



Executive Committee

Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business**Twenty-third session**

Geneva, 3 – 4 April 2017

Report of the Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) on its twenty-third session**I. Attendance**

1. The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) held its twenty-third Plenary session in Geneva from 3 to 4 April 2017.
2. The following countries were represented: Australia, Austria, Belarus, Canada, China, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malta, Nepal, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (United Kingdom).
3. The following United Nations organizations participated in the meeting: The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The following intergovernmental organization participated in the meeting: The Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC). The following non-governmental organization participated in the meeting: GS1.
4. The Under Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) opened the meeting. He drew particular attention to the recent entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO TFA), last February 2017, and mentioned that in difficult times for trade, trade facilitation is one area where countries agree that more needs to be done. He mentioned that ECE, in partnership with other key United Nations Organizations, have already committed to support member States in implementing the Agreement. He also stated that the ECE trade facilitation recommendations and UN/CEFACT electronic business standards will be helpful in this regard and encouraged member States to sustain this valuable work.
5. The UN/CEFACT Chair delivered opening remarks, highlighting the importance of the adoption of the WTO TFA, especially concerning its article 10 on the use of and reference to international standards. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent an opportunity for UN/CEFACT as many of its deliverables directly relate to these goals. Moreover, he underlined the nature of the work of UN/CEFACT based on a public and private sector partnership. He stressed the importance of the active participation of Heads of Delegations (HoDs) in the process of UN/CEFACT projects. Lastly, he expressed his gratitude for the work of the secretariat and the work of all experts, as well as for the support of HoDs, all contributing to the successful working of UN/CEFACT.

II. Adoption of the agenda (Agenda Item 1)

6. The secretariat presented the revised draft agenda ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/1/Rev.1.
7. The Plenary adopted the agenda as proposed (**Decision 17-01**).

III. Elections (Agenda Item 2)

8. Elections were held to fill the vacant Vice Chair positions. The positions will be for three years, from 2017 to 2020.
9. The secretariat recalled the background to the election, as well as the steps taken to request the nomination of candidates. The secretariat received eight nominations from the



Delegation of Australia for Mr. Ian Watt, Canada for Mr. Colin Laughlan, India for Mr. Tahseen Khan, Italy for Mr. Raffaele Fantetti, The Netherlands for Mr. Harm Jan van Burg, Nigeria for Ms. Estelle Igwe, Sweden for Mr. Anders Grangård, the United Kingdom for Ms. Sylvia (Sue) Probert.

10. The Plenary elected all eight candidates by acclamation, Mr. Ian Watt, Mr. Colin Laughlan, Mr. Tahseen Khan, Mr. Raffaele Fantetti, Mr. Harm Jan van Burg, Ms. Estelle Igwe, Mr. Anders Grangård, Ms. Sylvia (Sue) Probert as UN/CEFACT Vice Chairs for the period 2017-2020 (**Decision 17-02**).

11. Elections were also held for two Regional Rapporteurs. The Nigerian Delegation presented the nomination of Mr. Ibrahima Diagne for the position of UN/CEFACT Regional Rapporteur for Africa, and the Indian delegation presented the nomination of Ms. Urachada Ketprom for the position of UN/CEFACT Regional Rapporteur for Asia-Pacific.

12. The Plenary elected by acclamation Mr. Ibrahima Diagne as UN/CEFACT Regional Rapporteur for Africa and Ms. Urachada Ketprom as UN/CEFACT Regional Rapporteur for Asia-Pacific (**Decision 17-03**).

IV. Matters arising since the twenty-second session (Agenda Item 3)

13. The Chief of the ECE Trade Facilitation Section presented the document Matters arising since the twenty-second session (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/3). She reported that the secretariat is involved in supporting a multi-stakeholder initiative called “eTrade for All”, initiated by UNCTAD to facilitate coordinated assistance in the area of international electronic commerce. The initiative will provide an opportunity for the dissemination and implementation of ECE and UN/CEFACT recommendations, standards and tools through the work of other organizations. The initiative is to be launched in the last week of April 2017.

