

WIPO



WO/CC/51/3

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: October 1, 2003

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

E

WIPO COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Fifty-First (34th Ordinary) Session
Geneva, September 22 to October 1, 2003

REPORT

adopted by the Coordination Committee

1. The Coordination Committee was concerned with the following items on the Consolidated Agenda (document A/39/1): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26.
2. The report on the said items, with the exception of items 22 and 24 are contained in the General Report (document A/39/15).
3. The reports on items 22 and 24 are contained in the present document.
4. Mr. Dimitar Tzantchev (Bulgaria) was elected Chair of the Coordination Committee; Ms. Nurgaiha Sakhpova (Kazakhstan) and Mr. Supark Prongthura (Thailand) were elected Vice-Chairs.

ITEM 22 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF AGREEMENTS WITH
INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

5. Discussions were based on document WO/CC/51/2.
6. The Delegation of South Africa supported the Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and encouraged the Secretariat to also enter into agreement with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as, it considered, this kind of agreement in the field of intellectual property had an extremely positive political and economic impact.
7. The Delegation of Egypt, speaking on behalf of the African Group in the absence of the Delegation of Zambia, expressed its thanks to WIPO and COMESA for their enduring role in promoting the vital objectives of intellectual property and particularly for all the efforts they had undertaken towards facilitating the practical translation of the aspirations of the region's members, leading to the important task of drafting the Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and COMESA. The Delegation stressed its full support for the intended cooperation as, it believed, WIPO could provide a leading support to the successful transformation of the COMESA region. The role of WIPO in stimulating and protecting creativity for development, including sharing the benefits of scientific advancement and the furtherance of knowledge and culture, would also enhance opportunities for Member States' economic and trade collaboration and integration, not only within the COMESA region but also with the rest of the world in the current context of globalization which emphasizes interaction across nations. The African Group also welcomed the importance given in the agreement to issues related to traditional knowledge, genetic resources and folklore.
8. The Delegation of Egypt, speaking on its own behalf, stated that it also approved and fully supported the Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and COMESA, as Egypt was a member of COMESA.
9. The Delegation of Rwanda expressed its support for the statement made by the Delegation of Egypt on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation of Rwanda also urged WIPO to provide substantial support with regard to the recent Doha decision on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and on issues concerning public health in respect of the application of paragraph 6(2), to support the countries of COMESA, of which half of the members are least-developed countries. The Delegation said that this kind of support would be a key factor in helping those countries to take the best and most appropriate advantage of the Doha Agreement. The Delegation of Rwanda concluded that with this kind of agreement, WIPO could help the region to benefit from TRIPS and make the transfer of public health-related technology a reality, which would be a great source of assistance to COMESA and its Member States.
10. The Coordination Committee approved the Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), as set out in the Annex to document WO/CC/51/2.

ITEM 24 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA:

STAFF MATTERS

11. Discussions were based on document WO/CC/51/1.

WIPO Staff Association

12. At the invitation of the Chairman of the Coordination Committee, the President of the WIPO Staff Association made a statement, which is reproduced in its entirety in the Annex to this document.

Amendments to the Staff Regulations provisionally decreed and applied under Staff Regulation 12.1

13. The WIPO Coordination Committee approved the amendments to Staff Regulations 3.15 (Scale of pensionable remuneration for the Professional and higher categories), Staff Regulation 3.1 (Salaries for staff members in the General Service category in Geneva), and Staff Regulations 3.12(B) (Dependency Allowances for the General Service category in Geneva) and 3.7 (Language Allowance for the General Service category in Geneva), as indicated in paragraphs 1 to 19 of document WO/CC/51/1.

Amendments to the Staff Rules under Staff Regulation 12.2

14. The WIPO Coordination Committee took note of the amendments to Staff Rules 3.11.1 (Education Grant), 7.1.18 (Assignment Grant), and 3.9.3(a) (Compensation for overtime for staff members in the General Service Category) as indicated in paragraphs 21 to 30 of document WO/CC/51/1.

International Civil Service Commission

15. The WIPO Coordination Committee noted the information contained in paragraph 32 of document WO/CC/51/1.

United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board

16. The WIPO Coordination Committee noted the information contained in paragraph 34 of document WO/CC/51/1.

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE WIPO STAFF ASSOCIATION
TO THE WIPO COORDINATION COMMITTEE

(September 2003)

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

The WIPO staff representatives appreciate the honor to address you, as usual, on matters of personnel issues and would like to thank the Member States for this opportunity.

