## Useful Links

UN/CEFACT:
www.unece.org/cefact

Forum Management Group:
www.disa.org/cefact-groups/fmg

## UN/CEFACT Bureau

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# 12th Plenary Session, 22 - 24 May 2006

To make the Plenary more effective in advancing the work of UN/CEFACT, the Bureau has structured the forthcoming session to give delegations greater opportunity to express their viewpoints.

Three interactive "stakeholder" sessions are planned on: "countries", "sectors" and "standards development organizations". Each session will have a background document outlining UN/CEFACT's significance for the stakeholders, examining the use of the Centre's recommendations and exploring issues that need to be addressed.

The "countries" session will examine how the Centre's products and services could be strengthened, in the light of countries' priorities. Participants may wish to address the role of Governments as an enabler for regulations that support technological innovation through market-based mechanisms.

The "sectors" session will look at how to create better and more efficient business practices.

The session on "standards development organizations" will address the following:
- greater efficiency through using standards
- interoperability
- coordination and division of tasks
- collaborative efforts, and how to avoid duplication.

The Bureau and the authors welcome your ideas on the above topics. They would appreciate if you let them know in advance of you are interested in contributing to any of these sessions.

The results of the stakeholder sessions will be taken into consideration in building a single, integrated framework for UN/CEFACT. The framework will be based on last year's successful achievement in articulating parallel strategies for trade facilitation and e-business. Jean Kubler (Head of the UNECE Global Trade Solutions Branch, jean.kubler@unece.org), who is drafting a document on this agenda item, would greatly appreciate hearing your ideas on the subject.

**Background papers outlining UN/CEFACT's significance for the stakeholders will be prepared by:**

Mike Doran (Vice Chair, UN/CEFACT mike.doran@cern.ch) and Virginia Cram-Martos (Director, Trade and Timber Division, virginia.cram-martos@unece.org) - "Countries"

Dick Raman (Chair, Forum Management Group dick.raman@TIEglobal.com) and Sue Probert (FMG Vice Chair, sue.probert@DIAL.PIPEX.COM) - "Sectors"

Mark Palmer (Vice Chair, mark.palmer@nist.gov and François Vuilleumier (Standards Liaison Rapporteur, fvuille@attglobal.net) - "Standards development organizations".

As always, the Bureau are looking forward to reviewing these items with you soon and particularly when they see you at the meeting.


## 8th UN/CEFACT Forum, 13-17 March 2006, Vancouver, Canada

Delegates from over 55 countries and representatives of major NGOs will work on key standards and specifications for facilitating trade. Some of the work items involve modeling complex business processes using the Unified Modeling Language (UML) and the UN/CEFACT Modeling methodology (UMM), working on several key XML (Extensible Markup Language) specifications and business process specifications.

Participants will also discuss the globalization of trade and commerce and exploring ways for developing and transition economies to participate and share fairly in the benefits. The upcoming UN/CEFACT Forum meeting offers an opportunity for Canadian businesses and technology experts to attend and get directly involved in the work of the Centre.

Presentations will be given by the Chemical Industry Data Exchange (CIDX), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the ease, speed and cost of securely conducting business electronically in the Chemical Industry and OASIS on the Universal Business Language (UBL)

A special word of thanks to Vice-chair Mr. Duane Nickull and his team for generously contributing both time and effort towards making this a successful event. The United Nations is largely a volunteer-driven organization. It relies on the dedication of people such as you who can and are prepared to contribute to its development goals.

# UN/CEFACT Deliverables

## Core Component Library version 06A

The Information Content Management Group released and published the first UN/CEFACT Core Component Library on 15th February 2006[1].

## XML Naming and Design Rules (NDR) version 2.0 approved[2]

The UN/CEFACT Forum announces the publication of version 2.0 of the XML[3] Naming and Design Rules technical specification

The specification allows users to identify, capture and maximize the re-use of business information expressed as XML schema components. It ensures consistent and efficient use of XML in a business-to-business and application-to-application environment. It can be utilized wherever business information is being shared or exchanged among and between enterprises and government agencies worldwide using XML schema.

