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Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Committee

Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business

Thirty-first session

Geneva, 3 July (pm) and 4 July (am) 2025

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Thirty-First Session¹

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva starting at 15:00 on Thursday 3 July 2025, in Salle VII.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Elections.

A. Policy recommendations

3. Progress on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe policy recommendations.

B. Overview of activities and prospective developments

4. Operational challenges and prospective developments for the governance of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business.
5. Follow-up to the evaluation of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme and the Trade subprogramme by the Office of Internal Oversight Services.
6. Overview of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business activities.
7. Updates from the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy.

¹ Delegates are invited to register online at <https://indico.un.org/event/1013426/>. The session documents will be made available progressively at <https://unece.org/trade/cefact/uncefact-31st-plenary>. Please note that as part of its move to paperless meetings, the secretariat does not distribute paper copies of meeting documents. Additional information for delegates, including a map of the Palais des Nations meeting rooms, is available at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>.



8. Updates from the Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations.

C. Technical instruments and their implementation

9. United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business deliverables since the last Plenary:
 - (a) White papers for information;
 - (b) Technical standards for noting;
 - (c) Business requirements specifications for noting;
 - (d) Capacity-building and technical cooperation for information;
 - (e) Other deliverables for information.
10. Other business.
11. Adoption of decisions of the thirty-first session.

II. Annotations

Opening

The session will commence with opening remarks from the Chair of United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) and United Nations Member States representatives, highlighting the strategic importance of digital and sustainable trade facilitation in the current global landscape.

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda and timetable for the thirty-first Plenary of UN/CEFACT has been prepared by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat. It is based on the decisions adopted at the thirtieth session of the Plenary.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Annotated Provisional Agenda for the Thirty-First Session</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/1	For decision

The UN/CEFACT Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will present the annotated provisional agenda for decision and will inform the Plenary of any proposed changes.

This session will provide simultaneous interpretation into English, French and Russian.

Item 2. Elections

At the thirtieth UN/CEFACT Plenary, the new UN/CEFACT Chair (Canada) was elected for the period 2024–2026. Noting a vacant position in the Bureau, resulting from the election of former Vice-Chair Nancy Norris as Chair, the Plenary decided to open a call for nominations in view of its next session in 2025. To align the terms of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the UN/CEFACT Bureau, the Plenary decided that the next re-election of the entire Bureau (Chair and Vice-Chairs) will be held in 2026.

Document title	Document symbol	
<i>Consolidated United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business Mandate and Terms of Reference</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/15	For information

Delegations who are physically present will elect the Vice-Chair for the UN/CEFACT Bureau and the Regional Rapporteurs in line with the UN/CEFACT Mandate and Terms of Reference.

Delegations are encouraged to refer to the *Consolidated UN/CEFACT Mandate and Terms of Reference* (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2017/15) adopted at the twenty-third Plenary, and particularly to sections D on the role and responsibilities of the Bureau, section G on the role and responsibilities of the Regional Rapporteurs, and section E on the election procedures.

A. Policy recommendations

Item 3. Progress on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe policy recommendations

Over the last four decades, the 48 adopted ECE Recommendations have contributed to shaping United Nations Members States' trade facilitation reforms based on international norms and standards, such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. ECE policy recommendations have been extensively used by governments and businesses to make their trade operations across border easier, faster and more predictable.

The ongoing work of UN/CEFACT to advance digital, sustainable, and resilient value chains, and to enhance digital connectivity along transit corridors can further contribute to the strategic priorities for the global and regional trade and development agenda. This segment will provide an update on the two key work streams based on the UN/CEFACT programme of work for 2025–2026. It will consist of two parts:

