

## African regional symposium on the Internet treaties

WIPO held a regional symposium on its "Internet" treaties—the Copyright Treaty (WCT) and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT)—in March in Windhoek, Namibia with the cooperation of the Namibian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The symposium commenced with a comparative overview of copyright legislation in Africa before focusing on the two new Internet treaties in detail. Topics covered included:

- existing and new rights under the treaties
- the new WIPO treaties and the TRIPS Agreement, with a focus on the enforcement of rights
- technological means of protection, rights management, liability of on-line service and access providers.

The symposium concluded with country reports of the implementation of the treaties in Africa.



## Global registration systems

### WIPO joins forces to promote the PCT in Latin America

WIPO, in cooperation with the European Patent Office (EPO), the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office (OEPM) and the Industrial Property Office of Uruguay organized a March seminar in Montevideo, Uruguay, to promote the accession of Latin American countries to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

At present only two Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America, Cuba and Mexico, are members of the PCT.

The Seminar opened with an introduction to the PCT, followed by a

presentation on the European system and the contribution of the PCT to the international patent system.

Representatives of the Spanish Patent Office and EPO offered an examination of the role of the institutional players of the PCT system, the WIPO secretariat, the international searching authorities and the preliminary examination authorities, based on their own experiences.

The Brazilian and Cuban offices also described their experiences in the administration of the PCT sys-

tem, as receiving, designated and elected offices. During this part of the program, presentations were made by speakers from WIPO, the EPO, the OEPM, and the patent offices of Brazil (INPI), and Cuba (OCPI).

Large-scale users of the PCT system from the United States, Switzerland and Spain together with patent attorneys from Mexico and Spain closed the presentations with a discussion of the advantages offered by the PCT system.

There followed a roundtable on the advantages for Latin American

countries of their accession to the PCT, with the participation of the officials invited from the national offices, all of whom viewed the accession of their countries to the PCT, as a way of modernizing their national patent systems.

Photo: Corbis/Dave G. Houser



Montevideo Seaport, Uruguay

More than 120 people attended the seminar, including Government representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

## WIPO international designs bulletin now on CD-ROM

Users of the Hague Agreement can now receive the images published in the WIPO International Designs Bulletin on CD-ROM. This is a further step by WIPO towards full automation of its administrative procedures by keeping abreast of technological developments. This policy has resulted in a reduction of 20 per cent in the publication fees paid by applicants to register a design.

The new monthly publication on CD-ROM began on March 31,

includes all bibliographic data and reproductions of designs contained in new deposits registered and will be cumulative. This means that users can search one year's worth of international registrations using just two disks. Each disk, containing about nine month's worth of registrations, will accumulate data from the preceding months until it is "full". In a major development, searches can now be done according to various criteria, such as designated countries, the type of article or the name of depositor.



Introduction of the CD-ROM is a further development in making the Hague system a more cost-effective service for users.

### What is the Hague Agreement?

The Hague Agreement offers a unique, simple and cost-effective alternative to individuals seeking to register an industrial design in more than one country. Rather than making separate national deposits in each country where protection is sought, the Hague system offers users the possibility to designate protection in any of the 29 member states. Once an international deposit is made, it is published in the International Designs Bulletin.