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Standardization Policies

Sixteenth session
Geneva, 19-22 June 2006

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON REGULATORY COOPERATION
AND STANDARDIZATION POLICIES ON ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION**

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I. ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) held its "Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Week" from 19 to 22 June 2006 in Geneva. The Week included the Working Party's sixteenth session (19-21 June), the UNECE International Forum on Common Regulatory Language for Global Trade (in the afternoon of 20 June and the morning of 21 June), and as a side event, a workshop on the experience of ISO-9000 quality management schemes in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries (22 June).
2. The sixteenth session was attended by representatives from Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Uzbekistan.
3. The meetings were also attended by a representative of the European Community.
4. Representatives of Brazil, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and the Syrian Arab Republic participated under article 11 of the Commission's terms of reference.
5. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies participated: the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).
6. The following intergovernmental organizations also attended: the Commonwealth of Independent States Interstate Council on Standardization, Certification and Metrology; the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML); the Standardization Organization for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC-GSO); the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).
7. The following accredited non-governmental organizations participated: the European Committee for Standardization (CEN), the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).
8. Observers present at the invitation of the secretariat included representatives of private sector companies, associations and chambers of commerce, and civil society organizations from the UNECE and other regions.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/1 – Provisional agenda

9. The provisional agenda (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/1) was adopted with certain revisions.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Agenda item 2)

10. Mr. C. Arvius (Sweden) was elected Chairperson, and Mr. V. Koreshkov (Belarus) and Mr. A. Gonda (Slovakia) were elected Vice-Chairpersons.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF UNECE REFORM AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2006 SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (Agenda item 3)

Documentation: E/ECE/1434/Rev.1 - Work plan on ECE reform

11. The Director of the Trade and Timber Division highlighted the main outcome of the UNECE reform which had been finalized at the Commission session in February 2006 (its results were reflected in document E/ECE/1434/Rev.1).

12. The Chair of the Committee on Trade spoke about the new requirements set by the UNECE reform for the sectoral committees, including the request to committees and to their subsidiary bodies to render technical assistance to countries in transition when required and when resources are available. He also pointed out tasks for the newly restructured Committee on Trade and noted documents to be discussed and decisions to be made at the Committee's first session, to be held back to back with the session of the Working Party (from 21 to 23 June).

13. The Working Party:

(a) Noted the information from the Director of the Trade and Timber Division on the results of the UNECE reform and the decisions adopted by the Commission at its sixty-first session as well as the information from the Chair of the Committee on Trade on its new structure and the impact of the reform on the UNECE sectoral committees and their subsidiary bodies;

(b) Agreed, in view of the above, to make the necessary changes while reviewing its programme of work (agenda item 10).

V. UNECE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON COMMON REGULATORY LANGUAGE FOR GLOBAL TRADE (Agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/2 – Background document
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/3 - Programme
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/3/Add.1 - Submission from the African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO)
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/3/Add.2 - Submission from the EC
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/3/Add.3 - Submission from the OECD

14. The Forum was organized in three sessions, focusing on: (a) good practices and standards-setting practices (with presentations from WTO, ISO and OECD); (b) international and regional approaches to regulatory cooperation (experiences were highlighted from the European Union (EU), North America (Canada), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) region, the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and the CIS; and (c) UNECE instruments to promote regulatory cooperation and convergence (the activities under the Working Party and also UNECE programmes of work in transport, environment and energy areas were presented). A summary of the Forum's discussions is contained in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/13/Add.1.

15. At the end of the discussions, Forum participants agreed on the following conclusions, which were endorsed by the Working Party:

