part covering the relationship with ISO would be dealt with under agenda item 7.

51. The Chair then informed GE.1 that, following the March 1996 AC.1 Report, the ESG had been working to develop a new strategy for UN/EDIFACT, detail of which could be found in appendix 2 of his report. This strategy consisted of three interlinked strands which could be considered as parallel activities or "tracks."

1) Continuation of the development and maintenance of UN/EDIFACT as the global message standard based on both batch and interactive syntaxes. (Track 1 - Mainstream UN/EDIFACT)

2) Encouragement of the development of simpler UN/EDIFACT messages relevant to the needs of SME's (Track 2 - Simpler UN/EDIFACT)

3) Full development of the Object Oriented Approach to the design of future messages. (Track 3 - Object Oriented EDI, "OO/EDIFACT")

52. He then noted that this strategy proposal would be referred to the Regions and the Singapore JRT for consultation and agreement before being incorporated into CEFACT's work programme. He then invited comments from the delegations.

53. The delegate from the European Community requested that at some point an explanation be provided of the linkage between these three tracks and the proposed new structures outlined in TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135.

54. The delegate from EEMA expressed his complete support for tracks 1 and 2 while requesting an explanatory paper on the link between Object Oriented Technology and EDI. The Chair noted that there was to be a presentation on this topic at the Singapore JRT and that the paper prepared for that presentation would be made available to delegates.

55. Delegates congratulated the Chair on the paper which they acknowledged provided considerable scope for discussion and a possible path forward for the future.

56. **GE.1 then noted TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123 (The Report from the Chair of the ESG to GE.1).**

**Item 6 - UN/EDIFACT Directories and message types submitted as Status 0**

Documents:

TRADE/WP.4/R.1268	UN/EDIFACT Draft Directory D.97A
TRADE/WP.4/R.1264	Status 0 Message Summary for Messages Noted as Status 0 During the September 1996 Session of GE.1
TRADE/WP.4/R.1264/Corr.1	Status 0 Message Summary for Messages Noted as Status 0 During the March 1996 Session of GE.1, Corrigendum
TRADE/WP.4/R.1285	Status 0 Message Summary for Messages to be Noted as Status 0 at the March 1997 Session of GE.1

D.97B UN/EDIFACT DIRECTORY

57. The Directory Audit Team (DAT) Chair referred to the audit statement in the UN/EDIFACT Directory D.97A (TRADE/WP.4/R.1268) and recommended that the directory be approved. Under the new CEFACT structure, for the first time, it was agreed that the audit statement would be submitted to the CEFACT Steering Group, in order for them to approve the publication of the directories.

58. **GE.1 then agreed to recommend to the CEFACT Steering Group the publication of the D.97A directory.**

STATUS 0 MESSAGES

59. **GE.1 noted for information TRADE/WP.4/R.1264 and TRADE/WP.4/R.1264/Corr.1** (Summary for Messages noted as Status 0 during the September 1996 session) which had been distributed as TRADE/WP.4/CRP.115 during the previous session.

60. **GE.1 then noted the following messages for Status 0 as contained in TRADE/WP.4/R.1285:**

<u>Tag</u>	<u>Message Name</u>
CHAMAP	Chart of Mappings
CNTCND	Contractual conditions message
DEBREC	Debts recovery
INSREQ	Inspection request message
INSRPT	Inspection report message
LEDGER	Accounting Ledger Message

**Agenda Item 7 - International Standardization Affecting Trade Interchange**

Documents:

TRADE/WP.4/R.1269	The Standards Liaison Rapporteur's Executive Summary
TRADE/WP.4/R.1270	Standards Liaison Meeting Report
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.136	Report on the Basic Semantic Repository (BSR) Project by ISO Central Secretariat
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.140	Proposal to establish a liaison function related to Internet developments

STANDARDS LIAISON RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

61. The Standards Liaison Rapporteur presented his Executive Summary Report (TRADE/WP.4/R.1269) and Meeting Report (TRADE/WP.4/R.1270) which contained no items for approval. He requested, however, that delegates read these documents and contact him regarding any questions.

