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PATENT COOPERATION TREATY INTERIM COMMITTEE FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Sixth Session
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OAPI PROJECT

Progress Report prepared by the International Bureau

1. The PCT Interim Committee for Technical Assistance (hereinafter referred to as "the Interim Committee"), at its fifth session held in Geneva from October 28 to November 3, 1975, decided that the International Bureau of WIPO should continue with the work on the OAPI Project.
2. It is recalled that in May/June 1975 a preparatory assistance mission was carried out by the International Bureau with the financial assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to assist the member States of the African and Malagasy Industrial Property Office (OAMPI)--now called the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI)--(Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta). The mission report was discussed between officials of the International Bureau and the UNDP in October 1975 and was examined by the Administrative Council of OAPI in March 1976. At that session, the Administrative Council of OAPI endorsed the project for the creation of a patent documentation and information service within the framework of OAPI and agreed to assume the financing of the counterpart contribution foreseen for the project.
3. At its session in March 1976, the Administrative Council of OAPI furthermore entrusted its President with the task of exploring the possibilities of reducing the local contributions to be paid to the project and in particular to negotiate with the competent authorities of the European Communities. First contacts to this effect took place in June 1976. At the time of drafting this report these negotiations were still in a preparatory stage.
4. The examination and approval of the project by UNDP has also made further progress. The draft Second Regional Programme (1977-1981) for Africa of UNDP, prepared in February 1976, includes the project for the creation of a regional patent documentation and information service within OAPI. The said draft Regional Programme, which includes also the projects which may be retained for implementation and for financing in 1977, will be submitted to the Governing Council of the UNDP at its January 1977 session.

5. Further, at the request of the Director General of OAPI, the International Bureau prepared in December 1975 preliminary draft proposals for the revision of the Libreville Agreement of September 13, 1962, establishing OAPI, including its existing annexes on patents and trademarks, and for the introduction of annexes on utility models, trade names, protection against unfair competition, copyright, and the establishment of the patent documentation and information service.

6. The preliminary draft proposals were sent to the Director General of OAPI in January 1976 and submitted to the Administrative Council of OAPI at its session in March 1976, which established a Committee of Experts to study the draft proposals concerning industrial property matters. The Committee of Experts, which was assisted by two officials of the International Bureau, met in May 1976 in Yaoundé. The said Committee agreed in principle with the drafts submitted, but proposed a number of amendments on the basis of which the drafts are being revised at present for resubmission to the Administrative Council of OAPI in 1977, after they have been finalized by a Drafting Committee which will meet, in September 1976, in Geneva.

7. The Interim Committee is invited to take note of this report and to give its advice, if any, concerning the project referred to above.

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