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Inaugural meeting of Policy Advisory Commission confirms WIPO's proactive role in implementing public awareness of intellectual property

WIPO MAGAZINE

The Director General called on a group of eminent personalities from the world of politics, diplomacy, law and public administration to present their views on ways the international intellectual property system can be better used to promote economic development and catalyze social and cultural well-being.

Opening the April 15 inaugural session of the Policy Advisory Commission (PAC), Dr. Idris said that "on the eve of the 21st century, information and knowledge had emerged as a new factor of

production that will soon rival the classical economic factors, such as land, labor and capital." In the new information age, protection of intellectual property assets is at the heart of spurring creativity and of transforming that creativity, knowledge and information into material and cultural wealth.

This was the first time in the century-long history of WIPO that such a group had been brought together to make independent recommendations to the Director General.

"The fundamental question that I place on the table today is how can we - as policy-makers, thinkers, individuals and international organizations - help to release the creative and inventive potential and channel that energy into tangible, sustainable development"

Dr. Idris told the PAC.



Photo: H. Saigado

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Members of the Policy Advisory Commission



Photo: H. Salgado

AHTISAARI Martti, President, Finland

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ARAI Hisamitsu, Vice-Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Japan

BAHADIAN Adhemar Gabriel, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil, Geneva

BANGEMANN Martin, Member of the European Commission for Industrial Affairs and Information and Telecommunications Technologies, Germany

BATCHELOR Sheila (Ms.), Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Intellectual Property Office, Canada (Member ex-officio)

BERNARD Daniel, Ambassador of France to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

ESSY Amara, State Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Côte d'Ivoire

GABAY Mayer, First Vice President, United Nations Administrative Tribunal, Chairman, Patent and Copyright Laws Revision Committees, Ministry of Justice, Israel

GHOSE Arundhati (Ms.), Member, Union Public Service Commission, former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India, Geneva

GYGER Walter, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Geneva

His Royal Highness, Prince El-HASSAN Bin Talal, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

HERMASSI Abdelbaki, Minister for Culture, Tunisia

HÖYNCK Wilhelm, former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany in Geneva

JENNINGS Sir Robert, former President, International Court of Justice, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

KADIRGAMAR Lakshman, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

LEHMAN Bruce, President, International Intellectual Property Institute, former Assistant Secretary for Commerce and Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, United States of America

MENEM Carlos, President, Republic of Argentina

NYERERE Julius, former President, United Republic of Tanzania

OLSSON Henry, Special Government Advisor, Ministry of Justice, Sweden and former Director of Copyright Department, WIPO

PERSAD-BISSESSAR Kamla (Mrs.), Minister for Legal Affairs, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

PORZIO Marino, attorney, Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chile, and former Deputy Director General, WIPO

PRETNAR Bojan, Director, Slovenian Intellectual Property Office and Permanent Representative of Slovenia to WIPO

RAMOS Fidel, former President, Philippines

SIDOROV Vasily, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Geneva

SOARES Mario, former President, Portugal

SONG Jian, Vice-Chairman of the People's Political Consultative Conference of China and former State Councilor in charge of science and technology development, People's Republic of China

WEEKES John, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada, Geneva

Policy Advisory Commission decides to set up task force

The PAC decided to set up a task force to consider, amongst others, three issues: the text of a possible declaration or charter on intellectual property, a study on the balance between private intellectual property rights and the public good and the economic and social developmental dimension of intellectual property, especially for developing countries.

The Director General identified the international challenges with respect to intellectual property issues, not least the need to depoliticize the international debate on intellectual property "to prove that it is no longer a false issue of the have-nots against the haves." Also, he evoked the need to demystify intellectual property "so that policy-makers, leaders, consumers, tax-payers and the public at large will see it as deserving of respect and support as other traditional forms of property." Another critical question raised by the Director General is the need to assist developing countries and countries in transition "to unleash the creative and inventive potential of their peoples by canalizing that potential into commercially viable applications for the market place." He said it is necessary to enable these countries to use the intellectual property system to help them produce, trade and compete.

Dr. Idris noted an urgency to address these issues in light of statistics that show that of the 4.4 billion people in the developing world, one in three lacks safe drinking water, one in four lacks adequate housing, and one in five children do not reach the fifth grade. He called on the members of the Commission to offer their views on these issues and others relating to how WIPO, as guardian of global intellectual property legislation and harmonized practices, can keep pace with rapid technological changes so that developments like the Internet will not dislocate or undermine the international intellectual property superstructure.

