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Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business

Fourteenth session
Geneva, 16 - 17 September 2008

**REPORT OF THE CENTRE FOR TRADE FACILITATION
AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS ON ITS FOURTEENTH SESSION**

Summary

The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) held its fourteenth session from 16 to 17 September 2008 in Geneva. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (E/ECE/778/Rev.4), and the Rules of Procedure of the UNECE Committee on Trade (TRADE/2001/2), the Centre is submitting its report of the fourteenth session for review by the Committee on Trade and, subsequently, approval by the UNECE Executive Committee.

The fourteenth session reviewed the needs and priorities of member States, regional and international organizations, standard setting organizations and the business community relating to the use of UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards. Delegations also approved the UN/CEFACT programme of work for 2010-2011, with modifications related to increasing support for implementation in transition economies.

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I. ATTENDANCE

1. The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) held its fourteenth session in Geneva from 16 to 17 September 2008.
2. Participants in the meeting included representatives of the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Viet Nam.
3. The following intergovernmental organizations participated: the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the World Customs Organization (WCO).
4. The following non-governmental organizations participated: International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), and the International Organization for Standardization.
5. Observers present at the invitation of the secretariat included representatives of the following organizations: Global Standards 1 (GS1), Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP), and the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT).
6. The Chairman opened the meeting and the Director of the Trade and Timber Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) made a short introductory statement welcoming delegations.
7. The Head of the delegation from the Netherlands made introductory remarks on behalf of the Chairperson of the UNECE Committee on Trade. He noted that having the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) take an interest in the Committee on Trade was a positive development, and it follows that interest would focus on UN/CEFACT. A general debate on trade facilitation will take place at the next session of the Committee on Trade in February 2009, and the Inland Transport Committee will hold its session during the same week. A joint conference organized with the Trade Committee will take place in the afternoon of 24 February 2009.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

8. The Plenary adopted the agenda with minor changes (Decision 08-01).

III. OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES (Agenda item 2)

9. The Director of the Trade and Timber Division of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) presented country stakeholder perspectives, noting that countries need interoperable, intersectoral standards and trade facilitation to increase their efficiency and competitiveness. The priority most often cited in a recent questionnaire sent out to

UN/CEFACT Heads of Delegation by the UNECE secretariat was the development of electronic business standards, followed by assistance with implementation (see Annex I for a summary of responses).

10. The Plenary reviewed the presentations on the priorities of member States, business sectors, and other standard-setting organizations, which highlighted the different uses of UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations and the different approaches to developing trade facilitation tools and electronic business standards.

11. The representative of Belarus stated that his country's main priority was the implementation of existing UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations although this should not hinder the development of new tools and instruments. The UNECE main priority is the greater integration and involvement of the transition economies into the economic area.

12. The representative of the Russian Federation reported that its government attached a great deal of value to UN/CEFACT work, in particular the work of the Regional Advisor on trade, who promotes important tools, such as the Single Window. Best Practices should be shared in transition economies, and these countries should be involved in standards-setting as well as determining the areas in which standards are developed. In fact, more transparency and better communication concerning the UN/CEFACT programme of work is important, and perhaps a network of Eastern European experts would be a way to achieve these.

13. The Norwegian national trade facilitation organization, Norstella, meets twice a year with other Nordic countries, in a grouping called Nordipro, to share information and promote trade facilitation including UN/CEFACT tools. It is important to strengthen cooperation between UN/CEFACT and other bodies. A key challenge is deliverables, and all Nordic countries would need a robust global standard on e-Invoicing. The convergence process between different standards also should take into account the practical needs of businesses.

14. The Chairperson of the Forum Management Group discussed business stakeholder perspectives. UN/CEFACT addresses requirements of both the public and private sectors. The focus of its work is the international supply chain, as described in the "Buy-Ship-Pay" model, where both business and government sectors are involved. New government sectors are also participating (e.g. agriculture, environment and e-government), and other sectors are renewing their engagement (e.g. e-payment processing, procurement and customs). Collaboration across sectors in several countries and regional organizations, for example the Buy Ship Pay model and UNeDocs, has involved data model implementation and verification, as well as harmonization of core components in a number of International Trade & Business Processes (TBG) working groups.