14. She highlighted the relevance of the WTO TFA to the work of UN/CEFACT. Several new and revised ECE Recommendations directly support the implementation of the WTO TFA, including Recommendation 1 on the United Nations Layout Key, Recommendation 4 on National Trade Facilitation Bodies, Recommendation 18 on Facilitation Measures related to International Trade Procedures, Recommendations 33 to 36 on Single Window and Recommendation 40 on Consultation Approaches. Standards that can support the implementation of the Agreement include the United Nations Core Component Library (UN/CCL), the United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport (UN/EDIFACT), Code Lists and various Business Requirements Specifications (BRS) and Requirements Specification Mappings (RSM). The ECE secretariat has been active in supporting the implementation of the Agreement through the organization of workshops and meetings on this topic.

15. The Chief highlighted the importance of coordination among international organizations to ensure efficient and effective support is provided to countries in implementing the WTO TFA. To this end, ECE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT) in April 2017 and will continue to work closely with its partners UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre (ITC) to jointly support Member States.

16. The work of UN/CEFACT is also very relevant for the implementation of the SDGs. ECE and UN/CEFACT recommendations, standards and tools make it simpler, faster and cheaper to trade and exchange information, thus contributing to increased growth, productivity and employment in countries. ECE has prepared a short publication on the contribution of the work of UN/CEFACT to the SDGs.

17. Specifically, UN/CEFACT has been working on projects for sustainable management of fisheries in support of SDG 14, on a traceability framework in support of SDG 12 and on public private partnerships (PPPs) for trade facilitation in support of SDG 17. It has also been working on the control of trade in certain environmentally sensitive commodities and endangered species, contributing to SDG 15, and on a project on women in trade facilitation, contributing to SDG 5.

18. In terms of outreach and support activities, the secretariat has provided technical assistance and capacity building to governmental trade control agencies and the business community for the implementation of a Single Window in Albania. In 2016, the ECE Trade Facilitation Section in cooperation with ECE Working Party 6 on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies launched a capacity building project for Kyrgyzstan, to familiarise traders and government officials with international and national trade-related regulations, policies and trends that will end in 2018.

19. During 2016, ECE undertook an upgrade of its Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide (TFIG). With 10.5 million hits last year, it is the reference knowledge platform for trade facilitation. The secretariat expressed its gratitude to Sweden for its latest contribution and called on

countries to continue to support this project. ECE is currently raising funds to maintain and further enhance the TFIG by developing additional Domains, itineraries and sections, establishing this tool as the central portal for information on trade facilitation in support of the implementation of the WTO TFA, and including in the TFIG a “One United Nations Inquiry Point” on trade facilitation for countries.

20. The Regional Adviser presented on advisory services carried out in support of trade development and facilitation in the transition economies. The three key areas of work were: support for implementation of the WTO TFA, the streamlining of documentary requirements for trade, Single Window and National Trade Facilitation Bodies. He emphasised the importance of working on trade facilitation implementation in close cooperation with countries and key international organizations, and encouraged continued support for such work.

21. The Delegation of Ukraine acknowledged the work of the Regional Adviser as an important contribution to their country’s efforts in building a digital economy to facilitate trade procedures.

22. The Plenary took note of the report on matters arising and requested that the secretariat report on matters arising again in 2018 (**Decision 17-04**).

V. Bureau overview of developments (Agenda Item 4)

23. The Chair briefed the delegations on recent developments within the Bureau and invited each Bureau Vice Chair to report on the activities within their Programme Development Areas (PDAs) and relevant work by UN/CEFACT experts.

24. The Vice Chair in charge of the International Trade Procedures PDA reported on the finalization of a number of recommendations submitted to the Plenary for approval and noting under item 7. She also briefly explained several work items, which she expects will be launched as projects in the near future, including a Recommendation on Gender in Trade Facilitation; Single Window Interoperability with Private Sector Platforms; a Self-Assessment Model for Single Window; and the development of a High-Level Guidance on the Implementation of the WTO TFA. Two Focal Points will follow-up on the Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide and the WTO TFA to enhance communication between the secretariat and UN/CEFACT experts in these areas.

25. The Vice Chair in charge of the Buy/Pay PDA provided an update on his Domain’s projects. Completed projects include the Revised Remittance Advice, the Supply Chain Reference Data Model, and the Green Paper on Trade Finance as a tool for Trade Facilitation, for noting under agenda item 7. Ongoing activities include projects on the Purchase Order Financing Request, Supply Chain Scheduling, the Extension of Cross-Industry Messages Technical Artefacts, and a Background Research Paper on Public Procurement Using International Standards. Forward-looking activities include the idea of a Sustainable Procurement Project in connection with SDG 12.7, a Recommendation on Trade Finance based on the Green Paper, and an e-Tendering Reference Data Model.

