



C. PCT 994
– 21.1

June 18, 2004

Madam,
Sir,

PCT Quality Framework – Review of Progress

It is recalled that in May 2003, the fourth session of the Working Group on Reform of the PCT approved the content of a draft quality framework for international search and preliminary examination (see document PCT/R/WG/4/12 and paragraphs 72 to 81 of document PCT/R/WG/4/14). At the ninth session of the Meeting of International Authorities Under the PCT (PCT/MIA) in July 2003, this framework was incorporated into the draft PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination Guidelines (“the Guidelines”) (see paragraph 93 of document PCT/MIA/9/6) and, following renumbering, became Chapter 21 of the final version of the Guidelines (see document PCT/GL/ISPE/1), which are now in force for international applications filed on or after January 1, 2004.

Paragraph 21.17 of the Guidelines states:

“Each Authority should be required to submit an initial report to the Meeting of International Authorities under the PCT (MIA) describing what it has done to implement a [quality management system] based on the broad requirements set out in [Chapter 21 of the Guidelines]. This would help identify and disseminate best practice among Authorities. MIA should then submit a general initial report on progress to the PCT Assembly.”

The sixth session of PCT/MIA also agreed (see paragraph 93 of document PCT/MIA/9/6) that:

“the annual report by an Authority should be in the nature of an overall evaluation by the Authority of the progress of implementing the quality management system. Such annual reports should be submitted to the Meeting for discussion/information.”

I therefore invite your Office, in its capacity as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty, to submit an initial report describing what has been done so far to implement a quality management system. This report should be sent, preferably in Word format, to pct.mia@wipo.int by August 6, 2004.

It is proposed that the reports submitted should then be made available in confidence to all the International Authorities, using the PCT/MIA electronic forum. The tenth session of PCT/MIA, in September 2004, would then discuss the progress made and experience gained, and adopt an initial report to be submitted to the PCT Assembly at its thirty-third session, to be held from September 27 to October 5, 2004. In order to facilitate that procedure, it is proposed that the International Bureau should prepare a draft of a short general initial report, on the basis of the submissions, in advance of the session.

If Authorities wish to discuss the appropriate format and contents of the reports in advance of their submission, it may be useful to use the PCT/MIA electronic forum, which has been established on WIPO's website at www.wipo.int/pct/mia.

Yours sincerely,



Francis Gurry
Deputy Director General