November 3, 1999

Mr. K. P. Wittig
Deputy Director
Inter-Office Information Services Department
World Intellectual Property Organization
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20
SWITZERLAND

Re: C. SCIT 2469 Information Technology Strategic Implementation Plan
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Dear Mr. Wittig:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft WIPO Information Technology Strategic
Implementation Plan. Commissioner Dickinson also sent Dr. Idris a letter emphasizing the
importance of use of information technology and the benefits it can provide to intellectual
property offices as well as to the public at large. We hope both sets of comments will be useful in
the process of refining the plan.

The IT Strategic Implementation Plan is impressive, particularly given the short time frame within
which it was prepared. There is much substance conveyed in the plan. It is clear that the project
description authors are very knowledgeable of their subject matter and have an understanding of
related automation issues.

For purposes of the SCIT, it perhaps would be more beneficial to segregate and present first those
projects intended for external use by IPO's, those with IPO-IB implications, and lastly those
administrative systems which are internal to WIPO.

Secondly, I am uncertain of the role the SCIT is to play with regard to the projects and the
relationship with the IT Steering Committee. Perhaps description of this role should be
elaborated.

Lastly, as a five-year strategic plan, it would be helpful to show milestones for the projects for the
full five years. Many of the project milestones do not extend beyond 2001.

We have also enclosed more specific comments on selected project descriptions. I hope you find these comments useful in finalizing the Implementation Plan.

Sincerely,

/Cheryl E. Kazenske/

Cheryl E. Kazenske
Intellectual Property Program Manager
Office of Legislative and International Affairs

Enclosure

Comments on Selected Project Descriptions

- Project 1 - Automated IPOs

It is not clear if the three projects noted on page 22 are separate and apart from this project, or are sub-projects of Project 1. It is also not clear how SCIT is expected to identify offices as priority IPOs for receiving WIPO's technical assistance. Have the criteria been established? How will the IT assistance coordinators (page 24) interact with the project manager(s)?

- Project 2 - Changeover Assistance

Regarding the GlobalPat CD-ROM (page 27), the time is opportune for SCIT and WIPO to reconsider the need for this sub-project. While it can be rationalized and it appears that certain commitments have been made, it nevertheless represents an unnecessary addition to an already ambitious program. Moreover, Projects 8 and 9 are replete with examples as to why CD-ROM developments should not be pursued: *". . . difficult-to-manage facsimile images stored on CD-ROM."[1]* *"These formats have proven themselves expensive to store or manage, and have thus been beyond the effective reach of many interested communities, including IPOs, in developing countries."[2]* *". . . the intellectual property community can find itself in an exponentially increasing trap of CD-ROM shipments . . ."[3]* Instead of pursuing this project further, it would be better to accelerate access through WIPOnet.

- Project 3 - PCT IMPACT (Information Management for the PCT)

The timetable for PCT Electronic Filing is devoid of dates.

- Project 6 - MAPS/DMAPS 2000 & Project 7 - Copyright Support System

In the document, the treatment of these two projects serves, essentially, as a 'place holder.' In each case, analysis and study are proposed to decide what should be done.

- Project 8 - WIPONet

In reading the descriptions of Project 3 (PCT) and this project, it appears there may be some disconnects related to the schedule of WIPONet functions availability. There is clearly inter-dependence here that needs to be considered carefully. The WIPONet schedule also needs to be clarified.

A technical point worthy of question relates to the specified "512 KBPS" networking speeds for the WIPONet backbone. This seems marginal, if not inadequate. See page 89.

- Project 9 - IPDLs

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[1] SCIT 4/2, Annex 2, p. 79
[2] ibid, p. 80
[3] ibid, p. 90

The information dissemination policy statement on page 97, third bullet, and the statement of page 98, last paragraph, second sentence, seem inherently and from a practical standpoint, in conflict.

The "Business Models, Design of IPDLs" material on page 99+ describes an IPDL concept that is much more ambitious than implied by the preceding project description material. For example, it foresees inclusion of commercial databases. It indicates that a proposal may be placed before the SCIT Plenary in December 1999 or early 2000.

- Project 10 - Web Site Development Support

The project schedule is devoted to internal actions for improving the WIPO web site followed by an external survey to determine the interests and needs of Member States. The external survey should be conducted before or in parallel with internal site development in order to guide and focus development activities.

- Project 12 - CLAIMS (Classification Automated Information Systems)

In the 26-step plan (pages 118-119), the estimate of up to 9 months for steps 2-19 seems unrealistic, especially in view of step 19 (Acquiring IT Components and Services). This implies a tender procedure, which is inherently time consuming. The description also seems to underestimate the difficulties in building the master database. In sum, the estimated 2-year time frame for building, implementing and testing everything is probably overly optimistic.

- Project 13 - WIPO Academy Distance Learning Program

The concept seems well grounded; but, at this point, only development of a business plan is specifically scheduled (by 1Q 2000).

- Project 14 - IT Infrastructure Improvements

The milestone schedule given in the project description only goes through 1Q 2000, and gives no indication of time frame for actual accomplishment of infrastructure improvements.

It is not clear (see pie chart on page 5) what all the infrastructure improvements are going to cost, or whether that cost will be separate from or included in total automation budget accounting. It would probably be beneficial to review direct and indirect cost information for all activities envisioned in the Information Technology Strategic Implementation Plan.