26. The Vice Chair in charge of the Ship PDA provided an overview of projects in the Transport and Logistics Domain as well as on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE), and reiterated that the maritime container industry is extensively using UN/EDIFACT. During the last year, the Transport and Logistics Domain completed the Verified Gross Mass (VERMAS) project, for noting under agenda item 7. Ongoing activities include projects on a Multi-Modal Transport Reference Data Model, the Electronic International Road Consignment Note (eCMR), the Logistic Pipeline, and alignment and harmonization work with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on its Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business (FAL Compendium). It is anticipated that projects on Smart Container Monitoring and on an Electronic Bill of Delivery (eBoD) will be launched in the future. Concerning the UN/LOCODE, the 2016 UN/LOCODE conference had taken place and its report will be presented under agenda item 7 for noting. In addition, the UN/LOCODE directories 2016-1 and 2016-2 will be presented for noting under agenda item 7. Activities include the feasibility study and the community of Focal Points. It is further planned to introduce an advisory group on UN/LOCODE, as proposed for decision under agenda item 8, and to work on the idea of a UN/LOCODE Family.

27. The Vice Chair in charge of the Regulatory PDA reported on completed projects, including the Journal Book project and the Transboundary Movement of Waste project, both presented for noting under agenda item 7. Ongoing activities include the work with ISO/PC295 and the work on the project for “Ensuring Legally Significant Trusted Transboundary Electronic Interaction”. He also announced that in the future, an Accounting and Audit Reference Data Model and an Audit Control project will be under study. New activities on Cyber Security, Time-Stamping, Carbon Emission Calculation and a cross-UN/CEFACT

project on Blockchain are likely to be launched soon. The Vice Chair also reported on the Trusted Transboundary Electronic Interaction conference, organised in collaboration with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), and invited member States to get involved in planned activities.

28. The Vice Chair in charge of the Sectoral PDA reported on completed projects, including Sustainable Fishery messages (FLUX v1.1), Commercial Claims and Property Claims, as well as the Executive Guide on Small Scaled Lodging Houses (SLH), the latter being presented for noting under agenda item 7. The Insurance Domain has made large submissions to the UN/CCL and has been working in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN). Within the Agriculture Domain, work is currently being undertaken on a Traceability Framework Guide, on Track and Trace Plant, Animal and their By-Products, and on maintaining existing deliverables such as eCrops, eLab and the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF). Within the Travel and Tourism Domain, ongoing activities include projects on Destination Travel Information, and SLH Implementation pilot projects in Asia and the Pacific. The Utilities Domain is engaging in the alignment of Master Data for Metering Point and of Measured Data in the Deregulated Energy Market. In the future, the Agriculture Domain will be working on ideas for implementation guidelines for eCert, eCrop and Track and Trace, on ideas for an eQuality Certification project, and on an Agriculture Reference Data Model. Furthermore, a Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries will be introduced, and presented for decision under agenda item 8. Within the Insurance Domain, work is planned on an Insurance Reference Data Model, on projects including Business Information Entities (BIEs) and schemas. The Travel and Tourism Domain aims to work on a Green Paper on Experiences Programme, on implementation support for small housing accommodation and tourism information, and on a Travel and Tourism Reference Data Model.

29. The Vice Chair in charge of the Methodology and Technology PDA reported on the evolution of work in his PDA since the last Plenary. Within the Specifications Domain, this included the provision of explanatory documents for the activities of the PDA, namely the completed Executive Guide on the United Nations Core Component Technical Specification (UN/CCTS) and the UN/CCL, and the Executive Guide on UN/EDIFACT, which will both be presented for noting under agenda item 7. Ongoing activities of this Domain encompass the Standard Business Document Header (SBDH) / Business Document Envelope (BDE) project in collaboration with the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), the Library Publication Formats, the Reference Data Model Publication, the Code Management project and the Publication of Version 2 Artefacts. In the future, the Domain will provide technology support for the semantic hub principle of our prospective directions (strategic framework "B"). The Library and Syntax Focal Points completed work on UN/EDIFACT Directories D.16A, D.16A.1, D.16B; the Core Component Libraries 16A, 16B; and the UN/CEFACT XML Schema Library D.16A, D.16A.1, D.16B presented for noting under agenda item 7. Ongoing activities include the work on libraries 17A and on library development and extreme quality assurance and validation. All Data Maintenance Request (DMR) submissions for 17B must be submitted eight weeks prior to the first day of the 30th UN/CEFACT Forum.

