

Paris, January 15th, 2013

Request for contribution to Rec.14 Repository of technical implementations

Dear Sir or Madame,

UN/CEFACT, the trade facilitation recommendations and electronic business standards branch of the UN, is revising the Recommendation 14 on “Authentication by means other than a [manual] signature.” The text of the revised recommendation is currently underway. All on going work is available for your consultation on the UNECE Confluence website:

<http://www1.unece.org/cefact/platform/display/CNP/Revision+of+Recommendation+14%2C+Authentication+of+Trade+Documents+by+Means+other+than+Signature>

The future recommendation will be accompanied by two annexes: the first on legally enabling environments and the second on a repository of technical implementations. I am writing to you to solicit your contribution on the second annex. We have considered a number of typologies of electronic methods of replacing a manual signature and have planned a repository organized into each of these typologies. Contributions on actual implementations would be greatly appreciated.

Could you please take the time to consider the attached typologies and consider a brief submission of about a page (maximum)?

Contributions will be included in the final recommendation and are planned to be revised approximately every three to five years. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I thank you very much in advance for your consideration.

Best regards,

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Recommendation 14 Revision Working Group
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From Recommendation 14 Draft v0.2:

“5c. Typologies of electronic methods

A number of alternative methods exist that can replace a manual-ink signature. Technology is constantly evolving. Illicit or fraudulent activity is also constantly evolving, finding ways to undermine the level of assurance that might be placed in some aspects of a given method. For this reason, technical standards and technical implementations are further discussed in Annex B of this recommendation in order to facilitate its updating to correspond to current best practices and standards.

The different typologies of electronic methods can include (non-exhaustive list and there is no promotion intended in any of these methods):

- Biometric methods
- “Click through process”
- Communication channel (for example VPN)
- Devices (authentication with a smart phone, for example)
- Digital signatures (encryption, PKI)
- Electronic seals
- ID/Password
- Registration & verification process
- Scanned signatures
- “Something I know”
- Structural agreement enabling electronic data exchange with no authentication
- Third-party validation / Trusted-third parties
- Tokens
- Typed signatures

Authentication may involve just one method; it may involve a combination of methods. For example, a registration and verification process may be based on an ID/Password for identification accompanied by a VPN or other electronic method.”

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