- (a) Welcomed the timely initiative of UNECE in holding such an event, and thanked the speakers for their excellent, informative presentations;
- (b) Noted the relative growth of national regulatory and conformity assessment procedures as technical obstacles to international trade;
- (c) Stressed the importance of elaborating and promoting good regulatory practices, and took note of the discussions on these matters under way at WTO;
- (d) Confirmed that regulatory dialogue can and should be continued in all relevant international, regional and bilateral forums as a means for transparency, confidence-building and facilitation of trade and market access;
- (e) Encouraged Governments to follow good regulatory practices (including consultations with all relevant stakeholders) and to make use of voluntary standards instead of mandatory regulations whenever possible or to make reference in legal and normative acts to the use of relevant international or internationally recognized (i.e. widely used regional and national) standards;
- (f) Further encouraged Governments to enter into regulatory dialogue with their trading partners and, whenever feasible, to make recourse to internationally accepted regulatory approaches and tools such as the "UNECE International Model for Technical Harmonization";
- (g) Invited the Chairpersons of UNECE sectoral committees to make proposals for cross-sectoral projects based on the ideas presented at the Forum;
- (h) Requested the Bureau of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies and the Committee on Trade, to consider how issues raised during the Forum might be taken into account in the programme of work;
- (i) Requested the secretariat to publish the proceedings of the Forum with a view to disseminating information to interested parties at the national level.

VI. REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS IN STANDARDIZATION AND REGULATORY COOPERATION (Agenda item 5)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/4 – Proposed ECE standardization list (new format)

16. The delegation of Armenia introduced a document reviewing developments and standardization and regulatory cooperation in that country (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/4), and highlighted the country's experience in implementing WTO commitments, and in changing the legal and institutional framework for standardization and technical regulations.

17. Information was provided on the forthcoming meeting of the CIS standardization agencies, to be held in the Russian Federation at the end of June 2006.

18. The EC representative informed participants about the launching of a public consultation seeking the views of all interested parties on improving the "New Approach", in particular in the areas of conformity assessment, accreditation, CE marking and market surveillance. He also reported on the Commission's Action Plan on Standardization; and on the technical cooperation programme with the Russian Federation under the umbrella of discussions on the Road Map for a Common Economic Space to be created between the EU and the Russian Federation.

19. The delegation of Austria informed participants about the results of the Asia-Europe Meeting on Standards and Conformity Assessment (ASEM) held from 21 to 23 May 2006 in Vienna, where the UNECE Regulatory and Standardization List and the UNECE International Model for Technical Harmonization had been presented and discussed.

20. The secretariat provided information on its good working cooperation with the CIS Interstate Council on Standardization, Certification and Metrology, and on the establishment of contacts with the secretariat of the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC).

21. The Working Party:

(a) Took note of the submission from Armenia on legal and institutional changes in its national quality infrastructure to meet WTO requirements and to strengthen its competitive position in international trade;

(b) Noted the presentation by the delegation of Austria on the outcome of EU cooperation with Asian countries at the ASEM event held from 21 to 23 May in Vienna;

(c) Further noted the information from the EC highlighting current work on the review of "New Approach/Modular Approach" techniques and on relations with the Russian Federation in the standards and regulatory area;

(d) Invited the EC to continue providing information to the Working Party on the process and results of the "New Approach/Modular Approach" review in the light of the interest expressed by delegations.

VII. COORDINATION (Agenda item 6)

A. Revision of UNECE Recommendations

Documentation: ECE/STAND/17/REV.4 – Recommendations on standardization Policies
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/5 – Draft revision of Recommendation “J”

22. It was recalled that at its fifteenth session the Working Party had agreed to begin the revision of its set of recommendations (ECE/STAND/17/Rev.4), commencing with recommendations “J” (on definitions) and “D” (on reference to standards).

23. The Rapporteurs on Harmonization (Mr. C. Arvius and Ms. L. Romanovska) presented a draft of a revised recommendation on definitions (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/5) which was prepared in consultation with interested organizations (e.g. the secretariat of the ISO Committee on Conformity Assessment (ISO CASCO)) and which reflects the latest ISO/IEC work on definitions on standardization and on conformity assessment recently published in ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 and standard ISO/IEC 17000:2004.

24. Delegates agreed on the importance of having a uniform vocabulary of definitions and of attracting the attention of Governments to these publications. The participants were also briefed on the debate at WTO on the ISO work on definitions and the reference to it in the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade.

25. The Working Party:

(a) Approved the new, revised Recommendation “J” on “Definitions”, as set out in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/5;

(b) Recommended that UNECE member States, as well as all other States, encourage their national standards bodies to publish the new ISO/IEC international reference documents on definitions (ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 and ISO/IEC 17000:2004) as national guides and/or standards, translated into their national language;

(c) Agreed on the inclusion of the revised text of Recommendation “J” in the set of UNECE Recommendations on Standardization Policies;

(d) Invited the rapporteurs to begin revising Recommendation “D” on “Reference to Standards”, as contained in the UNECE publication *Recommendations on Standardization Policies* (ECE/STAND/17/Rev.4).