30. The Chair reported on Bureau activities since the twenty-second Plenary. The Bureau has had bi-weekly conference calls, three face-to-face meetings and has made sixty-three decisions, three quarters of which concern project development. He also reported on liaison and representation of UN/CEFACT at conferences and other organizations. Over the past year, UN/CEFACT was represented at over fifty meetings in all regions of the world. The Chair also noted that the use of twitter and other communication materials, as requested at the twenty-second Plenary, has been taken up. UN/CEFACT was the subject of over thirty tweets and the Bureau has produced a regular quarterly report on its activities to the HoDs. Key themes over the past year highlighted by the Chair include the Programme of Work 2017 – 2018, the support of project development, and activities of a project before and after the UN/CEFACT open development process (ODP). The Chair also emphasised the important role that the secretariat plays in assisting in the dissemination of the work of UN/CEFACT and the global nature of this representation activity, especially in light of the implementation of the WTO TFA.

31. The secretariat presented support activities to UN/CEFACT including ongoing work on the Collaborative UN/CEFACT Environment (CUE), UN/EDIFACT and other libraries, UN/LOCODE maintenance, communication activities, in addition to substantial work in collaboration with the WTO. The secretariat reported on the limited resources available for these support activities and possible future cuts that may affect its work.

32. The Delegation of Canada expressed its appreciation of the Bureau, the secretariat and UN/CEFACT experts who volunteer their time, for the excellent work done, and enquired about the possibility of having a written report on the conference on "Ensuring Legally Significant Trusted Transboundary Electronic Interaction". The Chair noted that all conference

presentations from the UN/CEFACT Forum are online and that information on project progress is available on the UN/CEFACT CUE.

33. The Plenary took note of the Bureau overview of recent developments and requested that the Bureau report on developments again in 2018 (**Decision 17-05**).

VI. Reports of Rapporteurs (Agenda Item 5)

34. The Rapporteur for Africa presented his report on activities since the last session (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/4) and the Rapporteur for Asia and the Pacific presented his report (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/5).

35. The activities of the Rapporteur of Africa included the assessment of the E-commerce pilot project between Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire, and an Agreement signed with the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 2016, including the establishment of an African trade portal. He also reported that a second Single Window implementation guide has been developed and will be launched during the UNCTAD eCommerce week at a side event co-organised by the African Alliance for eCommerce (AAEC) and UN/CEFACT in Geneva at the end of April 2017. Under the umbrella of the Economic Commission for Africa, Single Window conferences are to be organised in six countries.

36. The Regional Rapporteur for Asia and the Pacific referred to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to be signed between ECE and the Asia Pacific Council for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (AFACT) during the Plenary. He also mentioned that a new working group on cross border eMarket place had been established within AFACT and that AFACT members are working on the Electronic sanitary and phytosanitary (eSPS) certificate.

37. The Bureau and the secretariat commended the Rapporteurs for their continued support to expand the outreach work of UN/CEFACT in the African and the Asia-Pacific regions and invited them to further develop synergies and cooperation among the regions. The Delegation of The Netherlands invited the Rapporteur for Asia and the Pacific to further expand the reporting activities on the region.

38. The Plenary took note of the reports of the Rapporteurs for Africa and for Asia and the Pacific and requested that they provide reports again in 2018 (**Decision 17-06**).

VII. Activities of other ECE bodies and international organizations of interest to UN/CEFACT (Agenda Item 6)

39. Delegates were briefed on work relevant to UN/CEFACT by representatives from the following United Nations bodies: UNCTAD, ECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards, ECE Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6), ECE Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7), and ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30). These representatives highlighted the good, ongoing cooperation with UN/CEFACT and mentioned potential areas for future collaboration.¹

40. The Director of the UNCTAD Transport and Logistics Branch highlighted three key objectives of their work (trade efficiency, generating income with trade logistics and making trade sustainable) to be achieved through three interconnected pillars, which are research and analysis; technical assistance and capacity building; and consensus building. The Acting Director of the ECE Trade Division, speaking on behalf of WP.7, highlighted the increasing need for eStandards related work, particularly for traceability in the agricultural sector. Concerning recently completed studies, it was noted that the WTO TFA brings a risk of fragmenting reforms around distinct areas while limiting the scope of trade facilitation reforms.

