

## **Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO**

### **Forty-Eighth Series of Meetings Geneva, September 20 to 29, 2010**

#### **PROGRESS REPORT ON ACCESSIBILITY IN THE WIPO CAMPUS**

*prepared by the Secretariat*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this document is to present to the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO (“the Assemblies”) a first progress report on the Accessibility Project (the “Project”) focusing on physical accessibility to and in the WIPO Campus. Other aspects of accessibility, such as Web-accessibility, are dealt with under other frameworks in the Organization.

#### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES**

2. The project management structure was established in the Autumn of 2009, in the form of a Coordination and Study Team, composed of staff members throughout the Organization.
3. The personnel resources available to the Project are all on the basis of a voluntary participation, with the authorization of their respective supervisors, noting that one staff member has been assigned specifically to the Project, on a part-time basis, as “Project Assistant”. Some members have a “technical” capacity in the sense that they represent the administrative unit particularly concerned or responsible for the subject matter. Other members have a “non-technical” capacity in the sense that they have a particular knowledge or interest in the subject matter. There is today a total of seven staff members from WIPO involved in the Project.

4. Having been launched at the end of 2009, the Project could not be reflected *per se* in the Program and Budget for the 2010-2011 biennium, but it is expected that certain activities may be covered under the existing Premises Management Sub-program (Sub-program 24.4), to the extent possible for this biennium.

#### **STATUS IN RESPECT OF THE NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

5. In respect of the ongoing New Construction Project, compliance with local regulations in terms of accessibility to buildings is reflected as a requirement in the building permit and will be validated in the context of the official visits that will take place before the occupancy permit can be delivered by the local authorities in the Autumn of 2010. The following features can be mentioned as having been taken into account in the construction (noting that the list is not exhaustive): access to elevators, width of corridors and doorways, restrooms for persons with disabilities, separate designated parking spaces in the underground parking (including in the parking space area reserved for delegates).

#### **STATUS IN RESPECT OF THE NEW CONFERENCE HALL PROJECT**

6. Similarly, in respect of the future New Conference Hall, compliance with local regulations in terms of accessibility to buildings, with the particular specificities applying to conference and meeting facilities, is reflected in the building permit and will be validated in the context of the official visits that will take place before the occupancy permit can be delivered by the local authorities around the end of 2012. The following features can be mentioned as having been taken into account in the future construction (noting that the list is not exhaustive): facilitated access to the hall from the outside forecourt or internally from the lobby of the main building, sufficient numbers of seats (about 50) in the future conference hall easily reachable by persons with disabilities, on the podium and in various rows of the hall, all interpreters booths accessible to persons with disabilities, restrooms for persons with disabilities, access to elevators, width of corridors and doorways.

#### **STATUS IN RESPECT OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS**

7. In respect of the existing buildings owned by WIPO, it must be recognized that, in view of the dates of completion of the oldest of those buildings (1958 for the GBI Building, 1978 for the AB Building, and 1995 for the GBII Building), and the fact that there were no or limited requirements in place then, very few features have been implemented so far. Improving access by persons with disabilities to those buildings will require significant infrastructure work which will need to be planned over several biennia, with adequate budgeting.
8. The case of the PCT Building (2003), being the most recent of the existing buildings owned by WIPO, is somewhat different since a number of features were included during the construction according to the then applicable local standards for administrative buildings, for example, access by persons with disabilities to every office and every floor, restrooms for persons with disabilities, and facilitated access to the building lobby. As a consequence, even though less infrastructure works would be required, improvements will not be marginal and will have to be planned over a certain period of time, with adequate budgeting.
9. In any case, in view of the great discrepancy between these buildings and the various connecting areas between them—ground floor connection (between the AB and GBI and GBII Buildings), tunnel (between AB and GBI Buildings and PCT Building), and overhead

bridge (between GBII and PCT Buildings)— and because there are no technical specialists in the Secretariat, it will be essential to commission an audit by specialized architects and other specialists in the second year of the biennium or in the next biennium, depending on the availability of funds.

10. Nothing could reasonably be planned in respect of the office buildings rented by WIPO (the P&G Building, the CAM Building and the storage facilities in Collex-Bossy) since WIPO is only a tenant and since these premises will in any case be vacated before the end of 2011.

#### **AD HOC SOLUTIONS ON CASE-BY-CASE BASIS**

11. In the cases where a person with disabilities—staff member or other employee, delegate or visitor—has needed particular assistance, the various units concerned in the Secretariat, in particular, the Safety and Security Coordination Service, the Premises Infrastructure Division, the Conference Division, as well as, when needed, the cafeteria manager, have coordinated their efforts in order to provide *ad hoc* solutions, as much as possible and feasible in view of the premises concerned, noting that it has not always been to the full satisfaction of those concerned. Such matters will constitute major items under future renovations and layout modifications of the buildings on the basis of the future audit mentioned above.

#### **ESTABLISHING CONTACTS WITH LOCAL ENTITIES WORKING WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

12. Since the end of 2009, the Secretariat has established contacts with local public sector organizations whose mandate includes providing job opportunities and/or internship to persons with disabilities for a variety of professional profiles. This particular feature of the Project is to be seen also within the context of WIPO's Strategic Realignment Program (see below).

#### **REPORTING ON FUTURE WORK**

13. Reporting on future work under the Project will be integrated within the framework of WIPO's Strategic Realignment Program, as accessibility issues are included under the value "Environmental, Social and Governance Responsibility".

*14. The Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO and of the Unions administered by it are invited to take note of the present document.*

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