B. UNECE Standardization and Regulatory List

Documentation: ECE/STAND/20/Rev.5 - ECE standardization list
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/6 – Proposed revision of list

26. The secretariat informed delegations that the UNECE Standardization and Regulatory List (hereinafter referred to as “the List”) had been presented at the ARSO General Assembly in Cairo in February 2006 and at the ASEM meeting in Vienna in May 2006. At the latter meeting, as one of its conclusions, participants agreed to initiate an exchange of information consultations on national regulatory priorities.

27. The Rapporteur on Coordination (Ms. O. Manafova) introduced the new version of the List (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/6), which includes updated information received by the secretariat since the fifteenth session.

28. The delegation of the Czech Republic suggested that in the future a proposal from a country for the List should be accompanied by an explanatory note regarding future work expected in a particular area.

29. Another proposal was, in an effort to avoid confusion, not to include information in the List on areas where, for example, EU directives or European standards exist. Cited as an example was a recent European standard for amusement parks and playgrounds. A further suggestion was to request that the submitting countries include additional information in the List to show on which basis the regulatory cooperation is foreseen (international or regional standard, etc.).

30. During discussions, a representative of the EurAsEC group on technical regulations provided information on its forthcoming activities.

31. The question was raised of how coordination of regulatory activities is organized between CIS countries. For example, the Russian Governmental Programme on the preparation of technical regulations foresees the preparation of 181 technical regulations. The priority regulatory list of the CIS Interstate Council includes 29 items and the priority list of EurAsEC member States 28 items. Moreover, 19 items in the CIS and EurAsEC lists are identical and refer primarily to areas covered by the EU “New Approach” directives. However, no common regulations have so far been elaborated (either within the CIS or within EurAsEC) in these areas.

32. It was noted that parallel work at the national level and a lack of dialogue on identified common regulations (in view of the similarities mentioned above) might eventually lead to new technical barriers appearing in regional trade. It was considered that, to clarify this subject, further consultations with the CIS and EurAsEC would be needed.

33. The Working Party:

(a) Noted the importance of information exchange as a first step towards regulatory cooperation and called on delegations to intensify such exchanges, including through submitting information for inclusion in the List;

- (b) Invited countries having common regulatory priorities to work towards establishing a transboundary dialogue/exchange between national regulators in an effort to build cooperation. The WP.6 Team of Specialists on Standardization And Regulatory Techniques (“START” Team) would be called upon to provide necessary assistance to such projects, if required;
- (c) Requested the secretariat and the Bureau of WP.6 to follow up, in order to obtain information on the regulatory and standardization cooperation and priorities of the CIS, EurAsEC and other bodies such as ARSO and ASEM, for eventual inclusion in the List;
- (d) Decided to continue revision of the List;
- (e) Asked the Rapporteur on Coordination to make an update of the current draft version of the List, taking into consideration the comments made at the WP.6 session, and requested the secretariat to upload the revised version of the List to the WP.6 website;
- (f) Invited and encouraged delegations and international and regional organizations to submit further proposals for inclusion in the List, with a deadline of 31 December 2006.

VIII. HARMONIZATION/REGULATORY COOPERATION (Agenda item 7)

A. UNECE Recommendation “L” – “International Model for Technical Harmonization Based on Good Regulatory Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Technical Regulations via the Use of International Standards”

Regulatory activities in general

34. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about promotion of its regional and sectoral projects at different regional and national forums, and of the work of its “START” team since the previous session.

B. Regional Projects

35. The Working Party was informed that its work on recommendation “L” and related sectoral projects had been presented in April 2006 at the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (IPA) Permanent Commission on Economy and Finance, where it was decided to recommend national parliamentary committees in the CIS to use recommendation “L” in drafting national legislation. On this occasion, the IPA made a special request to the Government of the Russian Federation to accelerate consideration of the CIS agreement on technical harmonization. It was recalled that this agreement had been drawn up with the assistance of the Working Party.

36. The secretariat reported on contacts with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) regarding the possibility of obtaining funds for a continuation of the “South-East Europe Regulatory Project” and for its expansion to other regions. Delegations encouraged the secretariat to finalize the project proposal and to formally submit it to SIDA.