62. **GE.1 then accepted the Standards Liaison Rapporteur Executive Summary Report (TRADE/WP.4/R.1269) and Meeting Report (TRADE/WP.4/R.1270).**

63. The Standards Liaison Rapporteur then referred to TRADE/WP.4/CRP.140 (Proposal to establish a liaison function related to Internet developments), indicating that the groups involved in the development of Internet standards did not normally accept liaison arrangements, participation being open either to all

those willing to actively participate, or to all those willing to pay. Nonetheless, he had informally undertaken such liaison and had either ensured that representatives from relevant groups within UN/EDIFACT were already participating or that those groups were informed of developments affecting their work.

64. The delegate from Austria then requested information on the Commercenet organization, this was followed by requests from Australia, the European Community and several other delegations for a report providing an overview of initiatives in the electronic commerce area which might affect CEFACT's work.

65. The Chair concluded by encouraging all delegations who wished to do so to participate in the work of the Internet Engineering Task Force, as this was the only way to influence it. He also requested an overview document from the Standards Liaison Rapporteur on electronic commerce initiatives taken in other environments.

**66. GE.1 noted TRADE/WP.4/CRP.140 (Proposal to establish a liaison function related to Internet developments).**

67. Within the context of the migration to CEFACT, during which it had been agreed to maintain current structures until new structures had been agreed upon and implemented, **GE.1 confirmed Mr. K-D Naujok (Canada) as Standards Liaison Rapporteur.**

ISO MoU

68. The GE.1 Chair introduced the topic of the MoU with ISO, calling the attention of delegates to section 4, page 4 of his report (TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123). At their December meeting, the ESG had agreed upon the importance of strengthening the UN's involvement in the management of the ISO/IEC/ECE MoU. They therefore recommended that the UN team to the MoU management committee now consist of Mr. Walker, Mr. Bates, Mr. Naujok, Mr. Power, and Mr. Vuilleumier as well as the secretariat. **GE.1 approved this recommendation.**

69. He also informed delegates, and the ISO delegate subsequently confirmed, that in January 1997, the ISO had re-affirmed its commitment to the MoU and requested its extension, in principle, for a further five years.

70. An informal meeting between the UN team and the ISO Central Secretariat to discuss the MoU and how it might be strengthened would be held on 24 March 1997 in Geneva.

THE BASIC SEMANTIC REPOSITORY (BSR)

71. The Chairman reported that, at its December 1996 meeting, the ESG had also carefully considered, with the assistance of the Chairman and former Chairman of the joint UN - ISO BSR Management Committee, all aspects of the BSR project and in particular, the future participation of the UN/ECE in the management of this project. They came to the conclusion that it was now appropriate to recommend to ISO the disbandment of the Joint Management Committee and the transfer management of the project to the relevant ISO/IEC body. Subsequently, after consultation with ISO and formal notification, the ISO Central Secretariat had accepted the

UN's decision and, therefore, management of the BSR project would become the responsibility of the appropriate ISO/IEC body.

72. The Chair emphasized, however, that the ESG and the ECE still believed in the importance of the BSR project and encouraged all UN/EDIFACT experts to continue to fully participate in this project.

73. The delegate from the ISO then thanked the ECE for the outstanding contribution that it had made to the establishment and initial management of the project, as well as the continuing contribution of its experts. **He then presented a status report on the BSR project (TRADE/WP.4/CRP.136) which was noted by GE.1.**

#### **Agenda Item 8 - Codes and policy related to codes**

74. There were no documents, and no discussion, under this agenda item during this session of the meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 9 - International Trade Transaction Model**

Documents:

TRADE/WP.4/R.1271 Report of the Steering Group for the International Trade Transaction (ITT) Model

75. The Chairman suggested and it was agreed that as GE.2 had discussed the ITT modelling work the previous day, it was not necessary to undertake any further detailed discussions.

76. He noted that GE.2 had subsequently circulated a draft of a proposed mandate for covering this activity. This would be submitted to the EDIFACT Steering Group. It was agreed that this draft mandate would not result in just the continuation of the previous Ad hoc Group's activities but would take advantage of new synergies between trade facilitation and standardization and, in particular, the modelling work previously undertaken by AC.1 and the ITT Ad hoc Group.

