

Ms. Helen Frary
Head
IT Business Management Section
WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneve 20
Switzerland
Fax: (+41 22) 338 8460

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Dear Ms. Frary,

Unfortunately our office has received Circular SCIT 2515 and the second draft of "Proposal for the restructuring of the Standing Committee on information technologies (SCIT)" with great delay because of mail service failure. Nevertheless, owing to the significant importance of the matter, we consider it necessary to make our comments on the mentioned document known to the International Bureau.

Our Office fully supports the intention of number of IP offices and the International Bureau to improve the work of the SCIT. At the same time, we do not consider it necessary to change the whole structure of the WIPO Committee, responsible for information technologies related matters. Such a re-forming of all parts of the Committee may take a lot of time and divert the Committee from its primary tasks. This could lead to a gap in current projects implementation because of the rapid development of information technologies.

SCIT, even in its present structure, proved its efficiency, that is why, in our opinion, the most promising way is step-by-step reorganization of SCIT without interrupting its regular work. This reorganization should mostly affect working groups and working methods of the SCIT. After reviewing the second draft of the " Proposal for the restructuring of the SCIT" we considered option IV to be the most preferable.

The main advantages of this option are as follows:

- The structure of the option No. IV is similar to existing structure (option I). This will reduce time and efforts needed for establishing new structure.
- More flexible approach to forming and activity of ad hoc working groups and their orientation to specific IT projects. This approach would allow to optimize working groups meeting schedules and also to use task forces procedure and electronic communication means more actively when discussing matters at early stages. The membership of an IP office in ad hoc working group may depend on the interest and experience of this office in the concerned problem. Holding of joint meeting of several ad hoc working groups is not welcomed, with an exception of the situations when the matter needs to be considered comprehensively.

We also would like to present our comments and add-ons to the proposed option IV:

- Standards working out and revision is a special painstaking procedure, that is carried out almost permanently in respect of one or several standards. Thus, this working group within the SCIT as well as the Advisory Group on IT should be permanent. Nevertheless, the list of participants can vary, depending on specific standard. Activities of ad hoc task forces can be widely used in standards creation and revision. We think that the separation of a body responsible for standards from the SCIT, as it proposed by option II, is inexpedient as soon as it would worsen existing relations between this body and other IT-related bodies.
- Before adopting new SCIT structure that implies creation of ad hoc working groups, it is necessary to work out a clear procedure of new working group creation. It would allow to save time of the SCIT plenaries where, as supposed, the decisions on working group creation or reorganization would be taken.
- The mandate and working methods of the Advisory Group on IT (if the need of establishment of such group would be considered) can be based on propositions of points 10-13 of the second draft of the document. Probably this Group would pay closer attention to the internal matters of the WIPO activities related to information technologies.

We look forward to receiving the final draft of the SCIT restructuring proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Khabiboulo F. Fayazov
Vice-President
Eurasian Patent Office