- Part one will focus on fostering sustainability, transparency and resilience in value chains to support the green and digital transitions for the circular economy. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) *Recommendation No. 49: Transparency at Scale* will be presented for decision.
- Building on the success of the ECE Recommendation No. 46 which defined standardized processes and data structures for traceability and transparency in the textile and leather sectors, ECE Recommendation No. 49 offers comprehensive guidance to governments and industry stakeholders on implementing scalable and interoperable supply chains data exchange frameworks, which support the operationalization of digital product passports.
- An *Update on the ECE Call to Action – The Sustainability Pledge (ECE/TRADE/488)* - introduced with ECE Recommendation No. 46 will be provided, documenting its impact in promoting traceability and responsible business practices across global value chains.
- Part two will focus on enhancing digital connectivity along transit corridors to support global and regional economic integration. It will include an update on the development of the draft ECE Recommendation No. 50: *Enhancing Digital Connectivity along Transit Corridors*, which will be slated for adoption at the thirty-second Plenary in 2026.
- The segment will also highlight the uptake of the *ECE-ICC Call to Action – Digital Trade for an Interoperable and Digitalized Global Trade Ecosystem (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/INF.1)*, which is mobilizing political and industry support to accelerate the digital transformation of global trade, fostering

interoperability, trusted data exchange, and the adoption of internationally recognized digital trade standards. This Call to Action is to be annexed to ECE Recommendation No. 50.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>ECE Recommendation No. 49: Transparency at Scale</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/3	For decision
<i>Update on the ECE Call to Action – The Sustainability Pledge 3-year Monitoring Report – Enhancing Traceability and Transparency of Sustainable Value Chains in the Garment and Footwear Industry</i>	ECE/TRADE/488	For information
<i>Update on the ECE-ICC Call to Action – Digital Trade for an Interoperable and Digitalized Global Trade Ecosystem</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/INF.1	For information

The above deliverables are presented to the Plenary for decision and for information. Delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the topics raised.

B. Overview of activities and prospective developments

Item 4. Operational challenges and prospective developments for the governance of United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business

For nearly forty years, UN/CEFACT has been a key forum for standards setting in the field of trade facilitation and electronic business. The goal of this session is to discuss the future of UN/CEFACT, building on progress in key projects and to determine priority areas and prospective directions.

UN/CEFACT currently stands at a pivotal point, where adopting open-source tools for project management, standards development and maintenance, and achieving modernization and greater efficiency in processes is critical. Moreover, UN/CEFACT is facing significant resource constraints, which necessitates stronger engagement with Member States and partner organizations and careful prioritization of resources.

At the thirtieth UN/CEFACT Plenary, the delegation of the Russian Federation requested that a detailed report, outlining any structural and operational challenges, be prepared for the next Plenary. The delegation of Germany asked that this report also include an analysis of current processes, identifying strengths, weaknesses and potential improvements.

The Plenary will have before it the *Report of the UN/CEFACT Chair on Operational and Structural Challenges as well as Proposed Solutions* and recommendations for review and decision. Delegations will have an opportunity make suggestions on policy and governance directions to adapt to global and organizational challenges, and any other topics raised.

To overcome resource constraints for the maintenance and enhancement of UN/CEFACT flagship instruments, such as the UN/LOCODE, and for responding to governments and industry capacity building demands, the secretariat in close collaboration with the Bureau and the community of experts, has been working on a *Resource Mobilization Approaches and Fundraising Proposals*, which will be presented to raise interest of the public and private donors' community.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Report of the UN/CEFACT Chair on Operational and Structural Challenges as well as Proposed Solutions</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/4	For decision

*Resource Mobilization Approaches and
Fundraising Proposals*

ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/5

For noting

The above deliverables are presented to the Plenary for decision and for noting. Delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on these documents.

Item 5. Follow-up to the evaluation of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme and the Trade subprogramme by the Office of Internal Oversight Services

In 2022, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluated the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, sustainability, and integration of cross-cutting issues in subprogramme 4: Economic Cooperation and Integration, and subprogramme 6: Trade of the ECE for the period 2018–2021. The evaluation was part of the United Nations secretariat's regular program periodically evaluating selected aspects of its operations. Delegates will be briefed on the progress of implementing the recommendations of the evaluation as they pertain to subprogramme 6.

Item 6. Overview of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business activities

The UN/CEFACT Bureau and secretariat will provide an overview of activities and deliverables since the thirtieth session, including Bureau decisions and a summary of projects and outreach activities. The Regional Rapporteurs will report on activities related to UN/CEFACT in respective regions.