15. A UN/CEFACT vice-chairperson (USA) presented the stakeholder perspectives of standards development organizations. A common vision exists among public-private e-business organizations in support of trade facilitation. UN/CEFACT concentrates its resources in areas where it can add unique value, including the semantic framework. It also reaches out to standards development organizations for input on products. To foster such collaboration, the Open Development Process (TRADE/R.650/Rev.4/Add.1/Rev.1) makes it easier for other

organizations to participate. UN/CEFACT also uses a coordination matrix to track its agreements and relationships with other standards development organizations.

16. The Plenary noted document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/4 entitled “Overview of stakeholder priorities” and the presentations made on the issue (Decision 08-02).

17. Member States received a questionnaire on the activities of UN/CEFACT, including a request for suggestions. The replies are in the annex to this report (Decision 08-03).

IV. USES OF THE FRAMEWORK OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND STANDARDS (Agenda item 3)

18. A number of member States gave presentations on the uses of UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards. Participants from international organizations and user communities also gave a number of presentations.

19. The Plenary took note and requested that the secretariat place the presentations on the UNECE website for information¹ (Decision 08-04).

20. The Plenary requested that the UNECE publish an information brochure, in the three official languages, on the uses of UN/CEFACT standards, including information from the presentations (Decision 08-05).

V. REPORT ON FORUM ACTIVITIES SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE CENTRE FOR TRADE FACILITATION AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS (Agenda item 4)

21. The Plenary approved the report of the Forum Management Group presented in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/24 and which superseded the document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/9 (Decision 08-06).

VI. DEVELOPMENTS BY EXPERT GROUPS: DELIVERABLES AND PRIORITIES (Agenda item 5)

22. The Chairperson of the Forum Management Group introduced the work undertaken in the Forum and the Permanent Groups since the last plenary session. Two Forums took place: in Stockholm (24-28 September 2007) and Mexico City (7-11 April 2008).

23. The Forum in Mexico was the first one that included participants from all regions, and the participants greatly appreciated contributions made by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN/ECLAC).

¹ see http://www.unece.org/cefact/cf_plenary/plenary08/list_doc_08.html

24. Since the last session of the plenary, the Rapporteur for Asia has significantly contributed to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) community involvement in UN/CEFACT work.

25. A Forum also took place in Saly, Senegal from 10 to 14 November 2008. In April 2009, the Forum will be in Rome, Italy, and in September 2009, in Japan. The United Kingdom asked to host a Forum in April 2010.

26. The Plenary reviewed the various developments in the work of the five Permanent Groups: the Applied Technologies Group, the Information Content Management Group, the Legal Group, the International Trade and Business Processes Group, and the Techniques and Methodologies Group.

27. The draft annex to Recommendation 6 on “Aligned Invoice Layout Key for International Trade” (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/5) was presented. Its objective was to accommodate e-Invoicing (Decision 08-07).

28. The Plenary noted the revised recommendations as follows: (Decision 08-08):

(a) Codes for Units of Measure Used in International Trade, revision 5 of Recommendation 20 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/6);

(b) Codes for Passengers, Types of Cargo, Packages and Packaging Materials, annexes V and VI, revision 6 of Recommendation 21 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/7);

(c) Documentary Aspects of the International Transport of Dangerous Goods, revision 2 of Recommendation 11 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/8 and ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/8/Corr.1);

(d) Freight Cost Code – FCC Harmonization of the Description of Freight Costs and Other Charges, revision 6 of Recommendation 23 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/30).

29. The Plenary agreed to submit the following new and updated Business Requirements Specifications for intersessional approval, as contained in document “Business Requirement Specifications” (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/29) (Decision 08-09):

- (a) Electronic Agreement Template and Process;
- (b) International Forwarding and Transport;
- (c) Small-Scale Lodging House Travel Product Information;
- (d) Accounting in Supply Chain Process;
- (e) Universal Accounting Journal Process;
- (f) Trans-frontier Movements of Waste;
- (g) Crop Data Sheet Process;
- (h) Sourcing of Market Survey Information.

VII. REPORTS OF THE RAPPORTEURS (Agenda item 6)

30. The UN/CEFACT Rapporteur for Africa presented his work in the region since the thirteenth plenary session. The report provided insights into working with transition economies, and the key points could improve responses to these economies. The Rapporteur encouraged experts to participate in the UN/CEFACT Forum in Senegal from 10 to 14 November 2008 as well as the International Conference on Single Windows, organized by GAINDE 2000 and the Senegalese Government from 5 to 7 November in Dakar.