41. The Secretary of WP.6 underlined the importance of promoting the use of standards by policy makers and business, as well as promoting the SDGs. The focus of the work of WP.6 lies in developing common regulatory frameworks; furthering education on standardization; gender-responsive standards; enhancing the use of risk management tools in public policy; and promoting partnerships between standards bodies and authorities at local, national and global levels.

¹ The presentations are available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40403>.

42. The representatives of the secretariat of WP.30 highlighted the relevance of the 1975 TIR² Convention, especially as an inter-transit model will be boosted due to the use of TIR. Digitisation poses challenges to the participation in TIR, but the use of the UN/CEFACT modelling methodology has greatly contributed to computerizing the TIR.

43. The secretariat made a brief announcement concerning the second joint Global Survey on Trade Facilitation and Paperless Trade of the United Nations Regional Commissions, which has a focus on the implementation of the WTO TFA measures and on measures in support of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The survey will serve as the basis of a global report and five regional reports, which are planned to be presented at the WTO Aid for Trade Conference in July 2017. The secretariat invited Delegates to submit their input to the survey.

VIII. Recommendations and standards (Agenda Item 7)

44. The Chair provided a brief overview of the different recommendations and standards to be considered by the Plenary.

45. The Chair presented ECE Recommendation 36 on Single Window Interoperability (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/6), submitted to the Plenary for approval. The Delegation of Ukraine congratulated the experts that took part in the development of this Recommendation and proposed some amendments of the Russian translation of the document, for which the secretariat will produce a corrigendum. The Plenary approved the Recommendation (**Decision 17-07**).

46. The Chair presented the revision of ECE Recommendation 1 on United Nations Layout Key for Trade Documents (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/7), submitted to the Plenary for approval. The Plenary approved the Recommendation (**Decision 17-08**).

47. The Chair presented ECE Recommendation 42 on Trade and Transport Facilitation Monitoring Mechanisms (TTFMM) (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/8), submitted to the Plenary for approval. He noted that it was a project started in UNESCAP and brought to UN/CEFACT to develop a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of trade and transport facilitation measures. The Delegation of Ukraine proposed some editorial changes in the Russian version of the document, which will be reflected in the published document. The Plenary approved the Recommendation (**Decision 17-09**).

48. The Chair pointed out that ECE Recommendation 41 on Public-Private Partnerships in Trade Facilitation (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/9) had been approved intersessionally on 25 December 2016. The Plenary took note of the Recommendation (**Decision 17-10**).

49. The Delegation of The Netherlands made a suggestion that the intersessional approvals to be kept to the minimum to allow for discussion of documents during the Plenary. The Delegation of Ukraine expressed hope to have the Annexes of ECE Recommendation 41 translated into Russian. The secretariat explained that this had not been possible due to the length of the document and resources constraints.

50. The Plenary took note of the Summary report of recommendations and standards (ECE/TRADE/346/Rev.1), which was submitted for noting in order to have it translated into French and Russian (**Decision 17-11**). The secretariat expressed gratitude to the Delegation of Ukraine for their support in the translation of the document into Russian.

51. The Chair announced that, since the last Plenary, and according to agreed procedures, the secretariat had issued versions D16.A and D16.B of UN/EDIFACT; releases 2016-1 and 2016-2 of the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) Directory; the VERMAS Business Requirement Specifications; the Cross-Industry Remittance Advice Business Requirement Specifications; the Transboundary Movements of Waste Business Requirement Specifications; the Transboundary Movements of Waste Requirements Specification Mapping; the Supply Chain Reference Data Model Business Requirement Specifications; the Supply Chain Reference Data Model Requirements Specification Mapping; the Cross-Industry Invoicing Business Requirement Specifications; the Cross-Industry Invoicing Requirements Specification Mapping; the Accounting Journal Book Business Requirement Specifications; and the Accounting Journal Book Requirements Specification Mapping.