This specification is used by UN/CEFACT experts to develop XML schema based on information models developed in accordance with the *Core Components Technical Specification – (CCTS)*, version 2.01. It also provides value to designers who need to specify the conversion of user input into XML schema representations.

Since both the NDR and CCTS are consistent with the Unified Modelling Language (UML), NDR design rules can be applied to non-CCTS constructs as well.

The NDR technical specification was developed under the UN/CEFACT Open Development Process (ODP) and approved following successful implementation that was verified and subsequently confirmed by the editing group.

## UNeDocs Data Model

TBG2, the Electronic Trade Documents Working group, published a new Beta Version 1.2 of the UNeDocs Data Model[4]. The Model was prepared by SITPRO UK. It incorporates over 80% of the World Customs Organization (WCO) data requirements and is based on UN/CEFACT Core Components.

It was presented at the Workshop on "International Standards to Stimulate Paperless Trade" in Kuala Lumpur, 20 to 24 February 2006.

## Guidelines on Establishing a Single Window

The first issue of the Single Window Case Studies Repository contains contributions from Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Hong Kong SAR (China), Malaysia, Mauritius, Senegal, Singapore, Sweden and the United States. There are over 30 Single Windows in operation throughout the world and the Centre plans to expand the Repository over time.

The Guidelines are designed to assist member States and trade operators in developing national applications for all import, export, and transit-related regulatory data requirements.

## Benchmarking Guide

Governments and business understand the importance of measuring international trade performance. Benchmarking, for example, can help Governments draw up trade policies and design efficient control systems. Business needs reference points to plan marketing, sales and purchasing strategies and to ensure swift movement of goods and services across international borders.

The Guide presents a trade performance model focused on the international supply chain model of BUY -> SHIP -> PAY. This model is outlined in UN/CEFACT Recommendation 18 on Facilitation Measures related to International Trade Procedures. A brief description of the benchmarking activities of the World Customs Organization; the World

Bank; and SITPRO Limited (the United Kingdom) is provided for reference.

## E-Certificate for agricultural commodities

The draft electronic certificate for agricultural commodities (eCert) received wide appreciation at the last meeting of the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards. It is currently being ratified and the secretariat hopes that it will be approved as a standard by the end of this year.

# News

## The Electronic Commerce Steering Group (ECSG)[5] granted "Guest status" to UN/CEFACT

At the APEC Electronic Commerce Steering Group (ECSG) meeting in Ha Noi, Vietnam, February 2006, delegates agreed to undertake a reassessment of actions intended to achieve APEC goals in relation to paperless trading. Paperless trading goals are intended to reduce red tape involved in transporting goods across borders by increasing the use of electronic processing.

The ECSG granted guest status to the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business and will explore ways of collaboration on paperless trading.

## Finance, Banks and Enterprises

ISO Technical Committee on Financial Services (ISO/TC 68) published a new standard "UNIversal Financial Industry message scheme (UNIFI)" - ISO 20022. The standard provides the financial industry with a common platform for developing messages in a standardized XML syntax. The standard is based on the methodology defined jointly by UN/CEFACT and OASIS and published as ISO 15000 technical specification.

UN/CEFACT Finance Domain Working Group – TBG5, SWIFT and ISO/TC 68 agreed to resolve the differences between the two

specifications and try to get them to converge. They decided to cooperate and initiate a gap analysis of the two methodologies, to submit to TBG5 a UNIFI project.

Four "Customer-to-Bank Payment Initiation" messages and a first set of 45 "Investment Funds Distribution" messages will be harmonized.