These discussions will set the stage for the subsequent agenda items.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Consolidated Report from the Bureau and the Regional Rapporteur on the UN/CEFACT Activities and Deliverables</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/6	For information
<i>Chair's Report to the ECE Executive Committee</i>	Informal Document 2024/34	For information
<i>Decisions on Matters Relating to the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business</i>	ECE/EX/2024/L.13	For information

The above documents are presented to the Plenary for information and delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the documents.

Item 7. Updates from the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy

At the twenty-eighth session, the Plenary decided to extend the mandate of the UN/CEFACT Team of Specialists (ToS) on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy until 2025 (Plenary decision 22-19). The 125th meeting of the Executive Committee on 20 November 2022 approved the extension of the ToS mandate, as contained in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2021/23/Rev.1, for the period 2023–2025 (ECE/EX/2022/L.17).

The Plenary will have before it the *Programme of Work of the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy for 2026–2028* for decision. It outlines priorities for the coming years,

including the focus on sustainable, transparent and resilient value chains as a driver for green and digital transformation, which contributes the ECE cross-cutting priority themes.

The Chair of the Team of Specialists will provide an overview of activities and achievements of the group of experts over the reporting period.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Programme of Work of the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy for 2026–2028</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/7	For decision
<i>Report of the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy on its Fourth Session</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/8	For endorsement

The above deliverables are presented to the Plenary for decision and endorsement. Delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on these documents.

Item 8. Updates from the Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations

At the twenty-ninth session, the Plenary adopted the *Programme of Work of the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group* and decided to extend its mandate for the period 2024–2025 (Plenary decision 23-20). The 132nd meeting of the Executive Committee on 13 February 2024 approved the Programme of Work as well as the extension of its mandate, as contained in document ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2023/23, for the period 2024–2025 (ECE/EX/2024/L.3).

The Plenary will have before it for decision the *Briefing Note – Update on the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group and Next Steps*, which provides an overview of achievements and current challenges, and outlines the way forward to ensure that the UN/LOCODE is 'fit for purpose'.

Due to resource constraints, the AG LOCODE Chair will convene an informal meeting with the group instead of its annual session. The Bureau has acknowledged the proposed decision to cancel the 2025 AG LOCODE session and not to submit the Report of its activities since its last session of 2024, while the proposed Programme of Work of the Advisory Group for the period 2026–2027 will be annexed to the Briefing Note. Delegations will have an opportunity to make suggestions on the AG LOCODE governance to adapt to the challenges raised, including resource constraints.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Briefing Note – Update on the UN/LOCODE Advisory Group and Next Steps</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/9	For decision

The above note is presented to the Plenary for decision. Delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the document.

C. Technical instruments and their implementation

Item 9. United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business deliverables since the last Plenary

The UN/CEFACT Chair, members of the Bureau and the secretariat will present technical standards, guiding instruments and capacity-building activities since the last Plenary.

(a) White papers for information

The Plenary will have before it the following white papers for noting, which have been published since the last Plenary and the delegations will have an opportunity to discuss. An updated list of the UN/CEFACT guidance material, including white papers is available at <https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/guidance-material>

- White Paper on Cross-Border Multimodal Digital Corridors for Regulatory-Related Movements of Consignment Data and Consignment Status for Trade Facilitation;
- White Paper on Data Governance for Trade Facilitation;
- White Paper on Globally Unique Identifiers in Supply Chains; and
- White Paper on Guidelines for Establishing a Regional Single Window.

(b) Technical standards for noting

- UN/CEFACT Core Component Library (versions 24A and 25A) (<https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/uncl>)
- UN/CEFACT XML Schema Library (versions 24A and 25A) (http://www.unece.org/cefact/xml_schemas/index)
- UN/EDIFACT Directory (versions D.24A and D.25A) (<https://unece.org/uncefact/unedifact/2021-2024>)
- UN/LOCODE Directory (versions 2024-1 and 2024-2) (<https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/unlocode>)
- UN/CEFACT JSON-LD Web Vocabulary (<https://vocabulary.uncefact.org>)
- All UN/CEFACT e-business standards (<https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/mainstandards>)

All UN/CEFACT e-business context files, schemas, and OpenAPI specifications at the following locations:

- Open-source GitHub environment (<https://github.com/unecefact>)
- UN/CEFACT reference data models (RDMs) (<https://unece.org/trade/uncefact/rdm>)

(c) Business requirements specifications for noting

The Plenary will have before it the following business requirement specifications (BRSs) for noting, which delegations will have an opportunity to discuss. An updated list of BRSs is available at [Business Requirement Specifications \(BRS\) | UNECE](#)

- BRS on Cargo Insurance Process;
- BRS on Check IBAN Service Open Finance Use Case; and
- BRS on Trade Finance Documentary Credit Process.