52. The Plenary took note of the standards presented by the Chair and requested that they continue to be updated on a regular basis (**Decision 17-12**). The Chair expressed appreciation for UN/CEFACT experts' work, especially for the Library Validation and Maintenance.

² Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets.

53. The Chair presented the Technical Note on Terminology for Single Window and other Electronic Platforms (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/10). The Delegation of Senegal highlighted the importance of this Technical Note as it brings clarity and helps better decision-making in the development of Single Windows and submitted comments to be reflected in a corrigendum. The Delegation of Ukraine pointed out some corrections to be introduced in the Russian translation of the document. The secretariat will issue a revised version of the document. The Plenary took note of the document, including the proposed comments (**Decision 17-13**).

54. The Plenary took note of the White Paper on a Reference Data Model (RDM) (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/11) (**Decision 17-14**). The Delegation of The Netherlands remarked that in their view, to be effective, RDMs and the UN/CCL should be aligned with the WCO data model, as in The Netherlands, this data model is set by national regulations. The Chair replied that UN/CEFACT is taking a similar approach in order to possibly better align with what has been done at the WCO. This alignment is in fact one of the concerns of UN/CEFACT.

55. The Plenary also took note of the Green Paper on Trade Finance as a Tool for Trade Facilitation (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/INF.1) (**Decision 17-15**), and the Supply Chain Reference Data Model (SCRDM) Guideline (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/INF.2) (**Decision 17-16**).

56. Executive Guides, a new type of deliverable related to ECE Recommendations and UN/CEFACT standards, were presented to the Plenary. The Plenary took note of the Executive Guide to UN/Core Components (UN/CCTS & the UN/CCL) (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/12) (**Decision 17-17**), and the Executive Guide on Small Scaled Lodging House Deliverables (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/13) (**Decision 17-18**).

57. The Plenary took note that the Executive Guide on UN/EDIFACT (presented at the twenty-second session) (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2016/7/Rev.1) has now been translated into French and Russian (**Decision 17-19**).

58. The Chair presented the report on the UN/LOCODE Conference, which took place in Geneva on 28 April 2016 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/14). The Plenary took note of the secretariat report (**Decision 17-20**).

59. Following up on Plenary Decision 16-16 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2016/2, para 64) the UN/CEFACT Bureau, in coordination with the secretariat, prepared a questionnaire to gather information from member States and international organizations in order to develop a report on how UN/CEFACT deliverables are being used. The Chair presented the questionnaire and invited Head of Delegations to support the provision of relevant information.

60. The Delegation from the United Kingdom welcomed the initiative and suggested the addition of two general questions on what the respondents think of UN/CEFACT and what improvements they might suggest. The Delegate from GS1 offered to share the results of a similar survey that their organization does on an annual basis. The Austrian Delegation feared that such a questionnaire may only be able to identify obvious utilisations and suggested that success stories be gathered. The Chair welcomed the remark and indicated that the Bureau will consider gathering such stories. The Japanese Delegation appreciated the questionnaire but had some doubts about respondents' capacities to respond to estimated frequency of use.

61. The Plenary took note of the questionnaire and the Bureau will report on the outcome of the Survey at the next Plenary (**Decision 17-21**).

IX. UN/CEFACT structure, mandate, terms of reference, and procedures (Agenda Item 8)

62. Upon request of the Bureau, the secretariat prepared a Consolidated UN/CEFACT mandate and terms of reference (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/15), which compiles five different procedural documents, and will replace them. The Delegation of The Netherlands expressed appreciation for the excellent work done by the secretariat and the Bureau in preparing the consolidated document. The Delegation of The Netherlands will investigate whether their national legislation is not in contradiction with paragraph 34 (c) of the consolidated UN/CEFACT mandate and terms of reference.

63. The Plenary approved the document with minor changes. The secretariat will incorporate the agreed changes and will submit the revised version of the document to the Executive Committee (EXCOM) for approval (**Decision 17-22**). This document will enter into force after approval by EXCOM. At that time, the previous documents will be revoked.

64. The secretariat presented the Mandate and Terms of Reference of the Sustainable Fisheries Team of Specialists (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/16) and the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/17). The Plenary approved the Terms of Reference of the Team of Specialists and requested this team to report to the next Plenary (**Decision 17-23**). It also approved the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Group and requested the Advisory Group to report to the next Plenary (**Decision 17-24**).

