# Bureau teleconference discussion notes and decisions
## Monday, 30 March 2015 GoToMeeting session (11:00-14:00 CEST)

### Participants:

**Bureau:** Harm Jan van Burg, Raffaele Fantetti, Anders Grangård, Estelle Igwe, Lance Thompson (Chair)
**Apologies**: Tahseen A. Khan
**Secretariat:** Tom Butterly (until 12:00), Maria Rosaria Ceccarelli, Fabrizio Meliado

| Agenda item | Discussion | Action/Decision |
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| 1. Roll-call | Quorum: 4 of 6 Bureau members = quorum | |
| 1a. Agree Draft Agenda | It was proposed to spend some time on:<br>• Procedures to send documents to the Bureau<br>• DMRs (added to point 4a) | Agreed with proposed modifications. |
| 1b. Approve notes of previous session(s) | The minutes of the following meetings were reviewed and approved:<br><br>• Minutes of 16th March 2015 were approved.<br>• Regrets were expressed by a Vice-Chair for the fact that the Bureau did not address some of his remarks on the new proposed Domain structure and division of responsibilities among Bureau Vice-Chairs. He expressed preoccupation with the proposed attribution of responsibilities to a single Vice-Chair from the private sector in the M&T PDA for the risk of potentially creating conflicts of interest. Another point was that, in his opinion, in each PDA there should be at least two Vice-Chairs, so as to allow Vice-Chairs to help and assist each other but also provide cointinuity to the PDA's in the Bureau when a certain Vice-Chair could not participate<br>• He expressed surprise with the appearance of two new domains in the M&T PDA (formerly in the Bureau Programme Support section) of the new structure, and wondered about the rationale for the existence of these two new domains. He formulated a formal request to re-open the discussion on this point.<br>• He regretted the fact that the Chair has written to the experts by email directly, as this, in his opinion, created confusion amongst experts, and gave the impression that the Bureau is not acting in concert<br>• Another comment was expressed with respect to the idea of allotting two Vice-Chairs per domain. He highlighted that two managers per PDA would not define clear responsibilities, but in principle setting up a back-up mechanism could be a possibility.<br>• The Chair suggested to wait for further comments and re-open the | |

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| | discussion on this point at the next meeting. | |
| 2a.Domains | Responses from questionnaire:<br>• A Vice-Chair (Supply Chain) highlighted that a number of responses were received, and from those responses a situation of confusion could be detected. He suggested that the idea of preparing this questionnaire was a very good idea, and that a decision needed to be taken as to the issue of current and future domain coordinators.<br>• A Vice-Chair (M&T) reported that some responses were received in that PDA, too.<br>• In Sectoral, the questionnaire was not sent out. Nevertheless one domain coordinator sent something in anyway. The situation of the other domains is clear in the opinion of the responsible VC.<br>• Chair suggested that the responses could be sent to the Secretariat for the latter to combine the responses to the questionnaire, so as to consider ToRs for Domains and to assist in preparing such a document. | Secretariat to combine the responses to the questionnaire. |
| 2b. Domain Coordinators | Candidates for each Domain:<br>• Chair suggested that at the Forum new domain coordinators could be confirmed/nominated.<br>• A Vice-Chair highlighted that the Forum should be used to talk with Domain coordinators.<br>• Chair suggested that everyone in the PDAs could join Bureau meetings to discuss project status.<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that given that some responses to the questionnaire called for the preparation of ToRs, the Bureau could first present draft-ToRs at the Forum, receive comments, open the candidatures received, and then decide. In this way, he added, the Forum could give the Bureau some more elements to select Domain coordinators as well as to reach out to the vast majority of experts. The Bureau supported this line of action. | ToRs for Domain to be finalized by the Forum on the basis of the responses to the questionnaire. Candidates to lead Domains will only be considered after the ToR are completed. |
| 2c. Brochures for UN/CEFACT | • A new proposal for the layout could be formulated by the Secretariat and circulated for comments.<br>• Chair suggested some minor changes in the Brochure used in India. He mentioned for instance that there were four recommendation "success stories" for only one standards and this should be made a bit more balanced by adding work from CITES and Agriculture eDAPLOS. A Vice-Chair expressed disagreement in respect of the inclusion of the latter information, suggesting that library work | Secretariat to implement minor changes to current short brochure before the beginning of the Forum and send it to HoDs at the end of the revision process.<br>This revised short brochure should be used for the Forum. |