**77. Accordingly, GE.1 then agreed to support GE.2's proposal to the CEFACT Steering Group.**

#### **Item 10 - Multilingualism and Terminology in UN/EDIFACT**

78. The delegate from Austria presented a report on the ad hoc meeting held the previous evening to discuss multilingualism and terminology and the possible directions that this work could take.

79. There had been a general agreement that the principal problems in translation centred around ambiguities in the original English language text, i.e. around the question of terminology. In this context, they believed that the BSR project would, eventually, be of great assistance.

80. While the participants were not convinced that a specific group was needed to address this issue, they did believe that it should be incorporated somewhere in CEFACT's work programme. They further appealed for increased consciousness of

the problems related to language translation and the need for a more disciplined approach in language use.

81. The delegate from Australia pointed out that new rules had been incorporated into the latest draft of the Message Design Rules to, at least in part, address this need for greater clarity and discipline.

**Item 11 - Legal/Commercial aspects of trade facilitation**

Documents:

TRADE/WP.4/R.1282                      Norsk EDIPRO Interchange Agreement  
TRADE/WP.4/CRP.133                    Report from the Legal Rapporteurs

82. The discussion of this agenda item was deferred to a joint session of GE.1 and GE.2 on the legal and commercial aspects of trade facilitation held during the afternoon of 20 March 1997. The report of the joint session can be found in Annex A to this report.

**Item 12 - Other Business**

Documents:

- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.125                      Pan American EDIFACT Board Resolutions  
- TRADE/WP.4/CRP.132/Rev.1               NATPRO Executive Director's Report

83. **GE.1 noted the above documents submitted under other business, without discussion.**

84. The Chair then announced that the Spring 1998 JRT would be hosted by the PAEB on the East Coast of the United States and that the September JRT would be hosted by EEMA, EBES and the Free University of Brussels, in Brussels.

**DEADLINES AND MEETING DATES**

85. The secretariat then informed delegates of the following meeting dates and deadlines for document submission:

	<u>Deadlines</u>	
<u>CEFACT meeting beginning</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Issuance as "R" Document</u>
Monday, 15 September 1997	27 June 1997	18 July 1997
Monday, 16 March 1998	19 December 1997	17 January 1998

86. The following meeting date for the next CEFACT Meeting of Experts on Data Elements and Automatic Data Interchange (GE.1) was approved:

56th Session -                      17-18 September 1997

87. **GE.1 noted the following meeting dates:**

Joint Rapporteurs Team Meeting	- 21-25 April 1997, Singapore
	- 29 September - 3 October 1997, Anaheim, California (close to Los Angeles)
AC.1 (Research & Development)	- 28 July - 1 August, Ann Arbor
	- 10-15 November, Brussels/Paris
Ad hoc Group 1	- 23-24 April 1997, Singapore
Standards Liaison Team	- April 1997 JRT
	- Sept./Oct. 1997 JRT
CEFACT Steering Group	- 21-23 May 1997, Geneva
CEFACT Steering Group	- 18-21 August 1997, Geneva
EDIFACT Steering Group	- 19-20 May 1997, Geneva
MDR Group	- April 1997 JRT, Singapore
Syntax Development Group	- 12-16 May 1997, Herrenberg
Legal Rapporteurs Team Group	- April 1997 JRT
	- Sept./Oct. 1997 JRT
Directory Production Team	- 30 June -4 July 1997, Geneva
	- 1-5 December 1997, Geneva
Directory Audit Team	- 21-25 July 1997, Geneva

CONTACT INFORMATION

88. Contact information for submission of comments, as requested in the above minutes:

Comments on substantive issues related to Parts 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 of version 4 of the EDIFACT syntax should be sent to:

Dr. Winfried Hennig  
DIN NBü  
D-10772 Berlin  
Germany  
Telephone: 49 30 2601 2305  
Telefax: 49 30 2601 1158  
Internet: dallmann@nkt.din.de

Comments on Parts 4, 7 and 10 of the UN/EDIFACT syntax, version 4 (TRADE/WP.4/R.1244, TRADE/WP.4/R.1251/Rev.1, and TRADE/WP.4/R.1284) which will be finalized by SDG for approval at the September 1997 session should be sent no later than 30 April 1997 to the SDG at:

INTERNET address: schliep@ibm.net

Comments on the Message Design Rules should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to:

