



October 14, 2025

Jason Conroy
First Secretary
U.S. Mission to the UN and Other International Organizations in Geneva
Multilateral Economic and Political Affairs Section
Route de Pregny 11
1292 Chambésy

RE: Urgent Concern Regarding the Proposed Staff Reductions within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Transport Division, Dangerous Goods Section

Dear Mr. Conroy:

The American Coatings Association (ACA)¹ expresses its deep concern for the proposed staff reductions within the UNECE Transport Division. ACA understands that the UNECE is facing serious financial pressures due to the UN80 Initiative, a liquidity crisis, and a required 15–20% reduction in its 2026 budget. Among the 28 posts proposed for abolition, five are in the Transport Division, including the P5 post of Chief of the Dangerous Goods Section.

The Dangerous Goods Section manages many global safety and transport facilitation forums. The management of the UN Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (UNCOE) is critical in this structure. The UNCOE is a technical forum focused on addressing the inherent hazards posed by products and chemicals within the distribution system. Global trade demands consistent and clear standards to prevent impediments in transport and prevent gaps in worker protection. The UNCOE provides the forum for those countries with more robust safety infrastructures to raise the level of safety for all. Through this focus on harmonized standards, global competitiveness is fostered while facilitating the movement and manufacturing capabilities for products and materials that are vital to the world.

The UNCOE produces tangible results—incorporated on a two-year cycle—into international conventions for the transport of dangerous goods by air and sea, as well as many regional and national legally binding regulations. This work ensures uninterrupted multi-modal transport of goods that are essential to our daily lives; supports national and multi-national security needs; establishes a harmonized transport safety

¹ ACA is a voluntary, nonprofit trade association working to advance the needs of the paint and coatings industry and the professionals who work in it. The organization represents paint and coatings manufacturers, raw materials suppliers, distributors, and technical professionals. ACA serves as an advocate and ally for members on legislative, regulatory, and judicial issues, and provides forums for the advancement and promotion of the industry and coatings science. ACA serves as Secretariat for the World Coatings Council (WCC), which has maintained accredited NGO consultative status at the United Nations since 2005.



baseline supporting fair economic competitive opportunities; and provides facilitating provisions to assist market introduction of new technologies. The leadership provided by the Dangerous Goods Section of the UNECE Transport Division is critical in ensuring the effective technical and administrative coordination of the UNCOE. The stewardship provided by this position directly supports transport safety, environmental protection, and cross-border cooperation, which are pillars essential to our industry and public safety. The proposed removal of this post would jeopardize the international regulatory framework, with far-reaching consequences for safety and efficiency worldwide.

In contrast to many other forums, the UNCOE serves effectively as an operational committee producing measurable and necessary regulatory amendments utilized by essentially all countries. These transport provisions are then implemented through legally binding instruments (e.g., U.S. Hazardous Materials Regulations). ACA suggests that any necessary budget and staff reductions be applied to other committees, perhaps those that do not produce such tangible results and necessary outcomes for global trade. As such, ACA strongly urges the Permanent Representation of the United States of America in Geneva to raise this matter with the relevant decision-making bodies in New York, particularly in the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), to safeguard the UNECE's capacity to deliver on its important safety and trade facilitation mandates.

Thank you for your consideration of ACA's letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or require further clarification.

Sincerely,



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Submitted via email

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