

Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

Forty-Eighth Series of Meetings Geneva, September 20 to 29, 2010

POLICY ON WIPO EXTERNAL OFFICES

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. WIPO currently has four external offices, located (in chronological order of their establishment) in New York, United States of America; Singapore; Tokyo; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The New York Office has served principally as a liaison office for the United Nations and has been in existence since WIPO became a specialized agency of the United Nations. The remaining offices were more recently established, in response to offers to host them by the respective host countries.
2. A significant number of other Member States have approached the Director General in the past two years and have expressed an interest in hosting, or have made a concrete proposal to host, an external office for the Organization. The extent of interest is a very welcome sign of engagement in, and support for, the Organization. It highlights, however, the absence of a clear policy on the part of the Organization for the establishment of new offices. The Director General proposes, therefore, to initiate a consultation process with Member States in the coming twelve months, with a view to being able to recommend a policy for the consideration of Member States at the meetings of the WIPO Assemblies in September/October 2011. It is not intended in this process to re-consider the agreements already concluded with Member States concerning the existing external offices.
3. It is intended that the consultation should cover at least the following questions:
 - (i) What needs and purposes may be served by external offices?
 - (ii) What functions should external offices perform?
 - (iii) What is the cost/benefit analysis of performing those functions through external offices compared to performance of the functions from Headquarters?

- (iv) How would the relationship between Headquarters and external offices function?
- (v) How should the location of external offices be decided?

4. The Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO are invited to note the information in this document and to comment thereon.

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