

Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

Sixty-Second Series of Meetings Geneva, October 4 to 8, 2021

RECORDS OF WIPO MEETINGS

Document prepared by the Secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. At its 59th Series of Meetings, the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and of the Unions administered by WIPO (the Assemblies) approved a proposal designed to leverage advances in digital technologies in order to improve the speed and quality of services in relation to the production of WIPO meeting records, while also achieving significant cost efficiencies. The background and proposal was set out in full in document A/59/9.

BACKGROUND

2. As noted in that document, major shortcomings had been identified with regard to the existing production of WIPO meeting records. These included the lack of any indexing or search functionality within conference video recordings, which made it hard for users to locate specific interventions or agenda items; the difficulty in providing written records in a timely manner; and the highly labor-intensive preparation of verbatim reports. The proposal aimed to address these shortcomings and achieve the following objectives:

- more effective response to the needs of the Member States;
- faster, more efficient, digital records of meetings to replace the existing system of verbatim reports;
- support for the six UN-language policy;
- more cost-effective services thereby generating major cost savings;
- increased value and usefulness for Member States of audiovisual conference recordings.

3. Member States agreed to pilot a new approach, which would provide enriched video recordings of WIPO conferences using commercially available audiovisual technologies, complemented by automatically generated text records in the six United Nations (UN) languages using WIPO's artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The proposal contained in paragraph 11 of document A/59/9 consisted of the following three elements:

- (a) Enriched video-on-demand (VoD) recordings with digital indexing to enable easy navigation and search by agenda item or speaker, as well as integrated access to relevant meeting documents;
- (b) Replacement of verbatim reports by a complete, fully automated speech-to-text transcript in English, synchronized with the video recording, and with automated translations into the other five UN languages;
- (c) Phased implementation. During the initial trial phase (Phase One)¹, the replacement of verbatim reports by automated transcripts and translations was tested at the four sessions of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) and Standing Committee on Patents (SCP). In the light of the experience gained, Member States would be asked to decide in October 2021 whether the new system should be extended in Phase Two to other WIPO meetings.

4. If successful, the new approach would enable a phased discontinuation of the current, resource-intensive human production of verbatim meeting reports. The potential cost savings of replacing the verbatim reports by fully automated speech-to-text transcripts and translations are substantial. In the 2018/2019 biennium, the total resources required for producing the verbatim reports of WIPO meetings in the six UN languages were estimated to amount to approximately 2.6 million Swiss francs (see Annex of A/59/9 for details).

OUTCOME OF THE TRIAL PHASE

5. The technology platforms for the enhanced webcasting and VoD, and for the automated speech-to-text system (WIPO S2T + WIPO Translate), were successfully launched as planned in November 2019, and were in operation throughout CDIP/24 (November 2019), SCP/31 (December 2019), CDIP/25 (November 2020) and SCP/32 (December 2020).

6. Noting that the CDIP/25 and SCP/32 were in truncated format, the estimated cost savings in 2019-2020 for the four above-mentioned meetings amounted to approximately 355'000.00 Swiss francs.

ENHANCED AUDIOVISUAL RECORDINGS OF MEETINGS: RESULTS

7. Between the CDIP/24 (November 2019) and the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT) held in May 2021, the technology platforms for the enhanced webcasting and VoD covered 24 meetings with a total of 190 webcasted hours and 46'000 cumulated views making WIPO meetings accessible to everyone.

8. The VoD recordings of the four above-mentioned meetings may be viewed on the WIPO [webcasting page](#) at:

- CDIP/24: <https://c.connectedviews.com/05/SitePlayer/wipo?session=102659>
- SCP/31: <https://c.connectedviews.com/05/SitePlayer/wipo?session=103351>
- CDIP/25: <https://c.connectedviews.com/05/SitePlayer/wipo?session=110384>

¹ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the originally trial Phase One, planned from October 2019 to September 2020, was extended to December 2020

- SCP/32: <https://c.connectedviews.com/05/SitePlayer/wipo?session=110766>

9. In terms of language availability, the new system enables access to meeting recordings in all six interpretation channels. This marks a break-through, exceeding the original target for this phase, which had foreseen the continuation of floor plus English only.

10. Positive comments and feedback on the new features were received informally both from delegates and from internal stakeholders. Features, which are particularly appreciated, are the ability to access specific agenda items or interventions and the integrated link to the documents under discussion. The Secretariat noted however that the homepage and search features could be further improved in order to facilitate navigation and connectivity.

11. Furthermore, as noted in paragraph 17 of document A/59/9, the Secretariat is concerned to narrow technology and digital gaps for accessing and sharing records of WIPO meetings, particularly for users in countries where the Internet is not fast or reliable. In this regard, the platform enables to download full or share precise parts of a meeting afterwards. An online survey conducted by the Secretariat from February 10 to March 5, 2021, indicates that more than 85 per cent of respondents are satisfied with the overall webcasting and VoD services.

REPLACEMENT OF VERBATIM REPORTS WITH AUTOMATED SPEECH-TO-TEXT TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION: RESULTS

12. The complete speech-to-text products of the four above-mentioned meetings are available on the WIPO website in all language versions at:

- CDIP/24: <https://www.wipo.int/s2t/CDIP24/sessions.html>
- SCP/31: <https://www.wipo.int/s2t/SCP31/sessions.html>
- CDIP/25: <https://www.wipo.int/s2t/CDIP25/sessions.html>
- SCP/32: <https://www.wipo.int/s2t/SCP32/sessions.html>

The transcript of each segment was published within an hour or so of the respective morning/afternoon session. This compares with the standard process of several months required to produce the human edited and translated verbatim reports.

13. In terms of accuracy, the WIPO S2T English transcription consistently scores over 80 per cent using industry-standard measurement tools. The quality of automated translations from the English transcript using WIPO Translate is also generally rated positively by Language Division expert translators. It should be noted that the original floor channel plus all six interpretation channels are now available *via* the VoD platform, thus providing a valuable means to verify the original in case of doubt.

PROPOSAL

14. In the light of the experience during the trial phase, Member States are invited to proceed to the second phase, whereby the automated speech-to-text transcription and translation of WIPO meetings would be extended to replace the production of verbatim reports for all WIPO meetings (e.g., Standing Committees, Permanent Committees and Working Groups), with the exception of meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO Member States, meetings of WIPO Governing Bodies, and of Diplomatic Conferences, as of October 2021.

15. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, are invited to decide on the replacement of verbatim reports of WIPO meetings by automated speech-to-text transcripts and translations, except for WIPO meetings taking place in the framework of the Assemblies, meetings of WIPO Governing Bodies and of Diplomatic Conferences, as of October 2021.

[End of document]