

WIPO



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WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

WIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Twentieth Session (8th Extraordinary) Geneva, March 20 and 21, 1997

REPORT

adopted by the General Assembly

1. The General Assembly was concerned with the following items of the Consolidated Agenda (document AB/XXX/1 Prov. Rev.2): 1, 2, 3, 4, *4bis* and *4ter*, 6 and 7.
2. Mr. Moses F. Ekpo (Nigeria) current Chairman of the General Assembly, presided over the meetings, as well as the joint meetings of the General Assembly and the Assembly of the Berne Union.
3. The report on the said items, with the exception of items *4bis* and *4ter* is contained in the General Report (document AB/XXX/4).
4. The report on items *4bis* and *4ter* is contained in the present document.

ITEM 4BIS OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA:

PROPOSAL FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONCERNING THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN *AD HOC* INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE
AND PROPOSED DECISIONS CONCERNING SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS OF THIS
AND RELATED COMMITTEES

5. The discussions were based on document WO/GA/XX/1.

6. After a presentation of the proposal by the Delegation of the United States of America and a debate in which a number of delegations and the Director General participated, the WIPO General Assembly made the following decision:

7. (a) First, a working group will meet in June or July 1997, whose membership will be open to every Member State of WIPO on an equal footing as well as to those organizations which usually participate in WIPO meetings. The Working Group will have three inputs and is expected to have three results.

- The first input will be a paper from the United States of America in which it will further explain and specify its proposals.

- The second input will be any written comment on the proposal of the United States of America or any new ideas, in writing, from any of the Member States or the said organizations.

- The third input will be a document from the International Bureau of WIPO which, as regards information technology activities, will state what the Organization is already doing and what is in the draft program and budget for the next biennium; it may also provide any other comments.

In keeping with the spirit of the proposal of the United States of America, those three inputs should be communicated also through the Internet.

The three expected results of the meeting of the Working Group would be the following:

- The first result would be a recommendation as to the future structure or institutional aspects, namely, whether there should be a new committee (in which case, what should be its name and its composition, etc.) or should the task be entrusted to existing WIPO bodies.

- The second result would be a recommendation as to what should be the program in this field for the rest of 1997 and for the next biennium—to the extent that that is not already in the present and proposed program.

- The third result would be a recommendation as to general objectives beyond 1999.

(b) Second, the Director General will propose, if necessary, adjustments to the budget for 1997, and, in any case, an additional budget for the 1998-99 biennium.

(c) Third, if considered necessary, a special session of the Budget Committee will be convened, a few days before the September-October 1997 ordinary sessions of the Governing Bodies, to consider the said proposed adjustments and the said additional budget.

(d) Fourth, the Governing Bodies would then, in the said ordinary sessions, be invited to approve the necessary changes in, and additions to, the program and budget for the rest of 1997 and the 1998-99 biennium.

8. It was understood that, in the April 16 to 18, 1997, session of the Budget Committee, there would be no restriction in the consideration of the draft program and budget for the 1998-99 biennium presented by the Director General.

9. The Director General stated that there was ample coverage for financing any new activities from the reserves and that it would not be necessary to diminish any of the activities, in particular, development cooperation activities, or funds appearing in his draft program and budget for the 1998-99 biennium.

10. The statements made during the debate are reflected in the annex^{*} to this Report.

ITEM 4TER OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

PROPOSAL FROM THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION CONCERNING REPRESENTATION OF THE CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN REGION IN WIPO

11. Discussions were based on document WO/GA/XX/2.

12. The Delegation of the Russian Federation introduced the document referred to above. First of all, as regards the title of the proposal, in the past there was a group of Socialist countries. Then, certain changes occurred, and these countries were now involved in market economies. Thus, in the past, there was a general characteristic of these countries. Now they were countries in transition and this name is used in the United Nations and in this Organization. The "countries in transition" are now precisely in the same region, are very specific and have very special issues to deal with and, during the transitional period, also problems different from the problems relevant to other regions. First of all, there were a number of new States in which some difficulties arose, including a shortage of skilled staff and of proper training. In Russia, there is no special organization involved in copyright, although copyright is becoming increasingly important. This region which has made such a vast contribution to the development of civilization—contributions to science, literature and music—and which is the largest region geographically speaking, is now in a rather vulnerable

* The annex will be sent separately, as indicated in circular N 1770 - 04.

position. Therefore, it was proposed to restore the balance which existed in the past in the International Bureau, with the post of Deputy Director General and with the regional office for the countries of this group. It is important for this Delegation that the decision to restore a post that existed before be taken. In a world which is getting increasingly inter-related, the problems concerning the protection of the intellectual property were important for everybody.

13. The Director General said that this question had two aspects. One was on its merits, and he was not going to address that question. The other one was on procedure and he would address that question. Because of the coming on board of a new Director General, this question should be addressed together with the whole structure of the Secretariat, namely, the number of highest posts, the number and titles of the Bureaux, and what assignments they would have. The proposal made by the Delegation of the Russian Federation was useful because it pointed out in the present forum, organization-wise its aspirations and desires. When proposals will be made for the reorganization of the Secretariat, the proposal of the Russian Federation would probably resurface, but a decision on this matter today would be procedurally very difficult. The Director General suggested therefore that the Committee decide that the proposal of the Russian Federation be noted and considered at the next proper occasion.

14. The Committee agreed with the suggestion of the Director General.

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