The following six projects have also been approved:

- Exceptions and Investigations (Payments – 12 messages)
- Pre-trade/Trade (Securities – 44 messages)
- Credit Transfers (Payments – 2 messages)
- Credit Transfers (Payments – 6 messages)
- Cash Management (Payments – 31 messages)
- Trade Services Management (Trade Services)

The number of agreed projects and messages highlights the general interest in harmonizing business processes and information components, and the need for a common methodology. The cooperation between UN/CEFACT and ISO/TC 68 is especially interesting to enterprises using remittance information and electronic invoicing.

## Trade Facilitation Toolkit and Forms Repository[6]

The United Nations Regional Commissions released the "Trade Facilitation Toolkit and Forms Repository ". The Toolkit is designed to help Governments and trade associations simplify their documentary requirements and develop consistent national series of trade documents. The Toolkit is based on the UN/CEFACT Recommendation 1 - United Nations Layout Key for Trade Documents. The Toolkit and Repository support the requirements for simplification of documents and transparency in the implementation of trade regulations as set out in GATT Articles VIII and X.

The project was prepared under the UN Development Account project: "Interregional partnership for promoting trade as an engine of growth through knowledge management

and information and communication technologies".

## Use of UN/CEFACT Recommendations

The secretariat conducts a regular survey[7] on the use of five recommendations: UN Layout Key for Trade Documents, National Trade Facilitation Bodies, Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE), UN/EDIFACT and Single Window.

For the period 2004 to 2005, ten countries, representing a cross-section of types of economies, were surveyed: Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom.  Results showed that the rate of use of the recommendations is over 66 %.

For the same period, downloads from the website increased by 35% for the UN/LOCODE standards and by 346 % for UN/EDIFACT. This significant increase is explained by the publication in 2005 of a new message, 'Data Plot Sheet' (DAPLOS).

Countries participating in the work of the Centre reported higher levels usage. Countries with economies in transition, where advisory services had been delivered, report higher levels of implementation than countries relying on national efforts only.

## UN/CEFACT Events

### Workshop on "International Standards to Stimulate Paperless Trade", 20-21 February 2006, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia[8]

The Workshop presented the most recent standards for document harmonization and data exchange to facilitate the supply chain. These standards include the United Nations electronic Trade Documents (UNeDocs) and the World Customs Organization Data Model.

The Workshop was followed by a three-day technical training course on Data Modeling for UNeDocs. Participants learned how to draft an electronic trade document for the Asia-Pacific region.

### Symposium on "Single Window Standards and Interoperability", 3-5 May 2006, Geneva, Switzerland[9]

This three-day Symposium reflects the growing importance of the Single Window Recommendation and the pressing need for international standards for operating Single Window facilities. The Symposium will identify the standards and framework that Single Windows need for exchanging information between each other and with the business community.

On the basis of the experience of existing Single Window operators, the Symposium will consider the role and benefits of current standards for interoperability, and will identify the standards that need to be developed. It will also identify a suitable framework for developing these standards.

For countries planning or considering establishing a Single Window, the Symposium will offer an opportunity to learn from the experiences of existing operators and to consider some of the key requirements for successful implementation.

# Reform of the UNECE – Implications for UN/CEFACT

## Interview with the Director of the Trade Division.

*In December 2005, the UNECE Commission adopted a Working Plan on UNECE Reform, which will now be put into action within existing budgetary resources. What does the decision mean?*

Director: The Working Plan answers the needs expressed by Member States during the evaluation of the UNECE. For the Trade Subprogramme, the document reinforces the activities of trade facilitation. It states, "they shall continue and focus on supporting the development of standards carried out by UN/CEFACT". The Plan confirms that the public and the private sector need to work together for their development. I am convinced that this partnership will enable the use of these standards in 'off-the-shelf' business software solutions. This will bring about significant efficiency gains for international trade.

*UNECE governance will be strengthened to enhance accountability, transparency and the horizontal coherence of the activities. What does this imply?*

Director: It implies that from now on, the Commission will be responsible for allocating resources to each UNECE Committee and its subsidiary bodies, including UN/CEFACT. The allocation will be based on mandates, detailed programmes of work, reported and planned accomplishments and budgetary reports. Your Bureau is working to ensure that your programme of work supports Member State needs for technological innovation, efficiency in governments and regulatory requirements. This will reinforce UN/CEFACT's position within the discussions on resource allocation.

