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Page: 1/2

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

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UNECE UPDATE TO THE TBT COMMITTEE

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)

This document contains information provided by UNECE at the TBT Committee meeting of 8-10 November 2023 under Agenda Item 4 (Update by Observers).¹

1.1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) would like to congratulate the WTO on a productive TBT Committee meeting. As we have underlined in the past, there are a number of topics under development within the UNECE that could be of potential interest to the membership of your committee that we would like to briefly present.

1.2. The Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6) will hold its 33rd Annual Session from 23 to 24 November 2023, during which it will host a conference on "[How to target continuous compliance: Conformity assessment, legal metrology and market surveillance tools for the changing dynamic of digital goods](#)." As we move towards more and more products with artificial intelligence and other imbedded technologies, it is important to assess the compliance of these goods not only at the time of the entry onto the market, but throughout their lifecycle, particularly after remote updates which may be coming from outside of the country. This conference will be exploring the topic from a regulator point of view, an industry point of view and in light of transversal themes like digital divide. We hope to see you all at this conference at the Palais des Nations Thursday 23 November in the afternoon and Friday 24 November in the morning. Registration is open on the [WP.6 website](#).

1.3. WP.6 is also in the process of publishing a collection of articles entitled "The Basics of Quality Infrastructure for Trade" which provides an overview of the key elements of quality infrastructure and some of the key challenges today. The publication should be available by the end of the month.

1.4. WP.6 has also drafted a revision of Recommendation M on the contributions of market surveillance to the combat against counterfeit products. The final draft will be published in the coming days for a public review period of 30 days.

1.5. The last session of the UNECE Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards, the parent body of WP.6, held in Geneva in June 2023, featured discussions of relevant to the TBT Committee, including in the context of the UNECE Studies on Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade (RPBTs) requested by transition economies in the region. We would like to thank the TBT Committee Chair, Anna Vitie, for her contribution to that event.

1.6. Country specific RPBTs have included dedicated chapters on standardization, conformity assessment and metrology, identified gaps in the regulatory frameworks and provided tailor-based recommendations. 10 country studies have been completed, and the UNECE will launch a new Study for Turkmenistan in the upcoming months. All completed studies conducted to date are available at the UNECE [webpage](#).

¹ In original language only.

1.7. The Steering Committee session in June discussed the lessons learned from the Studies and the way forward, especially in the context of the novel cross-cutting issues such as the circular economy, digitalization and green transformations. UNECE member States reiterated the importance for updating analytical tools in the context of these cross-cutting issues. All Steering Committee documents are available on the UNECE [webpage](#).

1.8. UNECE stands ready to continue its demand based technical assistance for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including, and mainstreaming new agendas.

1.9. If you would like any further information on any of these topics, please don't hesitate to contact us at: regulatory.cooperation@un.org.