37. The Working Party:

- (a) Took note of the information from the CIS and EurAsEC on their regulatory work;
- (b) Invited interested countries and regional organizations to provide updated information on their regulatory cooperation activities and projects by the next session of the Working Party.

C. Sectoral Projects

38. A representative of the oil and gas industry in the Russian Federation noted the interest of the private sector in sectoral initiatives of the Working Party and reported on a plan to set up a “working party”-type private sector group at the national level to exchange information and identify projects of common interest for submission for consideration by the Working Party.

Telecommunications project

39. The representative of the Telecommunications Task Force (Mr. P. Döfnäs) provided information on the status of the project.

40. The Working Party took note of the status report on the Telecommunications project prepared by the Telecommunications Task Force.

UNECE Earth-Moving Machinery Initiative

41. The Chairperson (Mr. D. Roley) of the Earth-Moving Machinery Task Force presented information on the preparatory work for a national technical regulation on earth-moving machinery in the Russian Federation.

42. During discussions, the desirability of including CIS experts in such regulatory work in order to simplify regulatory convergence with other CIS States was pointed out. The Task Force Chairperson replied that this proposal was in line with the intentions of the organizers of the project.

43. The Working Party:

- (a) Noted the status report on the Earth-Moving Machinery initiative from the Chairperson of the Task Force;
- (b) Took note of the information on the current phase of work on technical regulation in this sector in the Russian Federation, and stressed the importance of involving, if feasible, experts from other CIS countries in these activities.

Safety of pipelines

44. It was recalled that at the fifteenth session a proposal for a new sectoral initiative in the area of pipelines was submitted by the Russian Union of Oil and Gas Constructors (TRADE/WP.6/2005/5/Add.1). In view of the interest expressed by UNECE member States, the Working Party agreed to initiate work on a possible new project in this area.

45. It was further recalled that the format and scope of such a project had been discussed at the "START" Team meeting in March 2006, and that the proposal had also been presented at regional regulatory and standardization meetings in the UNECE region.

46. The representative of the UNECE Environment Division presented the project on guidelines on good practices on the safety of pipelines under preparation within the framework of the UNECE Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

47. The representative of an industry association in Western Europe highlighted the industry's interest in such guidelines.

48. The representative of the Russian agency responsible for pipeline safety noted that the above-mentioned project (guidelines on good practices) responded only partially to the needs of Russian regulators, and called for a joint project to draw up common regulatory requirements for pipelines.

49. A number of representatives of the Russian oil and gas industry expressed their interest in the WP.6 project on pipelines and in any future similar project under the auspices of UNECE in this area.

50. Information was provided on the forthcoming international conference on standardization and regulatory issues in the oil and gas industry to be held in the Russian Federation in September 2006. It was noted that the UNECE secretariat would be assisting in the organization of the conference, and that the "WP.6 pipelines regulatory initiative" would also be presented at this event.

51. The Working Party:

(a) Took note of the information on the development of the pipeline safety initiative and of the proposal from the Russian Federation regarding future work in this area;

(b) Invited both interested UNECE member States and industries to contribute to further discussions on the drafting of a regulatory framework on pipeline safety, taking into account the results of discussions of draft guidelines on pipeline safety in the framework of the UNECE environmental programme;

(c) Requested the secretariat to look into the feasibility of intra-sectoral activities relating to pipeline safety.

Equipment for explosive atmosphere

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/7 – Proposal submitted by Germany

52. The Chairperson of the Working Party recalled that at its fifteenth session, a proposal had been made to explore the possibility of initiating a regulatory dialogue in the sector of equipment for explosive atmosphere. The proposal had been received favourably by the Working Party.

53. The German delegate presented a paper (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/7) which suggested a new sectoral initiative in the area of equipment for explosive atmosphere, linking it to a scheme currently functioning at the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC). The IEC delegation briefly presented the major elements of the IECEx scheme (Global Ex Certification Scheme) aimed at avoiding multiple testing and certification.

54. In view of the generally positive response to the German proposal in principle, it was suggested that discussions on the practical follow-up required to initiate this project would continue in the “START” Team.