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| | could be more emphasized. | |
| | • A Vice-Chair suggested that the decision on what to include in the Brochure should be taken in concert by the Bureau. | |
| | • Secretariat highlighted that a final version for the Forum could not be ready, and suggested that the existing one could instead be used. | |
| | • Chair suggested that the current brochure is missing an important part of UN/CEFACT norms, in particular in relation to EDIFACT. | |
| | • It was suggested to remove certain sections of the current brochure, remove the numbering in the examples. The secretariat could also use the UNECE convening power to check if the governments mentioned in the brochure are still happy with them being mentioned in the Brochure, contacting the HoDs. | |
| | • Major work on a "long" Brochure to be resumed after the forum. It was also suggested that a package of documents could be prepared for internal use by new domain coordinators and Bureau members. | |
| | • SHORT BROCHURE: a Vice-Chair suggested that from a communication point of view it would be desirable to have such short brochure ready for the Forum. | |
| 2d. Discussion on transparency and confidentiality (cont.) | • Chair presented a list of topics introduced at previous meetings.<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that the principle should be that all Bureau meetings and documents are confidential until the Bureau decides to publish documents. The decision could be taken on each document separately like is done with the minutes of the meetings.<br><br>• | It was decided to reopen this issue after the Forum. |
| 2e. Discussion on consensus and "Formal objection" and how it is documented | • Chair reviewed the concept of consensus and decision taking from the Mandate/Terms of Reference of UN/CEFACT. He proposed that for sake of safeguarding smooth workflow, a voting situation could be foreseen after sufficient time for discussion had been allotted.<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that the definition of "reasonable timing" would be difficult to set.<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that there could be a need for agreeing on how much time would be needed for agreement to be reached before moving on to voting. The Bureau agreed on this point.<br>• The Chair underlined that all documents for Bureau meetings are circulated about one week prior to meetings and the agenda clearly indicates if the motions are for discussion, approval or both. Bureau members who cannot join the call can send in written comments. Absence of such comments would imply non-opposition. | |

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| | • A Vice-Chair suggested that it could be essential to highlight that consensus could not happen even in the absence of some Vice-Chairs, when changes to documents are agreed to during a Bureau meeting.<br>• It was decided that in cases where a topic is for approval and modifications are made during the call, such document would be further circulated for further comments within a reasonable deadline. Absence of comments would imply non-opposition. | |
| 3a. Project proposal – Revision of Remittance Advice | • The responsible Vice-Chair presented the project proposal.<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that approval could be made, but that further consultations could be necessary as to point 2 in annex 1 of the document at issue, which is already proposing a solution before the business requirements are being defined.<br>• A Vice-Chair recalled that during the presentation of the project at the India Forum it was clear that the project only seemed to reflect one country's specific needs and that it will be necessary to ensure that the proposed revision remains universally applicable. In addition, he highlighted that the exit criteria could have been expressed in more specific terms, with two different tables.<br>• Chair suggested that project leader and project editor should come from different countries, to safeguard the global perspective of the project. In addition, he suggested that the language "expand the function…" in the first line did not really reflect the nature of the project, mostly aimed at revising something that existed already. New language could mention "revision".<br>• A Vice-Chair suggested that the project could be approved with some modifications pending the support from two additional heads of delegations. | **Bureau decision 1503005**<br>Project approved with change in title (from expanded to revised), taking into consideration the discussed comments during its development and pending approval by two additional HoDs.<br><br>Project leadership confirmed as presented with the suggestion of adding another editor from another region.<br><br>The Annex was not approved. |
| 4a.Update on organization of Forums | Report from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> of March Forum preparation meeting:<br>• The Chair presented a reminder of key points from the previous meeting.<br>• The Secretariat reported that five agendas from PDAs have been received and put online. All other documents and files were in order. It was highlighted that there might be a need to boost participation to the LOCODE conference in particular for the need to appoint focal points, which is an important expected outcome of the LOCODE conference.<br>• "Insurance" and "Utilites" are expected to be meeting, a Vice-Chair reported. Room requests are pending.<br>• Concerns were raised on some proposed agendas which called for joint meetings but the timings of which defined by one domain seemed to be in conflict with other planned meetings of the partner domain in | |