First of all, in the name of the staff, I would like to congratulate the Director General on his reappointment, and I would like to say that we have no doubt that the fruitful dialogue will continue in the interest of the Member States and the staff.

Distinguished Delegates,

We appreciate that over the last year:

1. The internal system of justice has become more transparent and more equitable. The Office Instruction concerning harassment at work has been published and the Mediator now has terms of reference permitting her to entirely assume her role;
2. The increase in salaries for staff in the General Service and professional and higher categories was implemented in accordance with the UN Fifth Committee decisions, even though the staff in the professional category was expecting an across-the-board salary increase;
3. Maternity leave, under limited conditions, has been extended to short-term professional category employees; and
4. Thanks to your decision, work on the former WMO building is nearly completed. Consequently, staff currently dispersed in different locations in Geneva will be regrouped so that the working conditions will be improved.

Distinguished Delegates,

For all of the above-mentioned items we have to thank you and the Director General, and we hope that during the year to come the improvements to the working and employment conditions will continue. At the same time, we can assure you that the staff, as usual, will do its best to satisfy your requests under the guidance of the Director General, Dr. Kamil Idris.

Distinguished Delegates,

If you would allow us to make some suggestions we would like to draw your attention to some issues which are very dear to us.

Firstly, we recall that, against the requests of the staff representatives and the proposals made by the ICSC, the UN Fifth Committee, when adjusting the salaries of staff in the professional and higher categories, decided to increase those of the high-level staff only. We have no difficulties to recognize that this increase was justified, but the other staff in the professional category was also, and perhaps even more so, entitled to receive the same

increase. The staff representatives have decided to lodge an appeal, and we would like to specify that it is not a question of money but is a question of justice.

A second issue, which is very important to us, is the long-serving short-term staff who have been working in WIPO for such a long time. These members of staff can no longer be considered as short-term employees and, even though we recognize that our Director General has made many efforts to help this category of staff, there is a need to continue to make efforts to improve their conditions of service. As WIPO constantly strives to apply the best practices and become an exemplary Organization with regard to employment and working conditions, we are convinced that you will support all efforts made to provide more employment security to these colleagues.

A third issue is the creche. The situation in Geneva is such that there is an insufficient number of places to satisfy the requests. Some Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations have taken into consideration this important problem which has an impact on the working conditions and lives of some staff. The WIPO Staff Association has been solicited by sixty Staff Association members requesting assistance in this matter. Since this problem has been pending for many years, we have prepared a project which was recently submitted to the Administration. We are sure that this project will be fully analyzed by the Administration, and we hope that some assistance can be expected.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

At last year's meeting of this Coordination Committee, we shared with you our concerns over the International Civil Service Commission's (ICSC) attitude and the difficulties for the staff representatives to defend the staff interests. We now have to inform you that the General Assembly of the WIPO Staff Association has decided to withdraw from FICSA and has instructed the WIPO staff representatives to find other solutions to better defend the rights of the staff. Considering that WIPO is not the only staff association which has decided to leave FICSA, this can be considered a signal that, as in ILO, the staff and the Administration shall be obliged to find some solutions permitting the staff representatives to present their point of view to the deciding bodies. We hope you will understand the necessity for the staff representatives to have the possibility to present the staff's point of view and be treated in accordance with the regulations governing freedom of association.

Distinguished Delegates,

We would also like to draw your attention to the fact that the staff representatives have proposed, to the ILO Administration, some changes to the Statutes of the ILO Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT), on the following points:

1. Direct access of staff associations/unions to the ILOAT;
2. Disclosure and judgment;
3. Oral hearings; and
4. Second appellate.

We took note of the fact that the Administrations have accepted to discuss point one, direct access of staff associations/unions to the ILOAT, but we regret that the other important points have not been taken into consideration, and we hope that, even on these other points, there will be a possibility to have a favorable evolution.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, I would like to close by underlining the importance the staff places on this possibility to share with you its concerns, hopes and aspirations.

Thank you.

[End of Annex and of document]