55. The Working Party:

- (a) Took note of the proposal for a new project presented by Germany;
- (b) Invited countries to inform the secretariat by the end of December 2006 about their interest, in principle, in participating in such a project;
- (c) Entrusted office bearers and the “START” Team with pursuing this proposal further, as required.

IX. CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT (Agenda item 8)

A. Review of Recent Developments

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/8 – Submission by Bulgaria

56. The Working Party received information on conformity assessment and related developments in countries, in regional groupings and in international and regional organizations. A submission was made by Bulgaria on the latest changes in its legal and institutional framework, and on the preparations for concluding an agreement with the EU on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (PECA). The functions of and relations between two major state agencies and major players (e.g. the State Agency for Metrology and Technical Surveillance and the Committee for Quality) were highlighted (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/8).

57. Information was provided on the discussions which had taken place during the meeting of conformity assessment bodies from the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) and other countries (in Sofia in April 2006).

58. ISO CASCO made available a room document on their recently published documents, ongoing technical work and new projects.
59. In response to the question on developments in the EU, the EC delegate promised to make a special contribution on conformity assessment at the next session.
60. The Working Party:
- (a) Noted the document from Bulgaria reporting on recent developments in the country's conformity assessment system;
 - (b) Also noted the information provided on the CEFTA conformity assessment meeting held in Sofia in April 2006;
 - (c) Took note of the report from the secretariat on its participation at the ISO CASCO held in Geneva in November 2005 and ISO CASCO room document presented.

B. Mutual Recognition Agreements

61. The Rapporteur on Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs), Ms. M.-C. Poncin, recalled the request made at the fourteenth session for an exchange of information between representatives of member States on the governmental MRAs in which their countries were engaged (according to a template agreed at that session, document TRADE/WP.6/2004/8).
62. The Working Party:
- (a) Asked Ms. Poncin, on the basis of comments received, to prepare a new draft of the MRA inventory, and requested the secretariat to make the revised version available on the WP.6 website;
 - (b) Reiterated its invitation to delegations to submit updated information on governmental MRAs, according to the format used for the inventory, by the end of December 2006.

C. Accreditation

63. The delegate from Bulgaria drew attention to a new Law on accreditation, which had entered into force in January 2006 in her country.
64. The Rapporteur on Accreditation Issues (Mr. D. Pierre) provided an update on the activities of the European Accreditation (EA), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), noting that developments were mainly dedicated to the extension of their Multilateral Agreements (MLAs) and the continuous work to provide guidance documents aimed at the harmonization of accreditation worldwide.

65. The Rapporteur explained that EA was working closely with the EC within the framework of the project aiming to enhance the application of the "New Approach" directives. He also pointed to the fruitful cooperation that existed between ILAC and IAF.

66. The Working Party took note of the presentation on the EA, ILAC and IAF activities.

D. Other issues

1. Organic agriculture

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/9 – Submission by the International Task Force

67. The representative of UNCTAD spoke about organic products and about this growing segment of the food products trade. Information was provided about the latest discussions in the context of the International Task Force (ITF) on harmonization and equivalence in organic agriculture (document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/9). The next ITF meeting will take place in Sweden in October 2006.

68. The Working Party:

(a) Noted the information from UNCTAD on current regulatory developments in the organic agriculture sector;

(b) Requested the secretariat to continue contacts regarding the potential interest of the ITF in initiating work on elaborating common regulatory objectives for organic products.

2. Policy issues related to quality assurance

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/10 – Report on meeting of CIS States

69. The Working Party was informed about a special meeting on 22 June 2006 on quality management, organized in conjunction with the current session. This meeting was organized at the request of delegations and representatives of industry from the CIS region to discuss their experiences at the governmental and company levels with the implementation of quality and integrated management systems.

70. The provisional programme of the meeting (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/10) was made available to the delegates.

71. The Working Party:

(a) Welcomed the initiative for organizing an expert meeting to analyse the experience of companies with ISO 9000 system certification;

(b) Called for a further exchange of information on quality-related matters.

3. Metrology

72. A representative of the International Organization of Legal Metrology (OIML) gave a presentation on developments in that organization.

73. A representative of industry suggested that one issue for future consideration at the Working Party might be metrological matters relating to the gas and oil industry.

