

**UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**A COMMON  
REGULATORY LANGUAGE  
FOR TRADE  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT**



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## Note

The designation employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

## Abstract

The publication examines changes in the regulatory landscape in the member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), including the recent trend towards “better regulation”, i.e. regulations with a greater focus on desired outcomes and more flexibility. This approach can help remove barriers to trade created by differences in national standards and technical regulations, as can good regulatory practice such as set out in the UNECE “International Model for Technical Harmonization”.

The current volume brings together contributions and research papers prepared by some of the speakers and participants of the International Forum on “Common Regulatory Language for Global Trade”, held in June 2006, as well as by the UNECE secretariat. These contributions, which were written after the event and since updated, reflect the thinking that the Forum helped generate, which is of continued policy relevance.

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# Contents

<i>Foreword</i> .....	v
<i>Abbreviations</i> .....	vii
<b>Chapter 1 Standards and Norms</b> .....	1
<i>Ms. Lorenza Jachia and Ms. Eleanor Loukass, UNECE secretariat</i>	
<b>Chapter 2 Regulatory Cooperation: The Case of the UNECE “International Model”</b> .....	13
<i>Mr. Christer Arvius, Chairperson of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe</i>	
<b>Chapter 3 OECD Work on Regulatory Reform and Market Openness: Reducing Trade Barriers through Good Regulatory Practice for Standards and Technical Requirements</b> .....	17
<i>Mr. Anthony Kleitz, Head, Trade Liberalization and Review Division, Trade Directorate, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</i>	
<b>Chapter 4 International and Regional Approaches to Regulatory Cooperation: The European Commission’s Better Regulation Package</b> .....	27
<i>Ms. Liliana Brykman, DG Enterprise, European Commission</i>	
<b>Chapter 5 Regulatory and Standardization Cooperation among Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Member Economies</b> .....	35
<i>Mr. Yuki Hayashi, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan</i>	
<b>Chapter 6 Standards Harmonization in Africa for the Common Good</b> .....	41
<i>Mr. Damian Udenna Agbanelo, Secretary General, African Organization for Standardization (ARSO)</i>	

The purpose of this series of trade and investment guides is to assist economies in transition, as well as economic actors in other countries, in becoming familiar with best practices in the areas of trade and investment and related legal and commercial practices and, thus, to contribute to the elimination of legal, administrative and technical barriers to trade and investment. The guides are developed under the aegis of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Trade and its subsidiary bodies.

This is the tenth guide in the series. The preceding titles were:

1. *Trade Finance in Transition Economies: Practical Ways to Support Exports and Importers*
2. *Standards and Regulations in International Trade*
3. *Investment Promotion in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS*
4. *The Polish Experience of Transition: Accomplishments and Problems*
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7. *Trade Finance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in CIS Countries*
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## Foreword

Dialogue is based first and foremost on a common language. Within the United Nations system, dialogue among stakeholders involved in standardization matters not only promotes international transfer of knowledge and technology but also contributes to enhancing safety, reducing obstacles to trade and preserving the environment.

This booklet presents in a simple and straightforward way some fundamental terms, tools and concepts for trade and development, such as regulatory cooperation, regulatory impact assessment and good regulatory practice.

Contributions from international experts present how these ideas have been put into practice in different regions and by different stakeholders. These experts are among the many that, since 1970, come together at the meetings of the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

The Working Party (and its predecessor bodies) have been a forum for exchanging information on developments and experiences, and have developed recommendations and good practices in a number of areas related to standardization and regulatory cooperation.

At the Working Party, regulatory cooperation is seen as a key instrument for avoiding unnecessary barriers to trade because of different norms and standards and ways of applying them. While each country has unique needs and circumstances, one norm or standard could never be valid for the whole world. Yet the underlying objectives for safety and protection are widely shared and could be the basis for better and convergent regulations that bring a minimum of disruption to traders and producers.

We hope this publication can assist Governments and business as they cooperate to build a regulatory environment that contributes to sustained growth.



Christer Arvius  
Chairperson

UNECE Working Party on Regulatory  
Cooperation and Standardization Policies



Ján Kubiš  
Executive Secretary  
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## Abbreviations

AFNOR	French Association for Standardization
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARSO	African Organization for Standardization
ASF	African Standardization Forum
ASTD	ARSO Strategy Document
AU	African Union
AUC	Commission of the African Union
BSI	British Standards Institution
CDSG	APEC Chemical Dialogue Steering Group
CEN	European Committee for Standardization
CENELEC	European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CISPR	International Special Committee on Radio Interference
CRO	Common regulatory objective
DCAS	ARSO “Different-But-Complementary-Approach” Standardization Model
DIN	German Institute for Standardization
EASC	EuroAsian Interstate Council for Standardization, Metrology and Certification
EC	European Commission
ETSI	European Telecommunications Standards Institute
EU	European Union
FL3C&R	Frog Leap, Collaboration, Cooperation, Coordination and Mutual Recognition (principles adopted in ARSO strategy)
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GRP	Good regulatory practice
GSM	Global System for Mobile communications Electrical Equipment
ICT	Information and communication technology

## Abbreviations (continued)

IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
IECEE	IEC System for Conformity Testing and Certification of Electrical Equipment
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information technology
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MRA	Mutual recognition agreement
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa
NT	National Treatment
OUA	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PTB	Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (Germany's national metrology institute)
RIA	Regulatory impact assessment
SAM	African Standardization Activities Model
SCSC	APEC Sub-Committee on Standards and Conformance
SDoC	Supplier's declaration of conformity
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
START	WP.6 Team of Specialists on Standardization And Regulatory Techniques
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO agreement)
TFTF	APEC Trade Facilitation Task Force
UN/CEFACT	United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and

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