31. The Rapporteur for Asia and the Pacific reported on relevant work in the Asia Pacific region since the last session.

32. The Plenary noted the reports from the Rapporteur for Asia and the Pacific and the Rapporteur for Africa (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/22 and 23) (Decisions 08-10 and 08-11).

33. The representative of Ireland noted that UN/CEFACT extends beyond the UNECE, and suggested that further contacts continue with the other regional commissions.

34. The Plenary requested the Bureau and the secretariat to follow-up on the recommendations from the Joint Capacity Building Symposium organized by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and UN/CEFACT in Seoul in May 2008. In particular, the delegations expressed support for (a) the development of a recommendation on the use of the UN/CEFACT Core Component Library as the foundational standard for cross-border paperless trading, and (b) the establishment of a joint APEC - UN/CEFACT task force (Decision 08-12).

VIII. MATTERS ARISING (Agenda item 7)

35. The Swiss delegation noted the useful exchanges in the previous informal consultations, and hoped the UNECE Executive Committee would develop recommendations to strengthen UN/CEFACT. He presented the submission by Switzerland (document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/25), and noted that the “electronic Business, Government and Trade (eBGT)” initiative, the Intellectual Property Rights report, and an improved website would address a number of concerns expressed in that paper.

36. The Director presented the information note originally prepared as an informal document for the UNECE Executive Committee (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/25). The Note explains UN/CEFACT governance and strategy, resources, linkages with other organizations, and involvement of transition economies in its work. Submitted to the Plenary in all three official UNECE languages, the note will help promote the work.

37. The French delegation encouraged UN/CEFACT to promote greater participation of member States and to improve transparency. The role of trade facilitation was very important, and UN/CEFACT required resources in addition to its existing human resources. The eBGT initiative was a good framework for achieving this. Furthermore, the role of UN/CEFACT in the implementation of World Trade Organization (WTO) rules was important, and coordination with other organizations should be encouraged. Finally, regarding implementation, two priorities would be the translation of documents into the three official UNECE languages and more capacity building activities.

38. The Plenary took note of the discussion paper submitted by Switzerland, also presented to the UNECE Executive Committee on May 6 2008, and encouraged delegations to coordinate with their missions in Geneva in order to be prepared for participating in the discussions taking place in the UNECE Executive Committee (Decision 08-13).

39. The Plenary took note of the document entitled Introduction to UN/CEFACT (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/25), also presented to the UNECE Executive Committee. The secretariat will prepare further communications material for UN/CEFACT, in all three official languages, based on the text of this document (Decision 08-14).

IX. GOING FORWARD (Agenda item 8)

40. The Director presented the draft UN/CEFACT Programme of Work for 2010-2011, and its three strategic sections: (i) page 3 sets the institutional framework; (ii) pages 4 to 9 are descriptive; and (iii) pages 10 to 13 include detailed lists of outputs, as required by the United Nations budgeting process.

41. The Chairperson suggested adding under capacity building (page 9), the following items:

- (a) Developing a more user-friendly availability of the Core Components Library;
- (b) Encouraging better cooperation and support to other international organizations in their efforts to help countries implement trade facilitation and, in particular, UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards;
- (c) Conducting workshops, subject to availability of extra-budgetary resources, to support the implementation of UN/CEFACT instruments;
- (d) Providing training materials and tools associated with the above-mentioned activities.

42. The representative of Belarus proposed that, before undertaking implementation, it would be useful for countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to have an analysis of the current system of trade facilitation and e-business. Then, based on the conclusions, States could suggest what recommendations would be useful. UN/CEFACT is part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, which has a special responsibility to the countries of the region.

43. The secretariat reported that the United Nations Development Programme is developing an evaluation guide, which includes trade facilitation as well as other areas covered by the Aid-for-Trade initiative. To avoid duplication of efforts, any work in this area should cooperate with United Nations Development Programme and the World Trade Organization.

44. The representative of the Russian Federation requested that the Programme of Work explain how it fits in with the Committee on Trade's political tasks, in a "top-to-bottom" approach. He also supported the proposal for an analysis of the current situation in CIS countries, and recommended increased capacity building to encourage expert participation in the standards-setting work.

45. The representatives of Switzerland and France requested the establishment of a website with clear information on current UN/CEFACT projects. A website using software to track projects is in development, and would be available shortly.

46. The representative from France presented the “e-Business, Government and Trade” (eBGT) initiative.

47. The Director introduced document that contains guidelines for donor contributions (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/39).

