

WIPO



SCIT/8/3

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: January 12, 2004

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

PLENARY

Eighth Session

Geneva, February 23 to 27, 2004

STATUS REPORT ON THE WORK TO CONNECT WIPONET, TRINET AND PATNET

Document prepared by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. Following an informal exchange between the representatives of the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a paper on the interconnection of PatNET-TriNET-WIPONET and its related issues such as potential benefits (e.g., patent database access by an extended user community) and technical feasibility, was presented at the Trilateral meeting held in The Hague, Netherlands, on May 21 to 24, 2002. The paper proposed that an ad hoc Task Force be established with the mandate to identify the potential business opportunities, associated technical solutions and costs involved in interconnecting the three networks. Other subject areas to be addressed by the ad hoc Task Force included security, operational support, and legal and contractual issues concerning the interconnection.
2. With the support of the EPO, JPO and USPTO (the Trilateral Offices) and WIPO, the ad hoc Task Force (AHTF) for the Interconnection of PatNET-TriNET-WIPONET was established in the summer of 2002. The AHTF consists of representatives from the Trilateral Offices and the Secretariat of, which is also responsible for providing coordination and administrative support.

3. The first AHTF meeting was hosted by the JPO in Tokyo, on January 27 and 28, 2003. The major items addressed and the conclusions reached during the meeting included: potential business opportunities and the improvement of business operations resulting from the interconnection; agreement on the Terms of Reference, organization and working method of the AHTF; agreement on the need for a harmonized security statement/guideline; presentations and discussions of interconnection proposals and approaches; project planning and management; and operational support matters.

4. A second AHTF meeting was held at WIPO headquarters from October 7 to 9, 2003, and among the major items covered during the meeting were: agreement on technical, security, implementation, administrative and operational support matters; cost and resource estimates; the identification of legal and contractual issues; and an evaluation of business opportunities.

Progress achieved

5. The major achievements by the AHTF are:

(a) the creation of a WIPONET discussion group, aimed at facilitating secure information sharing and exchange between AHTF members;

(b) the establishment of host-to-site Virtual Private Network (VPN) connections, in order to enable participating AHTF Organizations to have secure access to WIPONET;

(c) the implementation of TriNET migration from frame-relay circuits to Internet-based connectivity, (which is a prerequisite for the interconnection of the three networks), has made significant progress in establishing secure connections over the public Internet between Trilateral Offices and WIPO. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with regard to TriNET-Internet migration was signed in the summer of 2003 among the Trilateral Offices and WIPO, and the migration is expected to be completed by the end of 2003;

(d) agreements have been reached on a number of technical and non-technical matters concerning the interconnection of the three networks. In particular, an important agreement was reached on the interconnection architecture, in which TriNET is to serve as the intermediate network between PatNET and WIPONET. Additionally, agreements of the security policy and the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with regard to the interconnection were reached; and

(e) a MOA that defines the responsibilities and the cost sharing model with regard to the implementation of the interconnection is in preparation. The security policy and SLA will be included as annexes to the MOA for implementation, when finalized.

Next Steps

6. The Trilateral Offices agreed and approved the following objectives for the work of the AHTF at their meeting held in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2003:

(a) the finalization of the MOA mentioned in paragraph 6(e), above, is scheduled in early 2004;

(b) to start working on the details of the Proof of Concept (POC) and pilot testing and to complete the POC tests before the June 2004 Trilateral Meeting;

(c) to work out the timeframe and project plan details with the aim of having the interconnection in production by October 2004 or early 2005; and

(d) to continue the activity of the AHTF for an additional year after the interconnection goes into production.

7. The SCIT is invited to comment upon and to take note of the contents of this document.

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