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**SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)****COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS****Thirty-First Session
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IPC REFORM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Document prepared by the International Bureau

1. At its thirtieth session, held in February 2001, the Committee of Experts indicated that careful planning would be necessary in order to ensure the successful completion of IPC reform. To this end, the Committee agreed to create a new Task No. 18 "Prepare an IPC reform implementation plan" and to assign this Task to the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group (see document IPC/CE/30/11, paragraph 18).
2. At its fifth session, held in May 2001, the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group considered and approved the IPC Reform Implementation Plan prepared by the International Bureau. At its sixth session, held in October/November 2001, the Working Group considered the progress of IPC reform in light of the IPC Reform Implementation Plan and agreed that updates of the Implementation Plan should be submitted to each session of the Working Group (see document IPC/REF/6/2, paragraph 62).
3. An update of the IPC Reform Implementation Plan, prepared by the International Bureau for this session of the Committee of Experts, is given in the Annex to this document.

4. The Committee of Experts is invited to adopt the IPC Reform Implementation Plan.

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

IPC REFORM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. The Implementation Plan covers the years 2002-2004. The timing takes account of the requirements of the Strasbourg Agreement, according to which amendments to the Classification shall be notified to the competent authorities of the IPC Union six months before their entering into force. Given that the next edition of the IPC enters into force on January 1, 2005, it should be published by July 1, 2004, and last amendments to the current edition should be adopted by the Committee in early 2004.
2. The Plan indicates timelines and milestones with regard to major activities which will be necessary to carry out for completion of IPC reform. Those activities could be divided in two parts, namely activities relating to the elaboration of IPC reform tasks, which is in the responsibility of the ad hoc IPC Reform Working Group (IPC/REF) and the International Bureau (IB), and activities relating to the realization of the elaborated decisions in the IPC itself, which is in the responsibility of the IPC Revision Working Group (IPC/REV). The Implementation Plan also covers the IPC revision program carried out by the IPC Revision Working Group. A major part of decisions and recommendations of both Working Groups should be finally adopted by the Committee of Experts (IPC/CE).
3. The Plan of elaboration of IPC reform tasks is shown in the Table 1, below.

TABLE 1

Task No.	Task Title	Action	Timeline
2 [9]	Consider the IPC revision policy, the revision procedure and the criteria for accepting new revision proposals in relation to the core and advanced levels of the reformed IPC	Final proposal by IB Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q2/2002 Q1/2003
3	Consider the introduction of electronic data illustrating the contents of IPC entries	Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q4/2001 Q1/2002
4	General principles of classification; elaboration of rules for multiple classification in the IPC	Final guidelines on obligatory classification by US Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q2/2002 Q1/2003
5	Review the hybrid systems in the IPC	Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q4/2001 Q1/2002
7	Determine the most appropriate duration of revision cycles	Final proposal by IB Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q2/2002 Q1/2003

Task No.	Task Title	Action	Timeline
8	Elaborate principles of the creation, maintenance and functioning of the Master Classification Database	Proposal on reclassification procedure and propagation of IPC data by TO Discussion by IPC/REF Final proposal by TO Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE Creation of Master Classification Database by EP	Q2/2002 Q2/2002 Q3/2002 Q4/2002 Q1/2003 Q3/2003
10	Develop a general question and answer pamphlet on the application of the IPC	Draft pamphlet by IB Discussion by IPC/REF Revised draft pamphlet by IB Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q2/2002 Q3/2002 Q4/2002 Q1/2003
12	Study automated classification and indexing tools and conduct pilot projects on their use, in particular for the reclassification of backlog patent files	CLAIMS project by IB Consideration by IPC/CE	2002-2003 Q1/2004
13	Improve IPC training by providing modern training techniques, for example, computer-based and Internet training tools, involving, in particular, enhanced support for developing countries in the use of the IPC	Report by IB Discussion by IPC/REF Report by IB Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q3/2002 Q4/2002 Q3/2003 Q4/2003 Q1/2004
14	Determine the most appropriate contents of the core level of the reformed IPC	Final distribution of IPC entries between the core and advanced level by EP Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion	Q1/2003 Q2/2003
15	Study the feasibility of introducing a simplified set of rules in the IPC, in particular a uniform precedence rule	Adoption of the standardized sequence of main groups by IPC/CE Report on using the top-to-bottom precedence rule by TO Discussion by IPC/REF Consideration by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q3/2002 Q4/2002 Q1/2003
16	Study ways and means for the establishment of the French version of the advanced level of the IPC	CLAIMS project by IB Consideration by IPC/CE	2002-2003 Q1/2004

Task No.	Task Title	Action	Timeline
17	Revise the Guide to the IPC to provide for a more comprehensive explanation of the principles and rules of the IPC and to take into account the results of the IPC reform	2 nd draft proposal by IB Discussion by IPC/REF Final proposal by IB Discussion by IPC/REF and Task completion Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002 Q2/2002 Q3/2002 Q4/2002 Q1/2003
18	Prepare an IPC reform implementation plan	Adoption by IPC/CE	Q1/2002

4. The Plan of implementation of reform results in the IPC by the IPC/REV is shown in Table 2, below.

TABLE 2

Task Title	Action	Timeline
IPC revision program	Completion of remaining 20 revision projects	Q4/2002
Elaboration of classification definitions	Completion of definitions for 100 subclasses	Q4/2003
Revision of subclass indexes according to the standardized sequence of main groups	Preparation of revised subclass indexes for all IPC subclasses	Q4/2003
Introduction of illustrating structural chemical formulae in the electronic layer of the IPC	Preparation of a final collection of chemical formulae	Q4/2002
Checking of notes and references in the reformed IPC	Completion of checking and modifying of notes and references	Q4/2003
Conversion of indexing schemes to classification schemes	Conversion or other treatment of all indexing schemes	Q4/2003

[End of Annex and of document]