X. Future challenges in trade facilitation and electronic business (Agenda Item 9)

65. UN/CEFACT is providing continued support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, for example, through its work on Women in Trade Facilitation. In this context, the secretariat presented a Briefing Note (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/18) which provides insight into how the work of UN/CEFACT, aimed at eliminating gender disparities, will increase the gains that can be harnessed from trade facilitation in terms of international trade opportunities, countries' competitiveness and sustainable economic growth. The Plenary took note of the document (**Decision 17-25**).

66. The German Head of Delegation gave a presentation on the use of UN/CEFACT deliverables for eInvoicing, and recent European standardization activities. UN/CEFACT XML will be part of the mandatory syntaxes for eGovernment procurement. He highlighted the use of hybrid invoicing. He also mentioned that UN/CEFACT XMLs are extensively used in the German environment because of their reliability and continued maintenance.

67. Speakers from UNCTAD, WTO and UNEP had an opportunity to provide their perspectives on emerging developments for the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 and its connection with trade facilitation, particularly on the aspects of sustainable fishery management, sustainable public procurement, and green and fair trade.

68. The expert from the WTO introduced the work of the Trade and Environment Committee, which is currently focusing on issues related to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; organics and other sustainability criteria; and waste. The secretariat pointed out their possible connections with UN/CEFACT ongoing activities.

69. The UNCTAD representative briefed the Plenary about the outcomes of the recently concluded Regional Forum on Fisheries in Geneva, the preparations for the Ocean Conference in New York in June 2017, and the Call for Action on the implementation of SDG 14. He also made reference to the UN/CEFACT Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (FLUX) standard as an important tool to address IUU fishing. The secretariat mentioned that UN/CEFACT experts have submitted a contribution paper for the Conference and are working on a commitment to the Call for Action.

70. UNEP made a presentation on policy developments and trends for sustainable public procurement and links to SDG target 12.7. They highlighted the need to support less developed countries in expanding their production of environmentally sustainable goods and service, as more opportunities for such products and services will grow with the increased inclusion of sustainability criteria in public tenders. Access to eco-labelling and acquisition of advanced technologies may require support.

XI. UN/CEFACT Programme of Work 2017 – 2018 (Agenda Item 10)

71. The Chair presented for approval UN/CEFACT Programme of Work 2017 – 2018 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/19). This document is fully in line with the "UN/CEFACT Prospective Directions" (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2016/20) and was prepared by the Bureau in consultation with the Domain Coordinators.

72. The Chair highlighted that overall this Programme of Work has been prepared based on the Perspective Directions of Work, and should assist member States and stakeholders who wish to address requirements in trade facilitation and electronic business in taking full advantage of UN/CEFACT family of standards.

73. The Delegations of The Netherlands, Ukraine, Germany and Japan commented on how to use deliverables, on the reproduction of and the alignment with existing standards, and the collaboration with other standard setting organizations and bodies. The Delegation of the Russian Federation expressed support for the areas of activities of UN/CEFACT and highlighted the importance of developing paperless cross-border trade, which is crucial for sustainable development. The Plenary approved the proposed Programme of Work 2017 – 2018, with minor changes (**Decision 17-26**).

XII. Other business (Agenda Item 11)

74. Delegations were invited to raise other issues not previously addressed during the session.

75. The Delegations of Germany requested clarification on the concern raised by The Netherlands regarding the alignment of the UN/CCL with the WCO data model and asked The Netherlands if they plan to prepare a project on it.

76. The Delegation of The Netherlands replied that, for the moment, their aim was only to raise awareness of their requirement. But they understood that at present there is alignment, and therefore, a project does not seem to be necessary.

77. The Delegation of China stressed the importance of eCommerce and suggested the launch of a project on this subject. The secretariat clarified that, while welcoming the submission of projects, countries should be ready to provide the necessary resources for carrying out additional projects.

78. The Chair presented the new proposed structure of the UN/CEFACT Bureau for discussion and approval at the next meeting of the new Bureau.

XIII. Adoption of decisions and report of the twenty-third session (Agenda Item 12)

79. The Plenary adopted the decisions made at and the report of the twenty-third session (**Decision 17-27**).