Mr. David Dobbing  
Technical Advisor  
Data Logistics Pty Ltd  
505 Darling Street, Balmain  
Sydney NSW 2041  
Australia  
Fax: 612 810 7860  
Internet: ddobbing@attmail.com

Comments on legislative needs, requirements and current practice should be sent to one of the two following addresses:

Ms. Anne Troye-Walker  
Commission for the European Communities  
DG III/F6 N105/5-48  
200, Rue de la Loi  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium  
Fax: 32 2 296 8387  
Internet: anne.troye@dg3.cec.be

Mr. Renaud Sorieul  
Legal Officer, UN/OLA/ITLB  
Secretary UNCITRAL Working Group on EDI  
Vienna International Centre  
Room E-0465  
A-Vienna 1400  
Austria  
Fax: 43 21345 4071  
Internet: rsorieul@unor.un.or.at

Comments for consideration by the ESG and on TRADE/WP.4/CRP.123 and TRADE/WP.4/CRP.135 should be sent to:

Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos  
Trade Facilitation Section  
UN/ECE Trade Division  
Palais des Nations, Rm. 450  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
Fax: 41 22 917 0037  
Internet: virginia.cram-martos@unece.org

Comments for consideration by the Plenary Officers and on other subjects, should be sent to:

Mr. Hans Hansell  
Trade Facilitation Section  
UN/ECE Trade Division  
Palais des Nations, Rm. 442  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
Fax: 41 22 917 0037  
Internet: hans.hansell@unece.org

#### OTHER INFORMATION

89. For constantly updated information on Trade Facilitation and UN/EDIFACT work, as well as documentation for the next meeting, delegates can refer to:

The UN/ECE Internet WWW Trade Facilitation Information Exchange (TRAFIX)  
ADDRESS: <http://www.unece.org/trade/facil/>

#### **Item 13 - Adoption of the report of the fifty-fifth session**

90. The report of GE.1 was adopted on 21 March 1997 on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.

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ANNEX I

REPORT OF THE JOINT GE.1 AND GE.2 SESSION  
ON LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF TRADE FACILITATION  
(20 March 1997)

Documents:

TRADE/WP.4/CRP.133	Legal Rapporteurs Report
TRADE/WP.4/R.1282	NORSK-EDIPRO Interchange Agreement (Delegation of Norway)

1. The joint session was chaired by Mrs. B. Curry, Vice-Chairperson of CEFACT. The current Legal Rapporteurs were confirmed in their office under the same conditions as the rapporteurs for the full migration period.
2. The Legal Rapporteurs, Ms. Troye and Mr. Sorieul, reported on the discussions held at the most recent meeting of a sub-group of the Legal Rapporteurs Team in Brussels (March 1997) which would be followed by a meeting in Singapore in April 1997.
3. The Legal Rapporteurs indicated that the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce, adopted in 1996, together with a guide to enactment of the Model law would be published within the coming weeks and would be made available to the UN/ECE secretariat. They also stressed the importance of this document as an interpretative instrument for international conventions to ensure their compatibility with requirements linked to electronic commerce, thus avoiding entire revisions of these conventions. They added that the usefulness of the Model Law might be further illustrated in the context of the revision of document TRADE/WP.4/R.1096, currently undertaken by the SITPRO secretariat, with support from the UNCITRAL secretariat.
4. The Legal Rapporteurs also gave an overview of the work on the new UNCITRAL project on digital signatures and certification authorities which had recently begun, highlighting some of the issues under discussion such as the need for an international standard on certification, verification of digital signatures by means of public-private keys and the issue of liability of certification authorities. The Australian delegate informed about initiatives in his country on certification authorities, public-private keys and the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce (document TRADE/WP.4/CRP.133). Information on these initiatives would be made available to the secretariat.
5. Recommendation 26 (Interchange agreements): Attention was drawn to document TRADE/WP.4/R.1282 which presented the NORSK-EDIPRO Model Interchange Agreement and in response to an observation by the Dutch delegation, the Legal Rapporteurs noted that the Agreement had been examined and that it has been suggested that the LRT might draw its attention to the technical annex of the Model Interchange Agreements as part of the work programme. This work could be undertaken in view of the implementation of Recommendation 26. The Legal Rapporteurs also mentioned that a need to review the Model Interchange Agreement (Recommendation 26) in the light of the development of electronic commerce using Internet might be agreed upon. Comments from delegations on this issue were requested.
6. Negotiable Documents: The Legal Rapporteurs noted that several on-going initiatives had been monitored, such as the ICC-E100 project and SITPRO's

