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Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards

Fifth session

Geneva, 28–29(am) May 2019

Report of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards on its fifth session

I. Overview

1. The fifth session of the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards was held from 28 to 29(am) May 2019.
2. The first day was dedicated to discussing the results of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Armenia. Ongoing and planned reforms in Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova were discussed, including follow-up to the recommendations from ECE assessment studies carried out in these countries. The first day also featured discussions on increasing the contribution of trade to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, delegates were briefed about on-going and planned reforms in Serbia where a similar study is underway.
3. The second day was dedicated to discussing the programmes of work for the Steering Committee and its subsidiary bodies.
4. Presentations and speeches delivered during the session can be found on the ECE website.¹

II. Attendance

5. Representatives from the following ECE member States attended the meeting: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova (Republic of), the Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

¹ <http://www.unece.org/trade/sctcs2019>.

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6. Representatives of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Armenia attended the meeting.

7. The following non-governmental organizations with a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council also attended the session: International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML).

8. The representative of the European Union (EU) and its member countries attended the meeting.

9. Representatives of the Italian National Accreditation Body (ACCREDIA) and the National Accreditation Centre of the Republic of Moldova (MOLDAC) attended the meeting upon the invitation of the secretariat.

III. Agenda item 1. Adoption of the agenda

10. The Chair opened the meeting and invited the ECE Chef de Cabinet and Secretary to the Commission to give the opening remarks.

11. The Chair presented the annotated provisional agenda (ECE/CTCS/2019/1).

Decision 2019-1

The Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards adopted the agenda of its fifth session.

IV. Agenda item 2. Election of officers

Decision 2019-2

The Steering Committee elected by acclamation, for a two-year period 2019–2020, as Chair Ms. Damegul Kabiyeva, Minister-Counsellor, Head of the Economic Section at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations (UN) Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, and as Vice Chairs: H.E. Mr. Tudor Ulianovschi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova and Mr. Dmitri Fomchenko, Deputy Permanent Representative of Belarus to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva.

A. General segment

V. Agenda item 3. Matters arising

12. The Chair informed member States that the Steering Committee's updated Mandate and Terms of Reference had been approved during the 68th session of the Commission that had been held on 9–10 April 2019 (Decision 68, documents E/2019/37 and E/ECE/1488).

13. The ECE Chef de Cabinet and Secretary of the Commission briefed the Steering Committee on issues emanating from the Executive Committee meetings since the previous session of the Steering Committee and the 68th session of the Commission. She drew their attention to the high-level statement emerging from the session and ECE's nexus approach to supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The approach sought to exploit opportunities for cross-sectoral work to enable a multi-dimensional treatment of development challenges facing ECE member States in support of whole-of-government interventions.

14. The ECE had identified four high-impact areas of its work: sustainable use of natural resources; sustainable and smart cities for all ages; sustainable mobility and smart connectivity; measuring and monitoring SDGs. The emphasis was on pooling expertise knowledge, coordination mechanisms, standards and instruments under the different sub-programmes to deliver integrated programmatic activities, which generate greater synergies and bolster the impact of ECE within existing mandates. She invited the Steering Committee to provide the secretariat with guidance for furthering the identified high impact areas.

Decision 2019-3

The Steering Committee took note of the Matters arising and requested the secretariat and the Bureau to keep delegations informed of further developments.

VI. Agenda item 4. Improving the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards' delivery on the 2030 Agenda

15. In 2017, the Bureau of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards (SCTCS) had reviewed activities under the inter-governmental body in terms of their consistency with the level of ambition of the 2030 Agenda (A/RES/70/1). The results had been summarized in a concept note that had been prepared by the Chair in consultation with the Bureau and presented to member States during the fourth annual session of the SCTCS (ECE/CTCS/2018/3).

16. Member States had taken note of the results and had requested the Bureau to consider the proposals made by the European Union and its member countries when preparing a programme of work for the SCTCS fifth session (ECE/CTCS/2018/2, Decision 2018-3). The European Union and its member countries had requested the Bureau to further elaborate the proposals listed in the Chair's concept note.

17. Delegates discussed the background paper elaborating these proposals, which had been prepared by the Bureau with the support of the secretariat (ECE/CTCS/2019/3).