74. The Working Party took note of the presentation by the representative of OIML on its activities.

X. MARKET SURVEILLANCE (Agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11 – Draft proposal for a UNECE recommendation on market surveillance
ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11/Add.1 – Concepts and definitions
ECE/TRADE/C/2006/16 - Request for renewal of the “MARS” Group’s mandate

75. The Working Party was informed that, at the invitation of ISO CASCO, a presentation had been made by the secretariat on the market surveillance programme segment at the ISO CASCO meeting in Geneva in November 2005.

76. Referring to the latest national developments in the area of market surveillance, the delegation of Bulgaria reported on the establishment of a council comprising 10 bodies involved in different types of control related to market surveillance and consumer protection. The delegate of Sweden pointed out that her country already had a similar set up and could share its successful experience in this area.

77. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the latest comments received on the draft recommendation on the “Use of Market Surveillance Infrastructure as a Complementary Means to Protect Consumers and Users Against Counterfeit Goods” (draft recommendation “M”, document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11). The draft recommendation had been presented to the CIS parliament, where it was decided to recommend national parliamentary committees in the CIS to use the provisions of a recommendation “M” in drafting national legislation. It was suggested to organize a joint UNECE-CIS event in 2007 on experiences in market surveillance and counterfeit goods.

78. This draft recommendation was also presented for comments at the CEFTA meeting in Sofia in April 2006 and at the CIS meeting of market surveillance bodies in the Russian Federation in May 2006.

79. Delegations were informed that at the meeting of the World Trade Organization Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO CTBT) in June 2006, the delegation of Canada submitted a document drawing attention to the problem of counterfeit certification marks. In this context, the UNECE provided information to WTO CTBT on its market surveillance programme, in particular on work relating to the possible use of market surveillance as a means against counterfeit goods. During discussions at the Working Party session, it was clarified that the paper by Canada had been submitted in the framework of the fourth triennial review of the Agreement on WTO Technical Barriers to Trade, and at this time it was not clear what the follow-up to it at the WTO would be.

80. Delegations made some minor changes to the latest version of the draft recommendation set out in document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11. The delegation of Switzerland proposed further consideration of a definition of counterfeit goods from the point of view of market surveillance agencies. The delegation of France stressed the importance of involving intellectual property rights stakeholders in the process of finalizing discussions on the recommendation.

81. The representative of Slovakia invited the Working Party to hold the next meeting of the Advisory Group on Market Surveillance ("MARS" Group) in Slovakia on 25-26 September 2006.

82. The Working Party was informed that its request for an extension of the "MARS" Group mandate would be considered by the Committee on Trade (document ECE/TRADE/C/2006/16).

83. The Working Party:

(a) Noted information from the secretariat on the development of the proposed draft recommendation "M" and also the draft text (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11) on "Market Surveillance Infrastructure as a Complementary Means to Protect Consumers and Users Against Counterfeit Goods";

(b) Invited delegations to involve relevant stakeholders on a national level, and to provide written comments on documents ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/11 and Add.1;

(c) Accepted with gratitude the invitation from Slovakia to host the "MARS" Group meeting, and agreed that the secretariat would send out an invitation to the meeting, inviting further comments on recommendation "M", which should be sent to the secretariat two weeks before the meeting date;

(d) Requested that the "MARS" Group complete a final proposal for Recommendation "M", for approval at the Working Party's seventeenth session in 2007;

(e) Agreed to continue contacts with the CIS parliament on issues of mutual interest related to market surveillance, including on the prospect of holding a joint event in 2007.

XI. WP.6 PROGRAMMES OF WORK, VISION AND MISSION (Agenda item 10)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/12 – Mission and work plan
ECE/TRADE/C/2006/12 - Draft programme of work of the Committee
on Trade
E/ECE/1434/Rev.1 - Work plan on ECE reform

84. It was recalled by the Chairperson that at its fifteenth session the Working Party had decided to review its programme of work in the short, medium and long-term perspective in the context of the reform of UNECE initiated by member States.

85. The Working Party was informed about the final results of the UNECE reform (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1), about comments made on activities of the Working Party, and about relevant changes in the programme of the Committee on Trade (ECE/TRADE/C/2006/12).

86. The Working Party had before it the strategic directions of the Working Party and its programme of work (ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/12). The format of the document had provisionally been agreed upon by the Working Party in 2005, and had later been revised, taking into account the final conclusions of the UNECE reform. During the discussion, comments and proposals were made by a number of delegations (Czech Republic, France, Turkey, Sweden and OIML), which will be incorporated into a revised version.

