



REFERENCE: LA/TL 133 (25-1) 34th LC/et

15 September 2020

Dear representatives,

On 19 August 2020, the States members of UNCITRAL adopted a decision on the format, officers and methods of work of the UNCITRAL working groups during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (the “Decision”). According to paragraph 3 of the Decision, I (Giusella Finocchiaro, Italy) and Mr. Paul Kuruk (Ghana) have the honour of continuing our roles respectively as the chair and the rapporteur of Working Group IV (Electronic Commerce) at its upcoming 60<sup>th</sup> session, which is scheduled to be held from 19 to 23 October 2020. We also hope to facilitate further deliberations between that session and the 61<sup>st</sup> session scheduled in the first half of 2021, so that the pandemic does not disrupt the progress that the Working Group has made so far.

At its 60<sup>th</sup> session, the Working Group is expected to continue its consideration of the draft provisions on the use and cross border recognition of identity management and trust services (as contained in A/CN.9/WG.IV/WP.162) in light of comments on those draft provisions submitted by States and international organisations in response to the invitation of the secretariat (as synthesised in A/CN.9.WG.IV/WP.164 and Add. 1) and of the other documents submitted to the consideration of the Working Group (A/CN.9/WG.IV/WP.163).

I have been informed that arrangements are being made by the Secretariat to allow delegations to participate at the session in person at the Vienna International Centre and remotely via an online platform, Interprefy. This being said, in light of the travel restrictions, Mr. Kuruk and myself will unfortunately not be able to take part in the session in person. I would nonetheless encourage those representatives in a similar situation to participate remotely so that the Working Group can make progress.

As noted in paragraph 2 of the Decision, I would also urge delegations to make written submissions in advance of the session to facilitate discussions. Considering that the Decision was taken recently and the Working Group session is a few weeks away, it might not be feasible to have such submission translated into the other official languages of the United Nations. Therefore, I have requested the Secretariat to make all such submissions available on the Working Group IV website in the format and the language it is received. I will make efforts to ensure that such written submissions are adequately reflected in our deliberations and in the summary.

In accordance with paragraph 4 of the Decision, I will take steps to ensure an inclusive and transparent approach and adjust the pace and organization of the session to accommodate remote participation, especially as delegations may face technical difficulties. Considering the limited time allocated for the session, I would urge delegations to make concise interventions not exceeding five (5) minutes on a specific topic and also to make use of the chat and other functions available on Interprefy. This will ensure that we make efficient use of the resources available to the Working Group.

The provisional agenda for the session (A/CN.9/WG.IV/WP.161/Rev.2) is available on the webpage of Working Group IV. If I do not receive any objection or alternative proposals from member States of UNCITRAL by 12 October 2020, the agenda will be considered adopted at the beginning of the session on 19 October (Item 2 of the provisional agenda). According to paragraph 2 of the Decision, there

will be no election of officers for the session. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of the Decision, the rapporteur and I will prepare a summary reflecting the deliberations and any conclusions reached during the session (the “Summary”), which will be circulated to the delegations for comment.

As to the organization of the session, I hope that the following arrangements, made in consultation with the Secretariat in the light of the means currently available, will be agreeable to you.

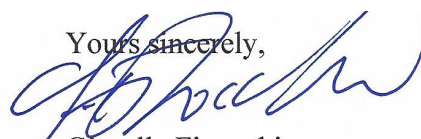
- There will be two two-hour meetings per day from Monday 19 October to Friday 23 October.
- The meeting times will be 11:00–13:00 and 15:00–17:00 Vienna time (Central European Summer Time).
- As a number of the delegations participating remotely will be new to the Interpretrefy platform, the first meeting on Monday 19 October will be partly dedicated to audio-visual connections testing and the adoption of the agenda. I would strongly urge delegations to make use of this opportunity to avoid delays during the deliberations. I would also recommend that delegations have adequate equipment ready (including a proper microphone) and ensure appropriate bandwidth when making their intervention (or if necessary, to use only audio).
- Tentative schedule of the meetings (the following is only indicative and is subject to change during the session to reflect the progress being made by the Working Group):

<i>Day</i>	<i>Working Paper A/CN.9/WG.IV/WP.162</i>
Monday	Equipment testing. Introduction and general remarks Chapter III: Trust Services, articles 13-16
Tuesday	Chapter III: Trust Services, articles 17-25
Wednesday	Chapter IV: International Aspects, articles 26-27 Chapter I: General Provisions, articles 2-4 Chapter II: Identity Management, article 5
Thursday	Chapter II: Identity Management, articles 6-12
Friday morning	Chapter I: General Provisions, article 1 (definitions)
Friday afternoon	Next steps, including intersessional work

- As had been the practice of the Working Group, I will request the Secretariat to prepare a draft summary of the deliberations and any conclusions reached during the session in a format similar to that of previous Working Group reports. That draft will be presented to you as the Summary for comments. My hope is that the Working Group would be satisfied with the draft and would be willing to adopt it as its report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session in 2021.

Please convey your comments on the above to the secretary of the Working Group (Mr. Luca Castellani, [luca.castellani@un.org](mailto:luca.castellani@un.org)), copying myself ([giusella.finocchiaro@unibo.it](mailto:giusella.finocchiaro@unibo.it)) and the rapporteur ([pkuruk@aol.com](mailto:pkuruk@aol.com)). I count on your constructive feedback and on your kind cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Giusella Finocchiaro

Chair, Working Group IV (Electronic Commerce)