18. The representative of the European Union and its member countries remained unconvinced and did not see the rational and merit of the proposals. It was a sweeping document and some of the elements fell outside the mandate of the ECE Steering Committee. The EU was not able to endorse the document.

19. The representative of the Russian Federation noted that SDGs could only be achieved based on a fair approach by the international community without excluding certain members. A more thorough analysis of barriers could help identify areas for synergies and impediments to achieving sustainable development in countries with economies in transition. He believed that the document could be endorsed. He noted that the Steering Committee's updated Mandate and Terms of Reference, which had been endorsed the previous year by the fourth session, provided for supporting the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDGs 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

20. The representative of the Republic of Moldova considered that the document could be endorsed and called upon the other countries to endorse it.

21. The secretariat explained that the Steering Committee's updated Mandate and Terms of Reference adding the SDGs to the existing areas, which involved reviewing and endorsing standards and recommendations developed by the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) and the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7); drafting the programme of work on trade capacity and standards;

and reviewing and endorsing the work plans of WP.6 and WP.7, and recommended these to the ECE Executive Committee for approval; and reviewing the results of demand-driven studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade.

22. The question was how to identify the perspectives and angles that the studies could adopt to ascertain the impact of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade on the achievement of SDGs, and how best to address environmental, gender and other dimensions of development. It was up to the member States to decide.

23. The representative of the Russian Federation said that the status of the technical papers proposed in document ECE/CTCS/2019/3 for guiding the research work under the Steering Committee had to be decided. A compromise solution was to have a range of research options for the donors and countries to choose from, and for the Steering Committee to provide the parameters for the research work.

Decision 2019-4

The Steering Committee took note of document ECE/CTCS/2019/3 “Improving the Economic Commission for Europe Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards delivery on the 2030 Agenda: Proposals by the Bureau”.

B. High-level segment: Removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the Economic Commission for Europe region

VII. Agenda item 5. Supporting the removal of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade

(a) Armenia: Findings and recommendations

24. The secretariat introduced the Study on Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in Armenia, which had been conducted over the course of October 2017 to January 2019 with financing from the United Nations Development Account. The study brought forward growth bottlenecks stemming from regulatory and procedural trade measures, using the ECE extended survey-based evaluation methodology. It drew on face-to-face interviews with relevant public stakeholders, business support institutions, logistic service providers and 91 enterprises from across the country, including 30 female owned enterprises. The study provided action-oriented recommendations, which addressed immediate and long-term capacity building needs for ensuring the removal of the identified barriers.

25. The Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Investments of Armenia said that the study provided sound analysis for turning trade into a tool for stimulating the structural transformation of the manufacturing sector towards increased specialization in high value-added products and the establishment of a knowledge-based economy, which would result in increased export diversification, job creation and reduced poverty.

26. The study showed that trade facilitation efforts had resulted in: a high level of trade transparency through online publication of up-to-date information on trade related regulations and administrative procedures; an efficient home-grown information and communications technology (ICT) systems for issuing customs declarations and trade permits electronically; a well-established integrated border management system for facilitating customs clearance.

27. Another indicator of successful reforms that could be deduced from the study was the strong competitive position of Armenia’s top 20 exports in all target countries including

in the EU and the Eurasian Economic Union, with the value of the revealed comparative advantage (RCA) index exceeding 1. These exports, which included food and beverages, chemical products and manufactured goods, had registered a consistent improvement in their overall competitiveness, with the value of RCA rising steadily. This meant that the exports of said products were unlikely to be substituted by alternative sources if the EU decided to lower its most favoured nation rate or extend preferential treatment to countries exporting similar products. This was significant, since as the study shows, Armenia had registered almost full and complete utilization of preferential treatment under the EU's Generalised scheme of preferences.

28. The challenge, as argued in the study, was to maintain these positive trends and focus on stimulating trade creation effects. This required removing the identified barriers, which operated throughout the international supply chain. These barriers affected both male and female-owned enterprises in a similar fashion. It was the Government's hope that donors would take the findings and recommendations into account as they planned their support for Armenia and would continue the fruitful cooperation with the ECE. The recommendations would help:

- Complete the country's transition to a paperless trading system;
- Fulfil the country's commitments under the WTO Agreement on Trade facilitation;
- Develop the national quality assurance system, particularly through the achievement of international recognition of conformity assessment results issued by Armenian bodies;
- Further develop the national system of metrology;
- Develop the manufacturing enterprises' technological capability to enable them to venture into new innovative production activities.

