UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
WASHINGTON, DC 20231
www.uspto.gov

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Ms. Helen Frary
Head, IT Business Management Section
World Intellectual Property Organization
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20
SWITZERLAND

Re: WIPO Circular C.SCIT 2515 – Restructuring of the SCIT

Dear Ms. Frary:

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has reviewed the proposal for the restructuring of the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) and has the following comments.

The USPTO has no objection to convening an Advisory Group to provide guidance to the Director General on Information Technology matters. However, we strongly believe that any restructuring of the SCIT should also include a standing committee that provides recommendations and guidance on policy, technical and documentation matters directly to the General Assembly. Such a committee could be constituted as outlined in WIPO's option 2 provided this option possesses the following criteria:

- Any Standing Committee should focus on both the technical and policy related aspects of information technology. We should not replace the SCIT with another entity similar to the former Permanent Committee on Industrial Property which would weaken the emphasis on information technology by having no representation at a Standing Committee level. The Standing Committee should meet at least once per year.

- Working Groups must be utilized within a Standing Committee. The structure and composition of Working Groups can be flexible and should be formulated according to need. WIPO should provide strong leadership to the Working Groups. This aspect has been lacking within SCIT. Working Groups rarely met. Timelines and objectives of each Working Group must be clearly defined.

- The USPTO objects to the mechanisms outlined for establishing priorities as identified in SCIT/RES/6. New IT activities should be evaluated within the entire scope of projects. Internal systems should not be automatically given a higher priority than those projects external to WIPO.

- We suggest a slight revision to the proposed mandate of the Standing Committee (referred to as Standing Committee on Technical Standards and Documentation) as follows:

  Provide a forum to adopt new or revised WIPO standards, policies, recommendations and statement of principle relating to intellectual property data, global information system related matters, information services on the global system, data dissemination and documentation, which may be promulgated on the authority of the Standing Committee to be referred to the WIPO General Assembly for approval.

- We support the concept of WIPO indicating the professional or technical competencies required by delegates according to the agenda for each meeting.

- We support dissemination of meeting documents via e-mail or on the WIPO web site as a substitute to paper mailings.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to receiving your revised proposal.

Sincerely,

/ROBERT L. STOLL/

Robert L. Stoll
Administrator for External Affairs