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December 8, 2006

Madam,  
Sir,

The International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO) signed a cooperation agreement in 1993 regarding the creation and distribution of the ESPACE series of CDs. For WIPO, the agreement enabled the electronic dissemination of PCT applications and provided a way of meeting the obligations of Rule 87 of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Regulations. According to this agreement, the EPO sends copies of the ESPACE WORLD CD on behalf of WIPO to Offices upon request.

Since then WIPO has created a DVD product to meet the obligations of Rule 87 and has implemented an electronic publication system through PatentScope Search Service (<http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/>). The DVD (so called "Rule 87 DVD") contains weekly published PCT data and is sent by WIPO to Offices upon request.

Consequently, in order to rationalize costs, it is proposed to discontinue, as of April 1, 2007, the distribution agreement between the EPO and WIPO regarding the ESPACE WORLD CD as the means for fulfilling the obligations of Rule 87. As an alternative, your Office will have the possibility to receive the Rule 87 DVD and download international PCT applications from PatentScope Search Service. Your Office may of course also request the ESPACE WORLD CD directly from the EPO.

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Despite the proposed discontinuation of the distribution agreement regarding the ESPACE WORLD CD as the means for fulfilling the obligations of Rule 87, WIPO continues to support the ESPACE products as well as other value-added patent information products of the private sector. The delivery of published PCT data to patent information providers has recently been improved by making available, on publication date, complete published PCT applications and OCR full-text for download over the Internet.

We would appreciate receiving any comments you may have in this connection. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague, William Meredith, Head, Patent Information and Industrial Property Statistics Section (e-mail: [william.meredith@wipo.int](mailto:william.meredith@wipo.int) or telephone: 41 22 338 96 58).

Yours sincerely,



Francis Gurry  
Deputy Director General