29. The Steering Committee was briefed in more detail about the findings of the study by representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and Investments, the State Revenue Committee and the Food Safety Inspection Body. The representatives also reported on planned reforms, capacity needs and required assistance for implementing the study recommendations.

30. Referring to the lack of clarity among Armenian traders over environmental and transport regulations applicable to cargo transiting through Georgia raised in the ECE study, the representative of the Revenue Service of Georgia said that her agency stood ready to support Armenia's State Revenue Committee efforts to address this knowledge gap. She also highlighted avenues for further strengthening border cooperation between the two countries.

31. The representative of IEC provided an overview of ongoing initiatives of relevance to Armenia as it would forge ahead in implementing the recommendations emerging from the study.

32. The representative of OIML invited Armenia to join the OIML, noting that this would enable it to implement the recommendations emerging from the study and maximize reaped benefits by participating in the technical work. He said that he stood ready to support Armenia's National Institute of Metrology in obtaining full membership in the OIML.

33. The representative of the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Armenia noted that the office was focused on supporting UN deliver as one processes in the country. The office was supporting the Government's efforts to develop sectoral strategies for implementing the 2030 Agenda. The findings and recommendations emerging from the

study needed to be incorporated in the sectoral policies. They would also work with the ECE and the Government to mobilise resources to implement the study recommendations.

34. The secretariat to ECE WP.6 drew the Armenian delegation's attention to the working party's Recommendation S on "Applying Predictive Risk Management Tools for Targeted Market Surveillance", which was presented to the EAEU member States. She also drew attention to the training material for supporting education on standards, noting that the recommendations were of direct relevance to Armenia as it forged ahead in removing regulatory and procedural trade barriers.

35. The representative of the ECE Sustainable Transport division invited Armenia to consider acceding to ECE Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP). The division stood ready to support Armenia in acceding this tool and the entire set of ECE protocols and agreements mentioned in the study. He also invited the Government to benefit from the UN Road Safety Trust Fund by responding to calls for proposals and drew their attention to the UN Global Framework of Action for Road Safety. The Framework offered a benchmarking tool for helping countries assess their road safety management systems and identify priority areas for further improvement.

36. The representative of ECE Working Party on Public Private Partnership introduced the ECE guiding principles for people first projects, which set the foundations for ensuring due diligence in addressing the multi-faceted aspects of financing development in a manner that was transparent and consistent with zero tolerance approaches to corruption.

37. The Deputy Minister expressed his appreciation for the interventions made by the delegates and international agencies. Armenia would report to the Steering Committee on the implementation of the study recommendations.

Decision 2019-5.1

The Steering Committee took note of the agreed upon recommendations for removing regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Armenia contained in document ECE/CTCS/2019/3 and invited the secretariat to support the Government of Armenia in implementing the recommendations made and to report back to the Steering Committee at its sixth session in 2020.

(b) On-going work

38. The representative of Serbia informed the Steering Committee on progress made in carrying out the study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the country. The secretariat would share the zero draft with the Government shortly. Although not yet a WTO member, Serbia was actively implementing the Agreement on Trade Facilitation and had already established a National Trade Facilitation Committee.

39. The secretariat informed the Steering Committee that preparations were underway for developing a system of indicators for measuring and monitoring progress in gearing trade to serve as a means of implementation. The indicators would draw on the findings and recommendations emerging from the studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and would be developed in consultation with relevant State agencies, representatives of the business community and the UN Resident Coordinator Offices.

Decision 2019-5.2

The Steering Committee took note of the report on preparations underway for carrying out additional studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in member States and

requested the secretariat to seek additional funding, carry out studies requested by member States and report to the sixth session of the Steering Committee.

VIII. Agenda item 6. Country follow-up to ECE studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade

40. The representative of Kazakhstan reported that the ECE study provided practical recommendations, which were implemented to support the implementation of trade reforms at the national level; the regional level within the context of the Eurasian Economic Union integration efforts; and the international level within the context of cooperation arrangements with third countries.