proposal on the replacement of paper-based letters of credit, and the BOLERO scheme. However, the Legal Rapporteurs also stressed that the lack of resources had caused considerable delays in the progress made in this area as well as in the analysis of the data received on International Trade- National Legal and Commercial Practice Barriers.

7. Cooperation with other international bodies: The Legal Rapporteurs mentioned that some progress had been made in the cooperation between the LRT and the ICC-E-100 project (in particular, the legal and regulatory Group).

8. Future work programme: The Legal Rapporteurs outlined a proposed up-dated work programme which was considered necessary in the light of the migration process to CEFACT, the near completion of the current work programme and the emergence of new items of work. It was stressed that any future work should take all forms of electronic commerce into consideration, including both structured and unstructured message formats, and consider as well the impact of the rapid growth of the Internet and its interface with EDI process. The Legal Rapporteurs proposed the following up-dated programme of work which would be discussed at the next LRT meeting to be held within the framework of the Singapore JRT:

- examination of the invoicing cycle for international trade transaction, focusing in particular on electronic invoicing and self-billing as a number of legal obstacles persisted;
- continuation of the work on "document, signature and writing" requirements;
- promotion of the use and implementation of the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce;
- assessment of the legal implications of a number of messages developed in areas relating to accountancy, registration and auditing, as well as some others such as the "contractual conditions" message;
- examination of the role of certification authorities;
- analysis of the potential impact of data protection legislation on message development processes and message users;
- continuation of the work on negotiability.

9. In response to a question raised by the Dutch delegate, the Legal Rapporteurs also mentioned that issues linked to "trusted third parties" would be included under the work item "certification authorities". In that respect, the work of UNCITRAL with respect to certification authorities would be fully taken into consideration.

10. The delegation of the United Kingdom expressed its support for the proposed work programme highlighting the fact that resources were critical to ensure its success and requesting the CEFACT Steering Group and the UN/ECE secretariat to address this issue.

11. The Legal Rapporteurs also mentioned that contacts had been established with the TEDIC project and a meeting of the LRT would be necessary to examine further this project and make suggestions.

12. WP.4 Re-engineering process: The Legal Rapporteurs reported that at the Brussels meeting of a sub-group of the LRT the issue of establishing a permanent legal group, the CEFACT Legal Group, and its mandate within the CEFACT structure had been discussed. The draft mandate which was being distributed to all members of the LRT would be discussed further at the next LRT meeting in Singapore, before being submitted to the CEFACT. The Legal Rapporteurs briefly presented a draft mandate (see below), noting the need for guidance by the Steering Group on how the CEFACT Legal Group could best serve the requirements and tasks addressed within CEFACT. Clarification from the Steering Group was also requested on the issue of recommendations to be prepared by the Legal Group and the allocation of resources to liaison with other groups and international organizations.

13. The draft mandate read as follows:

"

**CEFACT LEGAL GROUP**

**Draft Mandate**

1. Introduction.

It is proposed to CEFACT to establish a permanent working group named the CEFACT Legal Group.

As international trade develops and is supported by new technologies which impact on global practices and procedures, the legal implications and potential constraints resulting from those developments need to be identified and analyzed.

The removal of legal impediments is a key requirement to enable global trade to develop and be facilitated, thereby supporting the realization of the CEFACT mandate.

2. Mandate.

2.1. Purpose.

The CEFACT Legal Group is the forum empowered by CEFACT to address the legal issues of international trade practices and procedures supported by the use of new technologies including electronic commerce and EDI.

The Legal Group will approach these legal issues from a pragmatic standpoint and endeavour to provide practical solutions for the benefit of the user community.

It will do so by identifying relevant legal issues, analysing the key issues to determine actions to be undertaken and propose solutions and practical tools to address the legal impediments identified in this process.