48. The Plenary approved the Programme of Work of UN/CEFACT for the biennium 2010 – 2011 as found in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/16 with the following additions (Decision 08-15):

- (a) The recommendation and joint task force approved under agenda item 6;
- (b) The text to explain how the UN/CEFACT programme of work fits into the Committee on Trade’s political tasks (see annex II);
- (c) Under the guidance of the UN/CEFACT Bureau, UN/CEFACT will:
 - (i) Cooperate with and support other international organizations including the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the World Customs Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, and the regional commissions of the United Nations in their efforts to assist countries implement trade facilitation and, in particular, UN/CEFACT standards and instruments;
 - (ii) Conduct studies and workshops, subject to the availability of extra budgetary resources, to support:
 - Implementation of UN/CEFACT standards and instruments, with special emphasis on countries in transition;
 - Wider participation of experts from countries in transition in the standardization process and technical assistance activities;
 - (iii) Develop training materials and tools, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, to support the implementation of UN/CEFACT standards and instruments in countries;
 - (iv) Subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources, review the current situation and trade procedures in countries in transition and, based on that analysis, draw up recommendations to improve trade facilitation and e-business, including special measures to ensure better alignment with other regions.
- (d) The maintenance of the website with up-to-date information on work and individual projects.

49. The Plenary approved the eBGT initiative as described in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/2, as well as the document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/39

on Extra-budgetary Contributions to a United Nations Trust Fund for UN/CEFACT Activities (Decision 08-16).

X. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (Agenda item 9)

50. The Director reported on the work of the Intellectual Property Rights Task Team.
51. Regarding the resources available to the secretariat for work on UN/CEFACT issues, other than staff, the Secretariat has very limited financial resources for participating in or supporting activities.
52. A Vice-chairperson (USA) reported on standards liaison activities undertaken in 2007 and 2008. UN/CEFACT is working closely with the International Standards Organization (i.e. ISO TC154) on avoiding duplication of work, as well as focusing on electronic business Extended Mark-up Language (ebXML) specifications. Several experts from UN/CEFACT work are involved in this work.
53. The liaison activities involving the e-Business Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), include several organizations: the Organization for Standardization Organization (ISO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). In this context, the Chairperson of the Memorandum of Understanding Management Group reported on the work of its members. He noted that UN/CEFACT played a central role within the Group, particularly through an exchange of views on avoiding duplication of work on semantic interoperability. It seemed increasingly evident that standards-setting groups were encouraging a unified semantics framework based on UN/CEFACT's core component library.
54. After the Plenary, the ISO and the MoU partners organized an international conference on public-private partnership in the advancement of electronic business standards. There is a move towards the coordination of e-business standards, and much of the success is due to UN/CEFACT contributions from experts across a range of sectoral and governmental domains.
55. The Director introduced the updated terms of reference of the Permanent Groups. The Committee on Trade already approved them and submitted them for information in English, French, and Russian.
56. A representative of the United National Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) made a short presentation on the status of the World Trade Organization negotiations on trade facilitation. He briefly discussed the latest developments (see document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/17). Since the negotiating group on trade facilitation began in 2004, it has received over 130 proposals, some of which refer to UN/CEFACT standards such as the United Nation Local Standard Location Codes (UN/LOCODE), United Nations Trade Data Element Directory (UNTDDED), and Recommendation 33 on a Single Window. WTO members appreciate UN/CEFACT standards and tools, but implementation is an important issue, and cooperating with UNCTAD would help promote UN/CEFACT standards in the field.
57. Participants should inform their national World Trade Organization trade facilitation delegations about UN/CEFACT work so that it can appear in their references.

58. The representative of Switzerland pointed out that given its standard-setting nature, UN/CEFACT should be involved in the work on trade facilitation in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Through implementation of standards, reforms could move forward, regulatory issues could be resolved and a framework created for donors to provide support.

59. A suggestion was raised to create an informal group, jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), for interested countries to discuss trade facilitation implementation in the World Trade Organization.

60. The Plenary noted a report on cooperation between the UNECE Transport and Trade Divisions resulting from the 2005 reform process. The report advised that increased cooperation take place between these Committees in the area of trade facilitation, in particular. The Bureau identified several specific activities for joint work with the Inland Transport Committee. The two Committees agreed to hold parallel sessions in February 2009, so that they could also organize a joint half-day event on cross-border issues. This will take place on 24 February 2009.

61. The Regional Advisor on Trade made a short presentation describing his work on trade facilitation implementation in transition economies. His full report is in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/21.

