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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

**SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION
(IPC UNION)**

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

**Thirty-Sixth Session
Geneva, February 14 to 18, 2005**

IMPLEMENTATION OF IPC REFORM AT INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY OFFICES

Document prepared by the Secretariat

1. At its thirty-fifth session, held in October 2004, the Committee of Experts discussed implementation of the IPC reform at industrial property offices (see document IPC/CE/35/9, paragraphs 42 to 71) and identified several issues on which further work was needed. The Committee agreed on certain actions to be taken in this respect.
2. Follow-up actions taken after the thirty-fifth session of the Committee of Experts are described in the following paragraphs.
3. The Committee of Experts considered requests by several offices relating to the provision of files containing specific information on their national documents affected by reclassification. In this context, the European Patent Office (EPO) was invited to study how reclassification of patent documents which are not part of any PCT minimum documentation family could be assured. Annex I to this document contains relevant excerpts of the report of the thirty-fifth session which pertain to these requests. The EPO has redrafted the chapter of CONOPS relating to maintenance of the Master Classification Database (MCD) which now forms Chapter 2.6 of the revised version of CONOPS (see Project CE 354).

4. The Committee of Experts also discussed cases where the checking mechanisms of the MCD would detect invalid symbols assigned to documents which were fed into the MCD for the first time. It was agreed that corrupted data, i.e. strings that never represented valid IPC symbols should always be rejected. It was felt that formerly valid IPC symbols which were invalid at the time of introduction in the MCD should also be rejected. However, as this contradicted the procedures at that time foreseen in Chapter 2.4 of CONOPS, the EPO was invited to study which measures would be most appropriate to take in order to ensure proper operation and usability of the MCD. The EPO has redrafted the respective chapter which now forms Chapter 2.3 of the revised version of CONOPS (see Project CE 354).

5. The International Bureau informed the Committee of Experts that a revised version of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) would shortly be published on the WIPO IPC website which would address particular problems relating to the reformed IPC and give clarification to some aspects of the reform, described in official documents, where ambiguous interpretation could be possible. This new FAQ version is now available on the IPC homepage (see <http://www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/index.html>).

6. The Committee of Experts was also informed that the EPO had submitted proposals for amending the examples given in Standards ST.8 and ST.10/C to the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) which would avoid misinterpretations of these examples. These amendments were adopted by the SCIT Standards and Documentation Working Group at its fifth session in November 2004 (see document SCIT/SDWG/5/13, Annexes III and IV). At the same session, the Standards and Documentation Working Group also approved the new Standard ST.36 (see the Annex to document SCIT/SDWG/5/9).

7. In view of the ongoing developments in different offices and the fruitful discussion of the IT specialists during the session and also because not all issues could be considered due to time restrictions, the Committee of Experts agreed that the existing IPC webforum could be used for further discussion. By means of a message sent to the IPC reform listserver on November 29, 2004, the International Bureau informed the IPC community of this webform and of a set of discussion topics listed there, and invited submissions. However, no submissions have been received so far. The Committee also agreed that IT specialists should again be invited to the next session of the Committee. The agenda of a separate meeting of the IT specialists during the thirty-sixth session of the Committee is given in Annex II to this document.

8. The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the contents of the Annexes to this document and to make decisions as necessary.

[Annexes follow]

ANNEX I

EXCERPT FROM DOCUMENT IPC/CE/35/9

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63. In order to maintain their national patent registers and patent databases, several Delegations requested the EPO to provide files to national offices containing information on national documents which are part of the PCT minimum documentation families and were affected by reclassification made by the Trilateral Offices. The Delegation of the EPO acknowledged that this new requirement which was not reflected in CONOPS would be of great importance to national offices and agreed to make such information available.

64. In view of the objective of the MCD to provide only valid IPC symbols for all documents contained in the MCD, and in order to carry out the necessary reclassification of their national documents which are not part of any PCT minimum documentation family, several Delegations also requested to be provided with a working list of such documents similar to the working lists which would be created for offices participating in the reclassification of the PCT minimum documentation. The Delegation of the EPO again acknowledged the importance of this new requirement and agreed to make such information available.

68. It was also discussed whether special procedures would be required for documents stored in the MCD and not being part of the PCT minimum documentation nor of a PCT minimum documentation family, in order to assure their reclassification in view of the goal that the MCD should serve as a searching tool which allows for patent searches without having to consult outdated IPC versions. The Delegation of the EPO explained that the procedures for the maintenance of the MCD foresee reiterative processes for detecting invalid symbols but that at present no deletion of such symbols is foreseen. Due to time restrictions for reaching conclusions, the EPO was invited to further study this issue and include a potential procedure therefor in the amended version of CONOPS including, for example, the provision of respective working lists for the reclassification of non PCT minimum documents (see paragraph 64, above).

[Annex II follows]

ANNEX II

MEETING OF IT SPECIALISTS
AGENDA

1. REFORMED IPC OUTPUT FILES AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY WIPO
 - 1.1. RIPC validity file and RIPC validity service
 - 1.2. Scheme
 - 1.3. Concordance
 - 1.4. Others

2. MCD RELATED DATA STRUCTURE SPECIFICATION
 - 2.1. MCD data structure
 - 2.2. Work lists of national documents to be reclassified
 - 2.3. List of reclassified national documents
 - 2.4. Bilateral agreements with EPO for non-ST.36 exchanges and deadlines
 - 2.5. Others

3. PREFERENCES FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISM
 - 3.1. Infrastructure and data carrier (FTP, DVD...)
 - 3.2. Implementation of “pull” mechanism by the EPO
 - 3.3. Web services, open URL...

4. IPC REFORM IMPLEMENTATION IN IT SYSTEMS
 - 4.1. Feedback from offices/implementation status
 - 4.2. Patent related information provided by WIPO to Offices
 - 4.3. Patent related information provided by EPO to Offices
 - 4.4. Others

[End of Annex II and of document]