*Concerning the horizontal coherence of the activities, can you be more specific?*

Director: The Working Plan requests the Committee on Inland Transport to "strengthen activities in the field of border crossing and trade facilitation in cooperation with the Committee on Trade". Customs and transit are an integral part of the supply chain and central to ease cross-border trade. Together, the activities of UN/CEFACT and of the Working party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport (WP.30) cover the total trade transaction. By working more closely together, both programmes would take advantage of the experience of the Centre in the automation of transport procedures.

*The overall guidance of the work of UNECE is entrusted to an Executive Committee composed of representatives of all Member States. Again, what does this imply?*

Director: Even though UN/CEFACT's work is very technical, getting Member States interested in your work, is the best way to obtain the resources required by your programme. I expect the Executive Committee will become one of the key channels for obtaining this interest and support. The more our Member States are aware of what we do, the more UN/CEFACT standards will be used and the more opportunities will arise for getting extra-budgetary funds for an expanded programme. UN/CEFACT will have to communicate effectively with the Member State Missions here in Geneva, as well as with the capitals. Your Heads of Delegation will, therefore, be key to obtaining support from Member States and Missions for your work.

## Implementation of decisions made at the 11th UN/CEFACT Plenary Session in June 2005[10]

- Decision 05-05: Changes to TRADE/R.650/Rev.4 Mandate and Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT.

The Bureau are preparing four additions to complete the text of R.650/Rev.4:

- Add.1 Open Development Process
- Add.2 Rules of Procedure of the Bureau
- Add.3 Terms of Reference of Rapporteurs
- Add.4 Intersessional Approval Process

- Decision 05-12: Intellectual Property Rights Policy (IPR). In September 2005, the draft IPR policy document was sent from the UN/CEFACT's Secretariat in Geneva to the UN's Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) in New York for its observations. OLA had raised concerns about earlier drafts, but there is some confidence that these concerns should now be met. However, to date there has been no response from OLA. The Bureau is working with the Secretariat, the UN ECE Trade Division and country delegations to accelerate completion of the review by the UN OLA. With that task completed, the IPR Policy document will be distributed for approval by the Plenary.

Comments were received from delegations about the draft IPR policy document[11] distributed for the June 2005 Plenary. Comments that were received within one month after the 2005 Plenary were addressed in the draft IPR policy document sent to OLA. Comments received after the September transmission to OLA were forwarded to the IPR Special Contact Group and were reviewed for adjustments to the draft IPR policy document and additions to the Executive Summary of the IPR Policy. An Executive Summary document is being prepared to address questions raised and to ensure common understanding of the IPR policy and principles.

## Recent Publications

### Trade Facilitation Toolkit and Forms Repository[12]

The Trade Facilitation Toolkit and Forms Repository assist Governments and trade associations to simplify their documentary requirements and develop consistent national series of trade documents.

### A Roadmap towards Paperless Trade[13]

In June 2005, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) held its third international Forum. The Forum, which was held under the auspices of UN/CEFACT, was entitled, "Paperless Trade in International Supply Chains: Enhancing Efficiency and Security". Participants studied the extent to which paperless trade was being conducted in countries throughout the world. The objective was to find a consensus among all the parties on what needs to be done to make paperless trade a worldwide reality. The roadmap takes into account the results of the discussion at the Forum. It sets out the key issues and makes recommendations and policy-oriented suggestions for Governments and business.

## Summary of Bureau Meetings and Actions

The Bureau have held monthly conference calls (5 November and 5 December 2005, and 6 January 2006) and  a two-day meeting in Geneva (30 and 31 January 2006).