87. Delegations expressed their satisfaction with the results of the restructuring exercise initiated by the Working Party, which included a change of the Working Party's name, a revision of its terms of reference, an agreement on a vision and mission statement, a restructuring of the programme of work on the basis of new elements, and a refocusing of its activities in view of member States' current needs.

88. It was noted that, in recent years, the attendance at the Working Party's sessions and forums had increased significantly both in absolute terms and in terms of country, organization and civil society representation. Particularly welcome was the growing interest and participation of other regions.

89. During discussions, the representative of the EC proposed that "breakout" sessions be held during the Working Party's annual sessions, to allow for in-depth debate on areas of particular interest to delegations.

90. With a view to better understanding their value, an evaluation of the Working Party's activities was carried out in 2005 during its fifteenth session. At its sixteenth session, the Working Party was informed about the results of this evaluation. The average level of satisfaction with the Working Party's general programme was appraised at 4.1 (on a 0 to 5 scale, with 5 being the highest level), the format and organization of the session at 4.3 and the Forum on Market Surveillance at 4.2. The quality of presentations and discussions was rated at 3.8 and 3.9 respectively. Regarding quality of information, 43 per cent of the respondents felt that they received "new information" and 47 per cent found it "useful" (full information on the results of this questionnaire, and proposals made by delegations, is available on the WP.6 website).

91. The Working Party noted that the results of evaluation were encouraging and useful, and that it was especially grateful for specific suggestions made by delegations.

92. The Working Party:

(a) Noted the final decisions on the UNECE reform as contained in document E/ECE/1434/Rev.1 as well as the specific comments within this document relevant to the activities of the Working Party at the levels of the UNECE, the Committee on Trade and the Working Party itself;

(b) Approved the context of document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/12 with the revisions made during the session. This document contains the Working Party vision and mission statements and strategic directions, as well as a short- and medium-term programme of work (to be made available as document ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/12/Rev.1);

(c) Welcomed the final results of the work undertaken on restructuring and streamlining the Working Party in order to better meet the needs of UNECE member States, and expressed its gratitude to the office bearers and the secretariat for providing the necessary support to this process;

(d) Agreed on the usefulness of organizing “breakout” discussions on specific subjects during the annual sessions of the Working Party, and decided to continue the practice of evaluating its meetings.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 11)

93. The Working Party considered the work of its rapporteurs and coordinators.

94. The next session of the Working Party was tentatively scheduled for November 2007, back to back with the Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards (WP.7). At this next session, a joint WP.6 - WP.7 workshop on traceability and related matters will be organized.

95. The Working Party:

(a) Thanked the rapporteurs and coordinators for their contributions;

(b) Entrusted the Working Party office bearers with taking the necessary actions to fill the existing vacancies for rapporteurs and coordinators, taking into account the revised structure of the work programme;

(c) Confirmed the following appointments of rapporteurs and coordinators:

<u>Rapporteurs:</u>	International Standardization and Definitions of Terms	Ms. O. Manafova	Bulgaria	
		Ms. M. Saunders	United States of America	
	National Practices and Transnational Cooperation in Technical Regulations	Mr. C. Arvius	Sweden	
		Ms. L. Romanovska	Czech Republic	
	Conformity Assessment	Quality Management	Mr. P. Kalyta	Ukraine
			Mr. A. Hussein	Canada
		Accreditation	Mr. D. Pierre	France
		Mutual Recognition	Ms. M.-C. Poncin	France
	Metrology	Mr. V. Gedrovics	Latvia	
		Mr. E. De Leer	Netherlands	

<u>Coordinators:</u>	Liaison with the CIS Inter-State Council on Standardization, Metrology and Certification	Mr. V. Koreshkov	Belarus
	Market Surveillance	Ms. K. Steinlova	Slovakia

XIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Agenda item 12)

Documentation: ECE/TRADE/C/WP.6/2006/13 – Future report

96. According to the established procedures, the Working Party approved a “List of Decisions” at the sixteenth session. The secretariat was requested, in consultation with the office bearers, to complete the descriptive part of the report, taking into account the contributions made and the discussions held during the session.

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