41. The Government was in the process of implementing a broad range of reform measures to streamline and simplify trade related regulations and administrative procedures in almost all areas to: improve and further automate the permit system, and customs administration; improve at the border risk management systems; and support the unification of regulatory requirements within the customs territory of the Eurasian Economic Union.

42. The Representative of Kyrgyzstan's State Enterprise Single Window Centre for Foreign Trade Single Window, noted that following the integration of the country's national non-tariff measures legislation into the UNCTAD online Trade Analysis Information System (TRAINS), the Centre was considering the development of an in-house software to support the further dissemination of such legislation.

43. The Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova introduced the main recommendations emerging from the ECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the country. These included 38 recommendations to foster transparency, reduce documentary requirements, facilitate cross border trade, develop the national system of quality control and quality assurance and logistical services. The recommendations had been integrated in the country's national trade facilitation action plan and informed a range of reforms for consolidating a paperless trading system, achieving international recognition of conformity assessment results and increasing the efficiency of cross border control. These recommendations were implemented in support of donors and international development partners. As the Government forged ahead in its reforms, it was still challenged by its limited financial resources.

44. The representative of the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova briefed the Steering Committee on reform achievements to date, in particular: the adoption of the new Customs Code adapted to the requirements of the EU *acquis communautaire*; the automation of customs administration; the development of the national Single Window; the increased levels of transparency through increased use of ICT tools for the dissemination of up-to-date information; the further strengthening of border coordination with neighbouring countries; and, the development of Authorized Economic Operators schemes. The delegation of the Republic of Moldova presented five project proposals to the secretariat for consideration of international financial support.

45. Representatives of the National Accreditation Centre of the Republic of Moldova (MOLDAC) and the Italian National Accreditation Body (ACCREDIA) briefed the Steering Committee about the results of the twinning project, which sought to help MOLDAC fulfil the requirements for achieving international recognition of its accreditation process for test results, calibration certificates, inspection reports and conformity certification of products, management systems and competence of persons. The project, which had been implemented over a period of 10 months, equipped MOLDAC with the required capacity for addressing a number of recommendations emerging from the ECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in the country and had commenced the

process for becoming signatory to European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA) Bilateral Agreement for: Product Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC 17065); Management Systems Certification Bodies (ISO/IEC 17021); Calibration laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025); Testing laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025); and Medical laboratories (ISO 15189).

46. The representative of UNCTAD looked forward to further cooperation with Kyrgyzstan in developing the software. UNCTAD stood ready to assist the ECE member States in mapping their national non-tariff measures (NTM) legislation. Discussions were underway for undertaking this mapping exercise with Armenia and UNCTAD invited Azerbaijan to discuss the possibility of undertaking a similar mapping with UNCTAD.

Decision 2019-6

The Steering Committee took note of the Report on Follow-up on Economic Commission for Europe countries studies: Republic of Moldova (ECE/CTCS/2019/5) and the achievements of the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova, including the proposals for mobilising international support for five projects. The Steering Committee took note of the verbal reports made by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova in support of implementing the recommendations made in previous studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and invited member States to continue reporting to the Steering Committee at its sixth session in 2020.

IX. Agenda Item 7. Trade as a means for implementing the 2030 Agenda

47. The representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia briefed the Steering Committee about Georgia's experience in gearing trade towards serving as a means for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Georgia's approach was focused on creating synergies between trade and other economic policies. Trade policies aimed at diversifying partners and ensuring that non-tariff measures are compliant with the WTO requirements and those of main trading partner (EU). They were complemented by efforts to: develop the institutional capacities of State agencies (for example, a Single Window Facility and a robust quality assurance system); transform Georgia into a regional transit hub; support start-ups and help existing enterprises develop their productive capacity; achieve energy efficiency; and develop the service sector.

48. Georgia had also developed a web-based portal for ensuring prompt dissemination of information for monitoring progress in achieving the SDGs in Georgia.

49. The representative of the UN Resident Coordinator office in Armenia said the ECE study on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade traced the contribution of each recommendation to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. There were at least 10 SDGs that were directly or indirectly influenced by the implementation of the study recommendations. As an example, by stressing the importance of developing the national system of quality control and quality assurance, the recommendations would help achieve SDG 2. The challenge was to develop, in cooperation with national statistics offices, indicators for measuring direct and indirect links between trade reforms and the SDGs.