2.2. Key deliverables.

The key deliverables will include:

- the issuing of reports on specific legal issues following research and reviews,
- the drafting of guidelines to support widespread awareness of best practices,
- the issuing of recommendations relating to the removal of legal impediments through practical tools or suggestions for legal actions to appropriate bodies or organizations.

The specific legal issues to be addressed will be determined in the Terms of Reference.

Key deliverables need to be made available through a Web site directly connected to the CEFACT Web site and linkage needs to be ensured with other relevant Web sites such as the UNCITRAL Web site.

### 2.3. Geographical focus.

The focus of the CEFACT Legal Group is at global level. It is based on requirements being expressed by national user groups or reflected through research, reviews and analysis and upon consultation with internal or external sources.

The responsibility of the Legal Group is to produce globally applicable deliverables.

### 2.4. Functional expertise for membership.

The membership of the group will be open to all CEFACT delegations or users provided that the functional expertise of the group collectively results in a detailed knowledge of legal matters relating to international commerce, trade facilitation, use of electronic commerce and related technologies and processes. Experts, once designated, are expected to contribute actively to the work based on their expertise.

### 2.5. Delegated responsibilities.

It is proposed that the CEFACT Legal Group be empowered:

- to establish sub-groups and supporting teams as required;
- to prepare, present and issue recommendations according to agreed upon procedures laid down in the Terms of Reference;
- to issue contributions to strategic policy issues;
- to co-operate and establish liaisons with other groups and organizations as required.

### 2.6. Resources requirements.

Requirement for Centre resources:

It is estimated that at least one half man/year of the UN/ECE secretariat resource will be required, including appropriate travel and subsistence resources to attend meetings outside the secretariat permanent location subject to a review of this requirement every two years. This resource will be required to ensure the appropriate secretariat support for the Legal Group and the implementation and achievements of the Terms of Reference, including support for co-ordination with other organizations.

Additional financial resources will be required to set up and maintain a Web site and the linkages with other Web sites. Further extra-budgetary resources might prove necessary to address specific areas of concern of work items through research or consultancy.

Substantial additional contributions will be expected from members of the Legal Group.

3. Recommendations for the Procedures.

New work items should be supported by submissions of member of the working group. "

ANNEX II

MATRIX OF THE STATUS OF ISO 9735 - VERSION 4  
(Submitted by the SDG Chair)

Part No.	Title and Document Number(s)	Status
1	Syntax rules common to all parts, together with syntax directories for each part - TRADE/WP.4/R.1241 - TRADE/WP.4/R.1241/Corr.1	Submitted to ISO for fast-track ballot (Sept.1996, after GE.1 approval)
2	Syntax rules specific to batch EDI - TRADE/WP.4/R.1242	Submitted to ISO for fast-track ballot (Sept.1996, after GE.1 approval)
3	Syntax rules specific to interactive EDI - TRADE/WP.4/R.1243 - TRADE/WP.4/R.1243/Corr.1	Submitted to ISO for fast track ballot (Sept.1996, after GE.1 approval)
4	Syntax and service report message for batch EDI (message type - CONTRL) - TRADE/WP.4/R.1244	Pending approval by GE.1 in Sept. 1997, then submission to ISO for fast track ballot
5	Security rules for batch EDI (authenticity, integrity and non-repudiation of origin) - TRADE/WP.4/R.1245/Rev.1	Approved by GE.1 in March 1997 and submitted to ISO for fast track ballot
6	Secure authentication and acknowledgement message (message type - AUTACK) - TRADE/WP.4/R.1246/Rev.1	Approved by GE.1 in March 1997 and submitted to ISO for fast track ballot
7	Security rules for batch EDI (Confidentiality) - TRADE/WP.4/R.1251/Rev.1	Aiming for GE.1 approval in Sept. 1997 and then submission to ISO for fast track ballot
8	Associated data in EDI - TRADE/WP.4/R.1248	Submitted to ISO for fast track ballot
9	Security key and certificate management message (message type - KEYMAN) - TRADE/WP.4/R.1249	Approved by GE.1 in March 1997, and submitted to ISO for fast track ballot
10	Security rules for interactive EDI - TRADE/WP.4/R.1284	Aiming for GE.1 approval in Sept. 1997 and then submission to ISO for fast track ballot