

# WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION  
GENEVA

INTERNATIONAL PATENT COOPERATION UNION  
(PCT UNION)

MEETING OF INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES  
UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

Fifteenth Session  
Vienna, April 7 to 9, 2008

QUALITY FRAMEWORK

*Document prepared by the Secretariat*

## SUMMARY

1. The Meeting is invited to discuss the reports which have been submitted by International Authorities on their quality management systems, decide what form of report should be sent to the Assembly, and consider further action.

## BACKGROUND

2. Chapter 21 of the PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines (“the Guidelines”, document PCT/GL/ISPE/1) sets out a quality framework for International Authorities and requires Authorities to submit annual reports on their implementation of quality management systems in accordance with that framework.

3. In accordance with the procedures set out in paragraphs 21.17 and 21.18 of the Guidelines and the decision of the Meeting at its 13th session (see paragraphs 20 to 22 and Annexes II and III of document PCT/MIA/13/8), the Offices which had been appointed as International Authorities before the end of 2006 submitted full reports on their quality management systems at that time.

## REPORTS UNDER PARAGRAPH 21.17 AND 21.18

4. Those Authorities which made full reports at the end of 2006 were invited to submit updating reports, unless they felt that their circumstances were such that a new full report would be more appropriate. Those Authorities which had been appointed but were not yet operational and had not previously submitted a full report were invited to submit “full” reports (to the extent that their quality systems were now defined). The reports which were submitted are available from the private forum of the Meeting of International Authorities on the WIPO website. Authorities are invited to present to the Meeting any aspects of their reports which they consider may be of particular relevance to other Authorities and to discuss the reports of other Authorities.

## REPORT TO THE PCT ASSEMBLY

5. In accordance with paragraph 21.17 of the Guidelines, the Meeting should present a report to the Assembly on progress. The International Bureau proposes that individual reports by International Authorities should again be made available to the public on the WIPO website and that the report to the Assembly should take a similar form to the one presented to the 36th session of the PCT Assembly (document PCT/A/36/3), pointing to the availability of the individual reports, together with any particular statements which the Meeting may wish to include.

## FURTHER WORK

6. The Meeting may wish to consider how the quality reports might be further improved and what further common action might be appropriate in the context of the Meeting, as distinct from the development of individual Authorities’ quality systems within the general framework of Chapter 21 of the Guidelines.

7. It is recalled that the Meeting has previously discussed the need for coordination and cooperation on certain substantive issues relating to quality management, most recently at its 13th session (see document PCT/MIA/13/8, paragraphs 23 and 24):

“23. It was noted that further work had been planned on a number of other matters relating to the development of quality systems on which a common approach might be desirable, including quality standards, manuals and documentation, examiner skills and training, and metrics useful for measuring quality, and that the European Patent Office had offered to lead that further work (see documents PCT/MIA/12/8, paragraph 8, and PCT/MIA/12/10, paragraph 15).

“24. The Meeting agreed that further work should be undertaken, led by the European Patent Office, on the matters referred to in paragraph 23. That work should proceed using the PCT/MIA electronic forum, via which Authorities could comment on proposals to be developed by the European Patent Office or make new proposals.”

8. At its 14th session, the Meeting agreed that the European Patent Office should continue to lead further work on the PCT search and examination quality framework, but that this should await further progress within the framework of the European Patent Network.

9. *The Meeting is invited to:*

*(i) discuss the reports which have been submitted by International Authorities on their quality management systems;*

*(ii) decide what form of report should be sent to the Assembly; and*

*(iii) consider further action in connection with both quality reports and the general matters mentioned in paragraph 6, above.*

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