50. The Officer in Charge of the ECE Forests, Land and Housing Division briefed member States on the experience of housing and land management in incorporating a trade perspective in research activities. The analysis in the most recent ECE Country Profile on Housing and Land Management in Belarus had been carried out by the team in charge of the ECE series of studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. Such a perspective was consistent with the concept of "trade as a means of implementation" of the SDGs.

51. The country profile, which would be published in the months after the Steering Committee session, would feature an assessment of the impact of technical regulations,

standardization, quality assurance and metrology on housing affordability and availability, drawing on the ECE evaluation methodology informing the national studies on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade. The assessment, which was integrated into the country profile under a separate chapter, was meant to help the Government strike a balance between affordability concerns and the overall quality of the country's housing stock. Striking such a balance was even more important since houses that do not adhere to safety, health and environmental requirements not only carry negative consequences for the wellbeing of population and environment but also create a burden on households' budget in the form of repair and maintenance costs.

Decision 2019-7

The Steering Committee took note of the document Trade as means for implementing the 2030 Agenda: The experience of Georgia as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2019/6. The Steering Committee congratulated the Government of Georgia and the secretariat for extending the ECE studies to include the Sustainable Development Goals in view of trade as means for implementation and requested other Governments to follow suit. The Steering Committee requested the secretariat to report to the Steering Committee's session in 2020.

C. Continuation of the General Segment

X. Agenda item 8 Programme of work

(a) Updates from subsidiary bodies

52. The secretariats of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) and the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7) briefed the delegates on on-going and future activities. They also invited experts from ECE member States to participate in regional training activities and formal sessions, which would be organized in 2019–2020.

Decision 2019-8.1

The Steering Committee endorsed the report of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies on its 28th session and requested WP.6 to report at the 2020 session.

Decision 2019-8.2

The Steering Committee endorsed the report of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards on its 74th session and requested WP.7 to report at the 2020 session. The Steering Committee endorsed the Revised Programme of Work of WP.7 as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2018/7 and the revised Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (2018) as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2018/8.

(b) Capacity-building and technical assistance activities

53. The secretariat reported on ongoing and future capacity building and technical assistance activities (ECE/CTCS/2019/7). The secretariat invited delegates to take note of the relevant sections of the Trade Subprogramme's report on capacity-building and technical assistance activities. The secretariat also noted that sections implemented by the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) were for information only.

54. The representative of Belarus informed the Steering Committee that his country appreciated the impartial technical analysis provided by ECE experts to support the development of the national paperless trading system. The World Bank had prepared a road map for guiding the establishment of the paperless trading system, and ECE experts' conclusions would be considered in developing the system.

55. The Representative of Kazakhstan expressed her country's appreciation of the ECE and UNCTAD assistance in ensuring due classification and publication of the country's non-tariff measures (NTM) legislation on UNCTAD TRAINS, and for the legal analysis of this legislation. Kazakhstan also appreciated ECE's and UNCTAD's support in establishing the national Single Window and supporting a consistent migration to a paperless trading environment.

56. The Representative of Kyrgyzstan expressed his country's appreciation of technical assistance provided by UNCTAD and ECE. Further support and assistance would be needed to ensure continuing and prompt updating of published legislation.

57. The secretariat reported that discussions were underway with UNCTAD to ensure Kazakhstan's and Kyrgyzstan's access and use of the software that was being developed by UNCTAD to enable countries to update the NTM legislation published on UNCTAD TRAINS.

Decision 2019-8.3

The Steering Committee took note of the report on capacity-building and technical assistance as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2019/7 and the verbal reports made by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and requested the secretariat to present a report at the next session of the Steering Committee.

(c) Cooperation with other organizations and Economic Commission for Europe bodies

58. The secretary to the Steering Committee introduced the report on the trade subprogramme's collaboration with other organizations and ECE bodies (ECE/CTCS/2019/8).

