Ms. Helen Frary
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Re: Proposal for the restructuring of the Standing Committee on Information
    Technology (SCIT)

Dear Ms. Frary,

In reply to your letter C.SCIT 2513 of September 1, 2000 I have the pleasure to present herewith the comments of the Bulgarian Patent Office relating to the document SCIT/RES/1 Rev. and the other documents.

First of all we would like to express our deep conviction about the need of restructuring of the SCIT. We consider acceptable the IP proposal for establishing of a Committee dealing with the standard and documentation matters. This stand is prompted by the extremely great importance of the activities in this area and the need of solving the diversity of problems arising in the field of the industrial property information and documentation nowadays. In this light we could accept the proposal of the Secretariat for organizing a Standing Committee on Technical Standards and Documentation.

1. Standing Committee on Technical Standards and Documentation

We think that the main features of the Committee should be defined in the following general scheme:

(a) On our opinion the mandate of the SCTSD should be to adopt new or revised WIPO Standards and to deal with documentation matters. It should report directly to the WIPO General Assembly.

As far as the objectives are concerned they should be defined to approve the proposals for new standards relating to intellectual property data and the revisions of the already existing ones, as well as data dissemination and documentation matters.

The responsibilities of the Committee should be all the standards, guidelines and other international cooperation of a technical nature in the area of the industrial property information and documentation.

(b) Concerning the task-related working groups we think that a dynamic approach should be implemented in their establishing and closing depending on the problems to be solved. The creation of a specific group, dealing for example with trademarks, will promote the activity of the smaller patent offices and in this way the interests between developed and developing countries will be balanced

Bearing in mind the strong necessity of avoiding the duplication in the activities of the Plenary of the SCTSD and the Working groups it is reasonable the question on membership and the number of participants included to be considered. In this relation we find it logical all WIPO member states to take part in the Plenary and only limited number of experts skilled in the certain field to be involved in the task-related working groups. The number of the participants in the Working Groups should be far smaller then that in the Plenary.

We think that the frequency of meetings of the Plenary should be at least once a year otherwise the close relation between its members and the opportunity to exchange their views would be lost. The electronic communications in the activity of the working groups should be encouraged but we find it necessary physical meetings between their members to be organized as well in order the official proposals to be prepared for approving by the Plenary.

On our opinion the organization at one and the same time of the sessions of the working groups and the SCTSD Plenary undoubtedly leads to great savings, but this fact causes some difficulties in the activity of the working groups. May be it will be better if the meeting of the working groups precedes that of the Plenary.

Some work might be done in connection with clearly defining the budget responsibility of the Committee for improving the effectiveness of its work.

2. Advisory Group on Information Technology

Finally we would like to mention that as far as the Advisory Group on Information Technology is concerned we could not make any comments because its mandate, responsibilities and function are not clearly defined in the proposal.

Thanking you for our good cooperation, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Anna Nenova
Director
Industrial Property Information
And Documentation Directorate