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**Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)**

**Eighth Session**

**Geneva, November 30 to December 4, 2020**

# Report by the ICT Strategy for Standards Task Force

*Document prepared by the ICT Strategy for Standards Task Force Leader*

## BACKGROUND

At its sixth session, held in October 2019, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) noted the 40 Recommendations prepared by the Meeting on ICT Strategy and Artificial Intelligence, which the International Bureau convened for the exchange of views and experiences in ICT and business management for effective Intellectual Property Office (IPO) administration. The CWS considered the analysis of 40 Recommendations by the Secretariat and their relevancy to its activities indicated in the [Annex of document CWS/6/3](https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=415579). (See paragraphs 18 to 19 of document CWS/6/34.)

At its sixth session, the CWS created the new Task No. 58 to “prepare a proposal for a roadmap of future development and enhancement of WIPO Standards, including policy recommendations, in view of more effective production, sharing, and utilization of data by IPOs and other interested parties, taking the following activities:

* to review the Recommendations in Group 1 indicated in the Annex of document CWS/6/3, in collaboration with other relevant CWS Task Forces;
* to review the Recommendations in Group 2 and Group 3 indicated in the Annex of document CWS/6/3;
* to prioritize Recommendations and suggest a timeline; and
* to explore the impact of disruptive technologies on IP administration and IP data in view of harmonization and collaboration.”

The CWS also established the ICT Strategy for Standards Task Force (hereinafter referred to as “ICT Strategy Task Force” or “Task Force”) to work on Task No. 58 and designated the International Bureau as the Task Force leader. The CWS requested the International Bureau to issue a circular inviting IPOs to nominate business manager(s) and/or ICT policy maker(s) for the new Task Force and for volunteers to serve as co-leader with the International Bureau. (See paragraphs 17 to 24 of document CWS/6/34.)

The CWS requested the ICT Strategy Task Force to provide a progress report on Task No. 58 at its seventh session, including a prioritization of the work items in relation to the 40 Recommendations listed in the Annex of document CWS/6/3 (see paragraph 27 of document CWS/6/34). At its seventh session, the CWS noted the content of the progress report delivered by the International Bureau as the Task Force leader, including a suggestion by several Task Force members to develop new standards on authority files for trademarks and industrial designs such as WIPO Standard ST.37 for patent authority file. The Task Force also prioritized the topic on developing a common DOCX [[1]](#footnote-2)conversion tool. The CWS noted that the Task Force agreed on the reallocation of the following Recommendations: R20, R33 and R35 to Group 1 from Group 2.Relevant Standard(s) or CWS Task(s) for Recommendations R04, R05, R09, R10, R11, R13, R15, R22, R33 and R35 were also modified. Those amendments are reflected in the revised Table “40 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CWS ACTIVITIES” presented as the Annex to the present document. The CWS was informed that the Task Force would prepare a strategic roadmap for consideration at the eighth session of the CWS (see paragraphs 19 to 20 of document CWS/7/29).

## REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

The ICT Strategy Task Force met in person during the period of the seventh session of the CWS in Geneva in July 2019 and online in July 2020. The Task Force members reviewed 40 Recommendations and discussed their priority. At the July 2020 online meeting, the Task Force discussed the development of a common DOCX conversion tool and shared the experience of the Offices in overcoming the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic, in relation to Recommendation 06 “Re-engineer and transform the current business models and workflow processes based on paper transactions into modernized and optimized business models and workflow processes based on digital IP data transactions, with collaboration of business, ICT and legal representatives at all stages”.

In terms of prioritization, the Task Force conducted a survey participated by its member Offices and seven Offices responded. According to the results, the following recommendations, which belong to Group 1 mentioned above, are considered a priority, as reflected in the table of the Annex to the present document:

* Sharing information and possible collaboration on emerging technologies for IP administration such as search, classifications and languages (R09);
* Common conversion software tool to XML, e.g. DOCX convertor (R18 and R4);
* Re-engineering and digital transformation (R06);
* Providing IPOs’ authority file data or information to the International Bureau (R23);
* Online services via APIs enabling interoperability of systems, including systems developed by third party solution providers (R39);
* Developing a prototype for a distributed IP registry, exploring potential use cases of blockchain technology, including IP registry and priority data, and investigating legal and technical possibilities for identifying patent families (R12 and R15); and
* Exploring improved methods and creating a prototype of centralized service, with open and standard APIs, for data dissemination and data exchange between IPOs and regional/international IP systems (R38).

With regard to DOCX conversion, the Task Force members noted that the DOCX convertor has both information technology (IT) and policy implications as captured in Recommendation R18. The Task Force also noted that different Offices are already developing/using their own DOCX converters and several IPOs suggested/supported the development of a common DOCX converter for IPOs. Taking into account that several Offices already use their own tools, the Task Force members agreed to perform a comparison of existing tools and eight Offices confirmed their active participation in the exercises. The International Bureau has recently created a new wiki page to facilitate this discussion.

In addition, the Task Force agreed on discussing a common technical specification for DOCX converters as long as there was not a big impact on their existing systems. As a first step in moving forward with a common technical specification for DOCX converter, the Task Force members will share their challenges in developing and using their own tool.

The CWS is invited to review and comment on the updated table, in particular the priority level reproduced in the Annex to this document.

## Work plan

The Task Force planned to prepare a strategic roadmap for consideration at the eighth session of the CWS. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the Task Force has not started a substantive discussion on the strategic roadmap. Taking into account the result of the review exercise and the survey on the priority of 40 Recommendations, the Task Force plans to prepare a draft strategic roadmap for consideration at the ninth session of the CWS.

The Task Force also plans to prepare a proposal for a revised list of Recommendations taking into account the relevance of the current 40 Recommendations to the CWS present and future activities in collaboration with other CWS Task Forces for consideration by the CWS; and explore the impact of disruptive technologies on IP administration and IP data in view of harmonization and collaboration.

*The CWS is invited to note the content of this document and provide comment on the updated table of 40 Recommendations, which is reproduced in the Annex to this document.*

[Annex follows]

1. A DOCX file is a document created by word processing applications such as Microsoft Word, OpenOffice Writer or Apple Pages, which follows the open XML format that is designed to make document content more open and accessible. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)