59. The secretariat briefed the Steering Committee about ongoing and future activities (ECE/TRADE/CEFACT/2019/2), including matters arising from UN/CEFACT from its twenty-fourth plenary session (ECE/TRADE/CEFACT/2019/3). UN/CEFACT had approved two new policy recommendations on Single Submission Portals (N.37) and Sustainable Procurement (N.43), twelve new standards on Multi-Modal Transport, and e-Quality Cert, including the new versions of UN/EDIFACT, UN/LOCODE, CCLs, XML Schemas Libraries, three white papers on Blockchain for Trade Facilitation and Smart Containers, four Executive Guides on selected UN/CEFACT standards, two Briefing Notes on the work of UN/CEFACT in support of SDGs 12 and 17, and Training Materials on Streamlining Documentary and Procedural Requirements for Trade Facilitation. Capacity-building and advisory support were being provided, with partner organizations such as UNCTAD, ITC and OSCE, to several member States, including Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, North Macedonia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine, which would lead to the formulation of National Trade Facilitation Roadmaps to sustain countries' efforts in implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and moving towards digital and sustainable trade patterns. The secretariat was carrying out a joint UN Regional Commissions Survey on Sustainable and Digital Trade Facilitation and an online Survey Platform which would allow dynamic monitoring and benchmarking of countries' performance. The results of the Survey and the Platform would be launched at the WTO Aid for Trade Review in July 2019.

Decision 2019-8.4

The Steering Committee took note of the report of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business as contained in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2018/2 and their report on Matters arising in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2019/3. The Steering Committee also took note of the secretariat's report on Cooperation with other organizations and the Economic Commission for Europe bodies and requested the secretariat to continue reporting at the sixth session in 2020.

(d) Stakeholder needs and priorities

60. The secretariat informed that the stakeholders' needs reported under agenda item 5 (b) would be recorded. The secretariat was also discussing further studies with member States and will report to the Steering Committee's session in 2020.

Decision 2019-8.5

The Steering Committee took note of the requests made by member States and their stakeholders and requested the secretariat to seek funding for further support activities and to report to the Steering Committee's session in 2020.

(e) Status of Implementation of the 2018–2019 programme of work

61. The secretary to the Steering Committee introduced the report on the implementation of the trade subprogramme's 2018–2019 programme of work (ECE/CTCS/2019/11), noting that sections on UN/CEFACT were for information only.

Decision 2019-8.6

The Steering Committee endorsed the status of implementation of the trade Subprogramme 2018-2019 programme of work.

(f) Trade subprogramme's programme of work for 2020

62. The secretariat presented the trade subprogramme's draft programme of work for 2020, which was based on the trade subprogramme's draft proposed budget for 2020 and strategic framework for 2020–2021 (as contained in document ECE/CTCS/2018/13).

63. The Russian Federation made a proposal to rename the Trade Subprogramme "Trade and Economic Integration". ECE has eight sub-programmes, including trade overseen by this Committee and the Subprogramme on economic cooperation and integration overseen by the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (CICPPP). At the last session of CICPPP, there was a proposal to rename the programme to include competition. Member States were still discussing the proposal and the Russian Federation believed that the Steering Committee would be more appropriate and a more comfortable place to discuss economic integration, including issues within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The Russian Federation would not want ECE to miss out on this aspect and ECE could play a more active role in supporting integration efforts in the region. He proposed that the Steering Committee Bureau should consider the proposal and report to member States during the Steering Committee's 2020 session.

64. The Secretary to the Steering Committee noted that in terms of procedure, decisions on individual bodies are made by the body above it. If acceptable to member States, the proposal could be submitted to EXCOM for decision. If the Steering Committee would agree, the Bureau could work with other member States in preparing a proposal for the consideration of EXCOM. The Bureau could also develop such a proposal.

Decision 2019-8.7

The Steering Committee endorsed the Trade subprogramme's programme of work for 2020 and requested the Bureau of the Steering Committee to initiate discussions on a change of the name of the Subprogramme on trade to include economic integration in consultation with other Subprogrammes and Member States.

XI. Agenda Item 9. Other business

Decision 2019-9

The Steering Committee requested the secretariat and the Bureau to find opportune dates for the sixth session in May–June 2020 subject to the availability of meeting rooms and requested the Chair, the Bureau and the secretariat to prepare the necessary documents and make the necessary preparations for the meeting.

XII. Agenda item 10. Adoption of the report

Decision 2019-10

The Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards adopted the report of its fifth session held on 28 and 29 May 2019 and requested the secretariat to issue the report in document ECE/CTCS/2019/2.