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| | question. More clarity and coordination is needed from the groups.<br>• A Vice-Chair proposed a library review L&L. Since the Bureau requested a report from this group before agreeing, the M&T Vice Chair would request such an executive summary to allow the Bureau to make an informed decision.<br>• Chair suggested that the Secretariat could provide an update on the status of all the MoUs (mentioned in the UN/CEFACT website) and how they really affect the work of UN/CEFACT, for sake of avoiding duplication of efforts.<br>• During open Bureau sessions at the end of each day on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, general sessions would aim to have each domain (coordinators and project leaders) to present all ongoing work to clarify the current and new projects, to the extent possible.<br>• ITP-PDA, Regulatory PDA and M&T PDA would present on Monday. Sectoral and Supply Chain PDAs would be split over Tuesday and Wednesday at the discretion of the corresponding Vice Chairs. | |
| 5a.Liaison – MOU revision of Annex A – list of activities | • Comments expected by the beginning of April, and UN/CEFACT position should be issued by then. The exact deadline will be communicated by the Secretariat. | Comments to be sent to the Secretariat and compiled/circulated by Wednesday 1 April c.o.b. |
| 5b. Liaison – MOU/MG Semantic Interoperability project "e-BTR" | | Comments to be sent to the Secretariat and compiled/circulated by Wednesday 1 April c.o.b. |
| 5c. Liaison – MOU – ITU. CITS project | | Comments to be sent to the Secretariat and compiled/circulated by Wednesday 1 April c.o.b. |
| 5d. Procedures for circulation of agendas and bureau documents | • Agenda's and documents are generally distributed by the Secretariat<br>• | . |
| 5e. Report from Secretariat | The Secretariat proposed a new format for PowerPoint presentations. | |
| 6a. Enquires received | • No new enquires received | |
| 7a. DMR procedures | DMR procedures:<br>• A Vice-Chair highlighted the need to update the database, which is a small access database that could be updated very quickly. He | The DMRs received to date will be considered during the Forum. The approved procedure will be made clearer on the website. |

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| | suggested that the procedures should also be reviewed and updated during the Forum. He recalled that the submitters of DMRs do not need to be experts, they can be any subject, natural or legal persons.<br>• Secretariat recalled that the procedure was approved by the Bureau and presented at the plenary. Accordingly, DMRs should be submitted 6 weeks before the Forum. 2 additional weeks have been allotted on an exceptional basis on occasions. The deadline was specified on the website.<br>• A Vice-Chair (Anders) proposed to provide comments on the procedures, to possibly have a discussion with the Secretariat and the Bureau about this point at the next Forum. | |
| Subjects for next conference call on April 14th | • Forum presentations 10 min<br>• ToR for Liaison/Contact Point (Harm Jan)<br>• ToR for International Relations (Estelle & Tahseen)<br>• ToR for Communication Committee (Raffaele)<br>• ToR for 'How-to-Guides' (Anders & Lance)<br>• ToR for Domains | As soon as first drafts will be ready, they will be circulated within the Bureau |