In November 2005, they approved a new format for the 12th Plenary session. It will include strategic discussions on issues by three groupings - countries, sectors using the Centre's products and services, and international standard-setting organizations. The Bureau discussed the UBL policy and reviewed the Centre's contribution to the European Commission funded ITAIDE project.

In December 2005, they continued their preparatory work on the organization of the forthcoming Plenary and prepared the draft agenda and schedule for documents. This year's autumn Forum is being held in New Delhi, from 2 to 6 October.

In January 2006, the Bureau met in Geneva together with the Rapporteurs. They decided on the format and content of the Plenary session. Items to be discussed will include UN/CEFACT's liaison policy. For this, they will revise the Rapporteurs' Terms of References and Mandates and prepare a proposal to submit to the Plenary for approval.  They have also begun preparations for the elections of Vice Chairs and Rapporteurs. They discussed harmonization among the different working groups, the current status of the approval of UN/CEFACT's IPR policy, as well as sponsoring and financing of UN/CEFACT's work.

## Communications with Heads of Delegation

| Messages from the Bureau to the Heads of Delegation List server | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Date** | **Sender** | **Topic** |
| 05- 09-12 | Mika Vepsalainen | The Bureau's briefing note regarding the UNECE's external evaluation |
| 05-10-6 | Mika Vepsalainen | Press release after the 7th UN/CEFACT Forum (Lyon) |
| 05-11-10 | Mika Vepsalainen | Contact List of National Trade Facilitation Bodies |
| 05-11-24 | Mika Vepsalainen | First Quarterly Report |
| 06-01-26 | Mika Vepsalainen | Announcement of the UNeDocs workshop in Kuala Lumpur 20 – 24 February |
| 06-02-03 | Mika Vepsalainen | Message on the Legal Group of UN/CEFACT |

## Relevant UNECE press releases

7 march 2006 – XML Naming and Design Rules (NDR) approved as UN/CEFACT technical specification.

27 December 2005 - Secretary-General appoints Marek Belka of Poland as Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Europe)

2 December 2005 - The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe adopts its reform

26 October 2005 - Combating counterfeit goods on international markets: UN body explores new solutions

12 July 2005 - UN/CEFACT releases Roadmap to Paperless Trade

4 July 2005 - Towards the development of Euro-Asian land transport routes

20 May 2005 - Strengthening subregional economic cooperation in Central Asia - International Conference on Strengthening Subregional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future Role of SPECA (Astana, Kazakhstan, 25-27 May 2005)

20 April 2005 - Turning the page for paper in international trade

11 April 2005 - New Russian language glossary of international trade and WTO terms launched

5 April 2005 - Customs to play wider role in trade facilitation

5 April 2005 - African Countries call for Global Package for Trade Facilitation Implementation

23 March 2005 - 6th UN/CEFACT Forum session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, approves five Business Requirements Specifications (BRS)

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[1] The Library can be downloaded at www.uncefact.org, 15th February News

[2] The standard and supporting XML schemas can be downloaded at http://webster.disa.org/cefact-groups/atg.

[3] Extensible Markup Language

[4] The UNeDocs Beta Version 1.2 data model can be downloaded form the CEFACT TBG2 Web Site at http://www.unece.org/cefact/forum_grps/tbg/tbg2_edocs/tbg2_edocs.htm

[5] http://www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/som_special_task_groups/electronic_commerce.html

[6] http://unece.unog.ch/etrade

[7] A full description of the study can be found in document TRADE/CEFACT/2005/34

[8] Under the auspices of UN/CEFACT /TB2 and hosted by Dagang Net Malaysia

[9] For further information, contact Tom Butterly (Tom.Butterly@unece.org)

[10] The text of the decision can be found in document TRADE/CEFACT/2005/MISC.7

[11] TRADE/CEFACT/2005/MISC.3, 17 June 2005

[12] http://www.unece.org/cefact/publica/ece_trade_239_toolkit.pdf

[13] http://www.unece.org/cefact/publica/ece_trd_371e.pdf