62. The Plenary took note of the report on Intellectual Property Rights (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/10) and requested that the Bureau follow-up on the recommendations found in the report. In particular, it requested that the Centre establish a standing intellectual property rights task force, and that the necessary modifications to the Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT (TRADE/R.650/Rev.4) and its annexes be completed and submitted for intersessional approval (Decision 08-17).

63. The Plenary also took note of the final version of the updated Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT Permanent Groups, which had been submitted to the UNECE Committee on Trade at its second session, in 2007 (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/11) (Decision 08-18).

64. The Plenary noted the Report on the World Trade Organization Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/17) and requested that the Bureau and the secretariat discuss with UNCTAD and country representatives to WTO how to ensure that UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards are taken into account in the negotiations (Decision 08-19).

65. The Plenary took note of the Report on Cooperation between the UNECE Trade and Transport Divisions (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/18 and ECE/TRANS/2008/3). It requested the Bureau and the secretariat to work with their counterparts in the Committee on Trade, the Inland Transport Committee, the Working Party on Customs Questions in Transport and the Transport Division to identify specific joint activities that would be supportive of UN/CEFACT objectives, taking into account available resources and interest of experts. It also encouraged UN/CEFACT to contribute to the joint Committee on Trade and Inland Transport Committee Conference to take place in February 2009 (Decision 08-20).

66. The Plenary took note of the Report on Support to Transition Economies for the Implementation of UN/CEFACT Standards and Recommendations from the Regional Advisor (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/21) (Decision 08-21).

XI. ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS (Agenda item 10)

67. The following persons were elected as Vice-Chairpersons of UN/CEFACT for a two-year term: Mr. Peter Amstutz (the United States), Mr. Pier Alberto Cucino (Italy), Mr. Arild Haraldsen (Norway), Mr. Tahseen A. Khan (India) and Mr. Allen Bruford (the World Customs Organization) (Decision 08-22).

68. Mr. Ibrahima Nour Eddine Diagne (Senegal) was re-elected for a two-year term as Rapporteur for Africa (Decision 08-23).

XII. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS OF THE FOURTEENTH PLENARY SESSION (Agenda item 11)

69. The Plenary adopted the decisions made at the fourteenth Plenary Session and requested the secretariat to include these in the report (Decision 08-24).

70. The Plenary decided to hold its fifteenth session from 29 June to 3 July 2009 (Decision 08-25).

Annex I

Questions from the Bureau of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business to Heads of Delegation

This annex is for information. It reflects responses to a questionnaire sent by the Bureau in June 2008 to all UN/CEFACT Heads of delegation.

The 26 responses received as of 9 September 2008 came from the following countries:

Australia	India	Senegal
Austria	Italy	Sweden
Belarus	Japan	Switzerland
Belgium	Korea, Republic of	United Kingdom
Canada	Malaysia	United States of America
Czech Republic	Mongolia	Viet Nam
Denmark	The Netherlands	
Finland	Norway	
France	Poland	
Iceland	Russian Federation	

Question 1: What are your country's highest priorities for UN/CEFACT activities?

Summary of Responses

Priority Area	Countries
e-Invoicing	Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway
Capacity-building and implementation	Belarus, Czech Republic, India, Russian Federation, Sweden: Assistance + increased implementation Finland, Italy, Sweden - Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide
e-Procurement and e-Tendering	Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Japan, Norway, Viet Nam
Single Window and related recommendations	Finland, Italy, Japan, Norway
Cooperation with UBL and migration from UBL and ebXML	Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Viet Nam
UNeDocs	Australia, Malaysia, United Kingdom

Priority Area	Countries
Buy-Ship-Pay Model (whole supply chain)	Austria, Sweden
Customs related activities	Czech Republic, France
Transport messages and e-procedures	Czech Republic, Norway
Standardization	France, Korea (Republic of)
Establishment of a Registry/global trade data directory	India, Korea (Republic of)
Standards supporting interoperability based on frameworks for international trade procedures	Netherlands, Poland
Increased involvement of national industry and government agencies	Russian Federation, United Kingdom
Increased transparency and more accessible information, for example through the Web	Russian Federation, United States of America
Policy guidance from governments	Russian Federation, Switzerland
eCERT (Sanitary & Phytosanitary Certificates)	Australia
Case studies – Success stories	Canada
Finalization of UNTDED corrigendum and alignment of all relevant UN/CEFACT work with UNTDED 2005	Czech Republic
Finalization of ebXML standards	Czech Republic
Increased recognition from national, regional and international authorities	France
Input from UN/CEFACT to the work by the European Union on a “European Interoperability Framework”	Poland
Implementation of WTO trade facilitation agreement	Switzerland
Trade facilitation	Senegal

Question 2: What opportunities are there for improving UN/CEFACT activities?

