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Item 5.5 of the provisional agenda

**UNITED NATIONS CENTRE
FOR TRADE FACILITATION AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS**

Summary of main activities and developments

DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION

This document is presented **for discussion** and provides an overview of UN/CEFACT's principal achievements during 2003.

UN/CEFACT supports activities dedicated to improving the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations, from developed, developing and transitional economies, to exchange products and relevant services effectively. Its principal focus is to facilitate international transactions, through the simplification and harmonization of processes, procedures and information flows, and so contribute to the growth of global commerce with a vision to provide "simple, transparent and effective processes for global commerce".

Delegates are reminded that the 10th UN/CEFACT plenary takes place only after the 7th session of the UNECE Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. Consequently, any decisions to be made at the 10th UN/CEFACT Plenary that require the approval of the Committee will be submitted for intersessional approval.

The report of the Centre's 9th session and other documents are available at the following website address:
<http://www.unece.org/cefact>

1. At its 9th session, 12-13 May 2003, UN/CEFACT adopted the programmes of work of its five Groups: the Applied Technologies Group (ATG), the Information Content Management Group (ICG), the Legal Group (LG), the International Trade and Business Processes Group (TBG) and the Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG).

2. Since the 9th session, the work undertaken in the Groups has resulted in the following outcomes:

- The first revision of Recommendation 23 was released
- UN/CEFACT released Version 2.0 of the Core Component Technical Specification (CCTS)
- UN/CEFACT released its UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology (UMM) User Guide as part of the UN/CEFACT Business Collaboration Framework (BCF), a set of specifications and guides.
- UN/CEFACT envisages the release of version 1.0 of the UN/CEFACT - Standard Business Document Header Technical Specification in spring 2004. The public review period was closed in February 2004 and the finished specification is awaited after the revision of the comments received.

3. In addition, two UN/EDIFACT and two UN/LOCODE editions were issued:

- D.03A UN/EDIFACT directory was approved by the Directory Audit Team and published on UNECE website on 17 June 2003;
- D.03B UN/EDIFACT directory was approved by the Directory Audit Team and published on UNECE website on 20 January 2004.
- UN/LOCODE 2003-2 edition was released and published on UNECE website on 1 August 2003
- UN/LOCODE 2004-1 edition was released and published on UNECE website on 18 January 2004.

4. Technical assistance and support to implementation has been provided through:

- The Project for Technical Assistance in Trade Facilitation implemented jointly by UNECE and the Czech Republic
- The Second International Forum on Trade Facilitation, 14-15 May 2003
- The UNECE-EAN Regional Seminar on Trade Facilitation in the New Security Environment, 1-2 July 2003
- Capacity-building in Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business in the Mediterranean supported by the United Nations Development Account
- The implementation project on United Nations Extensions for electronic Trade Documents (UNeDocs)

- Two conferences on trade security in February and November 2003
- Activities of the Regional Advisor on Trade Facilitation

5. A full description of the above activities and related achievements can be found in the document on Capacity building and technical cooperation in support of the programme of work (TRADE/2004/19).

Significant deviations from the original plans for the 2002-2003 budget period

6. A new relational database system for UN/LOCODE was developed and data from UN/LOCODE 2001.2 onwards transferred into the system in April 2002. This additional work item was requested by the UN/CEFACT Codes Working Group in order to improve the quality and usability of UN/LOCODE (with more automatic error checking). The system is available on Internet:
www.unece.org/cefact/locode/service/main.htm

7. Similarly, a relational database for codes for units of measure used in international trade (Rec. 29) was developed in June 2002 as an additional work item based on a request from users who need to load these codes into their own databases. Available on www.uncefact.org

8. The work on a new recommendation on the Single Window concept was delayed (envisaged to be completed in 2004-2005). However, the secretariat issued a booklet on the concept and its benefits. The work on a Guide on Benchmarking was postponed and is envisaged to be completed in 2004-2005.

Significant changes from budgeted activities foreseen for 2004-2005

9. No significant changes are envisaged. However, the 10th UN/CEFACT plenary will make important decisions regarding the future direction of its work, and particularly work items related to electronic business standards, including the acquisition of additional extra-budgetary resources (a support service provider). These decisions may affect the programme of work and will be reported to the Committee accordingly.

Other decisions required from the Committee

10. The 10th UN/CEFACT plenary will take place 17 – 19 May 2004 after the 7th session of the UNECE Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. Consequently, any decisions made at the Plenary will be submitted to an intersessional approval by the CTIED after the UN/CEFACT session.