

ANNEX I

REPORT OF THE WIPO STANDARD ST.10/C TASK FORCE

(June 10, 2005)

Introduction

1. In order to improve the quality of patent family data and to avoid confusion in the presentation of priority application numbers, after finalizing the specific description of the Task Force, the WIPO Standard ST.10/C Task Force (ST.10/C Task Force) began discussions regarding WIPO Standard ST.10/C in July 2002.
2. At the second session of the SCIT/SDWG meeting held in December 2002 (SCIT/SDWG/2), in accordance with the proposal made by the ST.10/C Task Force, the SDWG agreed on a two-phase process:
 - (i) the first phase consisting of a moderate and pragmatic solution, and
 - (ii) a second phase with a standardized format solution.
3. During the first phase, the ST.10/C Task Force would prepare a questionnaire on the revision and update of the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C that would be forwarded to the Secretariat for its distribution to the industrial property offices (IPOs) for its completion.
4. The Task Force would also complete a proposal concerning the recommendations set out in this Standard along the lines suggested in Appendix 3 to document SCIT/SDWG/2/6.
5. In a second phase, the ST.10/C Task Force would present a proposal on a unified format for priority application numbers.
6. The ST.10/C Task Force started its discussions and tasks related to the first phase after the end of the second session of the SCIT/SDWG meeting (SCIT/SDWG/2).
7. As for the revision and update of the Appendix, the ST.10/C Task Force prepared two different questionnaires and letters entitled "Maintenance of the tables in the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C (SDWG Task No. 30)". On January 29, 2003, the JPO, as Task Force Leader, submitted to the Secretariat the two questionnaires concerning the revision and update of the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C for distribution to and completion by IPOs. The International Bureau (IB) issued Circulars C. SCIT 2580 and 2581, dated April 4, 2003, which invited IPOs to provide information on the maintenance of the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C.
8. The circular C. SCIT 2580 was prepared for the IPOs whose application numbers were provided in the Tables of the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C to check the accuracy of the information contained in the Tables. The circular C. SCIT 2581, on the other hand, was prepared for the IPOs whose application numbers were not listed in the Tables of the Appendix to WIPO Standard ST.10/C although they are members of the Paris Convention.

9. The IB requested them to submit their answers by May 30, 2003. The IB received 36 responses until the fourth session of SCIT/SDWG meeting (SCIT/SDWG/4). The complete list of countries and their responses are available on the WIPO/SCIT Web Page at <http://www.wipo.int/scit/en/mailbox/circ03.htm> under “Administrations/Circulars.” The updated Appendix was published in the 2003 WIPO *Handbook on Industrial Property Information and Documentation* CD-ROM and in the SCIT area of the WIPO website.
10. With regard to the revision of the recommendation set out in the Standard, the ST.10/C Task Force eagerly exchanged views and opinions in order to find a pragmatic but effective solution. Thanks to the great efforts made by every member, the ST.10/C Task Force successfully completed its discussions at the first phase before the SCIT/SDWG/4. The ST.10/C Task Force prepared and submitted to the IB its proposal to revise the texts of paragraphs 3, 5 and 11 of the Standard. (Appendix 2 to the document SCIT/SDWG/4/3)
11. In addition to the revision of the Standard, the ST.10/C Task Force proposed that a cover page be provided for WIPO Standard ST.10/C containing an “Editorial Note” by the IB (Appendix 3 to the document SCIT/SDWG/4/3). Moreover, the ST.10/C Task Force proposed that the Annex containing the previous version of the Standard be provided. The Editorial Note and Annex help the IPOs know that the new version of paragraphs 2 and 3 would be implemented for all patent documents with a publication date from January 1, 2005, onwards, while the previous version would be valid until December 31, 2004.
12. As for the cover page, the Task Force also suggested that the cover page to WIPO Standard ST.10/C be added to the WIPO website and be provided in the 2003 WIPO Handbook CD-ROM. In addition, the Task Force proposed that the cover page text and related Annex be removed from the cover page by the IB at a suitable time subsequent to January 1, 2005.
13. At the SCIT/SDWG/4 meeting, the Task Force invited the SDWG to consider and approve the above-mentioned proposals concerning revision of the recommendation set out in the Standard at the first phase and insertion of the cover page.
14. The SDWG approved the text of WIPO Standard ST.10/C as reproduced in Annex 4 to the document SCIT/SDWG/4/14 (Report) as well as the proposal for the cover page.
15. During the 34th session of Committee of Experts of the IPC Union in February 2004, the postponement of the implementation of the reformed IPC to January 1, 2006, was agreed. Following this decision, the previous version of paragraphs 2 and 3 of WIPO Standard ST.10/C will be valid until December 31, 2005, and the new version will enter into force from January 1, 2006. The Editorial Note was accordingly revised with full agreement by the Task Force members.
16. At the SCIT/SDWG/5 meeting, the ST.10/C Task Force made two proposals. First, the Task Force proposed changes to the description of Task No. 30 in order to include the task relating to revision of WIPO Standard ST.13 in the ST.10/C Task Force. The SDWG approved the changes as reproduced in Appendix 2 to the Annex to document SCIT/SDWG/5/4.