Summary of Responses

Opportunities For Improvement	Countries
Improving organization and procedures to speed up the production of outputs	Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Republic of Korea, Sweden - for the Forum Australia, Denmark, Italy - for the International Trade & Business Processes Group (TBG))
Resolving open UNeDocs issues	Australia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia,

Opportunities For Improvement	Countries
Preparing more literature/information for missions, non-technical audiences and those not familiar with UN/CEFACT's work	Austria, Czech Republic, Japan, Senegal
Developing case studies, implementation examples and statistics regarding implementation	Belarus, the Netherlands, Russian Federation (Also see Canadian reply under priorities)
Improving transparency through: timely information on the work (CZ); more timely provision of documents (RF); annual discussions by member States on policy orientation and the resource situation (CH); programme of work discussions on which standards should be set by UN/CEFACT and which by the private sector (CH); information on self-evaluations (RF).	Czech Republic, Russian Federation, Switzerland
Looking at backward compatibility problems between XML schema issuances and, in that context, the frequency of those issuances	Denmark, Norway, Viet Nam
Improving secretariat support	Finland, Sweden – for CEFACT Groups Finland – for liaison with missions/IGOS Poland – for national “Pro” organizations
Providing more implementation assistance to country officials, engaging more countries in implementation/projects	India, Russian Federation, Viet Nam
Making available more information in Russian	Belarus, Russian Federation
Improving promotion of UN/CEFACT, including a more user friendly web site.	Finland, the Netherlands: General Russian Federation (also United States under priorities) - Web site, in particular
Increasing the use/referencing by the European Commission of UN/CEFACT standards	France, Poland
Ensuring/improving public sector input and participation	Italy, Switzerland
Expanding work to include other standards based on the core components technical specification (CCTS)	Canada
Increasing cooperation on the e-invoice work between TBG1, TBG5 and ISO 20022	Finland

Collaborating more with OECD, UNCTAD, WTO, WCO and other international organizations	Czech Republic, Italy
Implementing of Intellectual Property Rights Task Team Report recommendations	Japan
Establishing a monitoring group to review requests for new standards to check the application of criteria and resource availability	Switzerland
Implementing the electronic Business, Government and Trade (eBGT) project objectives	United Kingdom
Increasing participation by government and business	United States
Making more use of government and business representatives to promote UN/CEFACT recommendations and standards in other fora	United States

Annex II

Additions to the Programme of Work

The following text should be inserted after paragraph 1 in the Programme of work (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2008/16). It explains how the UN/CEFACT programme of work fits in with the political tasks of the UNECE Committee on Trade.

1. “The work of UN/CEFACT contributes to:

(a) The mandate of the UNECE to, “Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic development and integration of Europe, for raising the level of European economic activity, and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the European countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world;”²

(b) The objective of the UNECE Trade subprogramme, which is, “to facilitate trade and trade-related economic cooperation among countries of the ECE region and with the rest of the world;” and

(c) The Trade sub programme strategy to, “support governments, with a special emphasis on the less economically developed countries in the region, in the national and regional adaptation and implementation of UNECE trade-related standards and recommendations, including their integration into national and regional trade facilitation strategies, trade policy and regulatory regimes.”³

2. It does this by working to achieve its vision of UN/CEFACT of simple, transparent and effective processes for global business. It works to achieve that vision through the development and maintenance of international trade facilitation instruments, and particularly those that facilitate: international supply chains; government to government trade information exchanges; and government to business processes. These instruments include global standards and best practices for moving from paper-based to electronic processes and for the harmonization, simplification and automation of information flows concerning business and regulatory practices used in international trade.

3. UN/CEFACT supports greater integration by countries, and especially those with economies in transition, into the global economy by enhancing guidance in the work of the Trade Facilitation Regional Advisor, the dissemination of information and extra-budgetary funded projects such as its Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide.”

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² Document E/ECE/778/Rev.4 (Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic Commission for Europe).

³ This quotation and the one in the previous bullet point come from General Assembly document number A/63/6 (Programme 16) dated 20 February 2008.