(d) Capacity-building and technical cooperation for information

The Plenary will review key capacity-building and technical cooperation initiatives aimed at supporting digital trade facilitation, interoperability of data exchange systems and sustainable value chains. These documents provide updates on collaborative efforts and ongoing projects

in the ECE region and beyond, in cooperation with United Nations Member States, international organizations and industry stakeholders.

As part of this update, the secretariat will brief Member States on the progress of a joint project with the ECE Sustainable Transport Division and the Government of Azerbaijan on the roadmap for the establishment of a national system, and its possible regional extension, for the operationalization of the ECE Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) CMR Convention and its Additional Protocol concerning the electronic consignment note (eCMR) for the contracts for the international carriage of goods by road, which leverage the UN/CEFACT eCMR data exchange standards. This project contributes to the implementation of the SPECA Roadmap for the Digitalization of the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor of 2023, and the wide UN/CEFACT workstream for advancing digital connectivity along transit corridors.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>National Trade Facilitation Roadmap for Uzbekistan 2025-2030</i>	ECE/TRADE/489	For information
<i>ECE–ECLAC Report: Prioritizing Quality - Developing Technical Regulations to Promote Circular Trade in Second-Hand Clothes</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/10	For information

The above deliverables are presented to the Plenary for information and delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on these documents.

(e) Other deliverables for information

This section contains additional deliverables developed in response to recent Plenary discussions and ECE Commission sessions. These are presented for information.

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Mapping of the UN/CEFACT Buy-Ship-Pay Reference Data Model and WCO Data Model</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/INF.3	For information

Delegations will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on these documents.

Item 10. Other business

Delegations will be invited to raise other issues not previously addressed during the session.

Item 11. Adoption of decisions of the thirty-first session

<i>Document title</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>	
<i>Report of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business on its Thirty-First Session</i>	ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2025/2	For decision

Delegations will be invited to adopt the decisions of the thirty-first session.

Closing

III. Timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Introduced by</i>
Day 1 - Thursday 3 July		
15:00 – 15:15	Opening	Secretariat
15:15 – 15:20	Item 1: Adoption of the agenda	Chair*
15:20 – 15:40	Item 2: Elections	Secretariat and Bureau
A. Policy recommendations		
15:40 – 16:40	Item 3: Progress on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe policy recommendations	Secretariat and Bureau
B. Overview of activities and prospective developments		
16:40 – 17:40	Item 4: Operational challenges and prospective developments for the governance of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business	Secretariat and Bureau
17:40 – 18:00	Item 5: Follow-up to the evaluation of the Trade subprogramme and the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme by the Office of Internal Oversight Services	Secretariat
Day 2 - Friday, 4 July		
10:00 – 11:00	Item 6: Overview of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business activities	Secretariat, Bureau and Regional Rapporteurs
11:00 – 11:30	Item 7: Updates from the Team of Specialists on Environmental, Social and Governance Traceability of Sustainable Value Chains in the Circular Economy	Team of Specialists Chair
11:30 – 12:00	Item 8: Updates from the Advisory Group on the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations	Advisory Group Chair

* When written on its own, “Chair” refers to the UN/CEFACT Chair.

C. Technical instruments and their implementation

12:00 – 12:30	Item 9: United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business deliverables since the last Plenary:	
	(a)	White papers for information
	(b)	Technical standards for noting
	(c)	Business requirements specifications for noting
	(d)	Capacity-building and technical cooperation for information
	(e)	Other deliverables for information
12:30 – 12:45	Item 10: Other business	Chair
12:45 – 13:00	Item 11: Adoption of decisions of the thirty-first session	Secretariat