17. Second, the Task Force presented proposals on the revision of WIPO Standard ST.10/C outlined in SCIT/SDWG/5/4 in conjunction with several additional proposals. In the course of discussion, several changes as to the editorial note, paragraph 3 (font types in the classification examples), and paragraph 12(a) were suggested by members. The SDWG approved the proposals made by the Task Force, as well as the above changes suggested by the members. The revised WIPO Standard ST.10/C that was adopted is reproduced in Annex IV to SCIT/SDWG/5/13.

18. It was also agreed that a survey of the Offices as to the compliance with the provisions of paragraph 12(a) in WIPO Standard ST.10/C concerning priority document numbers would be prepared and sent along with a suitable circular issued by the Secretariat as shown in paragraph 101 (Task No. 30).

Task Force Activities

19. As the ST.10/C Task Force has completed the first phase, it now focuses on the second phase.

20. At the ST.10/C Task Force meeting on January 28, 2004, during the fourth session of the SCIT/SDWG, the participants recognized the importance of examining an ideal format for application numbers as a second phase and concluded that the Task Force should make a proposal to the SDWG including the task relating to the revision of WIPO Standard ST.13 in the ST.10/C Task Force. With full support by every member in the ST.10/C Task Force's E-Forum, this proposal was forwarded to the SDWG. The SDWG, at its fifth session, unanimously approved this proposal.

21. In order to determine next steps to be taken, the ST.10/C Task Force held a meeting on November 11, 2004, during the SCIT/SDWG/5. At this meeting the participants agreed that the Task Force Leader would prepare a proposal for a format for application numbers and circulate it among the Task Force members.

22. A first version of the discussion paper based on the above agreement was circulated to the Task Force members in the beginning of April 2005. Until the end of April, four comments from members were submitted. The revised version of the discussion paper, which incorporated the submitted comments, is presented as an Annex II to this report.

Current Result and Further Work

23. The ST.10/C Task Force has completed its basic study on the format of application numbers and prepared the discussion paper on the revision of WIPO Standard ST.13 as reproduced as the Annex II to this report.

24. The discussion paper includes analyses of existing WIPO Standards ST.10/C and ST.13 and of current practices of member offices as to numbering of applications. It also discusses the prototype of an ideal format of application numbers based on these analyses. The following action items have been completed by the Task Force to date:

Step 1 (completed):

Invite comments from the Task Force members by the end of April on the proposed prototype format, other parts of this paper, and why formats in line with WIPO Standard ST.13 are not adopted by IPOs, and collect information on the newest application formats of IPOs.

Step 2 (completed):

Taking into consideration the comments and information, revise a prototype format and submit it to the IB by June 1, 2005, along with a progress report for discussion at the September SCIT/SDWG/6 meeting.

Finally, the following items and time frame are proposed as further actions:

Step 3 (from SCIT/SDWG/6 to December 15, 2005):

Invite preliminary comments on Task Force proposals and collect updated information on application formats of IPOs from SDWG members by December 15, 2005. Encourage members to consult with user groups and reflect their views in the comments.

Step 4 (from early January 2006 to SCIT/SDWG/7):

Based on comments and information from SDWG members and further analysis on related WIPO standards and other presentation systems of application numbers (e.g., presentation systems of application numbers in commercial databases), further examine ideal format aiming to submit a proposal at SCIT/SDWG/7.

25. The ST.10/C Task Force invites the SDWG to consider and approve the work completed by the Task Force to date. The SDWG is also invited to consider and approve the remaining action items and time frame set forth in the discussion paper and above. The Task Force will work on the task presented in the discussion paper upon approval by the SDWG.

[Annex II follows]