"I look forward to hearing your views and advice. I have full confidence that they will, in full partnership with our member states - the owners of this Organization, help us create the best possible environment for WIPO's continuing effectiveness and help put intellectual property in its rightful place in the economic, social and cultural landscape of the 21st century," he said before opening the general discussion.



Photo: H. Salgado

HRH Prince El Hassan of Jordan

HRH Prince El-Hassan of Jordan said he left the meeting with hope for the future. "I came here thinking of the problems of the costs of textbooks and software for students, of governments establishing domestic offices and agencies of training personnel, and so on. On the other hand, I came away from the meeting thinking we must be positive, we must think of a more active flow of foreign investment, higher quality for consumers, the enhancement of specific exports and the avoidance of sanctions."

The morning session was devoted to a series of presentations:

- "Critical Topics for Intellectual Property in the 21st Century" by Mr. Marino Porzio, Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Chile and former Deputy Director General of WIPO
- "Intellectual Property as a Tool for Development" by Mr. Bruce Lehman, President, International Intellectual Property Institute, Washington D.C. and former Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Patent and Trademark Office, US Department of Commerce
- "The Future Evolution of the International Legal Framework for Intellectual Property Protection" by Dr. Bojan Pretnar, Director, Slovenia Intellectual Property Office
- "The Future Role of WIPO in the International and United Nations Communities" by Mr. Mayar Gabay, First Vice President, UN Administrative Tribunal and Chairman, Patent and Copyright Laws Revision Committees, Ministry of Justice, Israel
- "A Draft Global Intellectual Property Charter" by Mr. Hiramitsu Arai, Vice-Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Japan

The PAC members began informal discussions on the issues raised by the Director General and in the presentations. These focused on the critical role of intellectual property as a tool of economic development. Some members called for the establishment of a vision first and transforming that vision into tangible benefits to the individual, using intellectual

Photo: H. Salgado



Fidel Ramos, former
President of the Philippines

Speaking at the end of the meeting, former President Ramos of the Philippines also underlined the importance of international cooperation for economic, social and cultural well-being. He said "I would like to emphasize the word 'sharing' of intellectual property rights in an ever changing high technology environment. This will necessitate the continuing search for a broad and responsive international framework for cooperation and integration."

property as a tool. The impact of globalization on intellectual property was discussed as well as the necessity to engage and integrate all interested parties, including the private sector and civil society.

Some members pointed out that developing countries generally do not lack laws or regulations, but that problems exist in implementation. All members emphasized the critical need to implement public awareness, education and advocacy plans. Participants agreed that WIPO had an important global proactive role to play in respect to all issues discussed.

The PAC concluded with an agreement to set up a task force to consider the text of a possible global intellectual property charter or declaration that would help place intellectual property in a wider economic, social and cultural context. This would recognize the emergence of intellectual property as a new critical factor of production like capital or manpower. At the same time, it would reaffirm the critical role intellectual property can play as a tool for economic development, in particular for developing countries. The task force would also look into elaborating a vision to define the new and future roles of intellectual property and WIPO.

The task force would also study the question of the use and abuse of intellectual property rights and the balance between private and public benefits. Emphasis was placed on the need to heighten international cooperation to promote intellectual property issues so that they can truly become a vital tool in wealth creation for the benefit of all peoples.

Doing more with less, WIPO member states support draft program and budget for 2000-2001

The member states of WIPO expressed support for the results-based draft program and budget for the 2000-2001 biennium presented to the Program and Budget Committee by the Director General, Dr. Kamil Idris on April 26. It will be formally submitted to the WIPO Assemblies for adoption in September.

The draft program and budget for the 2000-2001 biennium, described by Dr. Idris as a "global intellectual property development strategy" with a "do more with less" approach, proposes a budget of 409.7 million Swiss Francs (CHF). This represents an increase of 8.1 percent over the 1998-1999 biennium (378.9 million CHF). Projected income for the same time period is 409.8 million CHF as compared to 391.8 million CHF in the previous financial period. The surplus in the 2000-2001 biennium is therefore expected to be negligible.

Another feature is a reduction in the contributions by member states of 10 percent below the 1999 level, which is in itself 10 percent below the 1998 level. Unlike other

specialized agencies of the United Nations, WIPO is mostly self-financed, generating its income from the international registration services it renders to the private sector.

The program and budget also contains a proposal to once again lower the fees of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) by an average of 13 percent effective January 1, 2000. The cumulative effect of this measure (including two earlier PCT fee reductions in 1998 and 1999) would mean a 29.2 percent reduction in the income of the PCT.

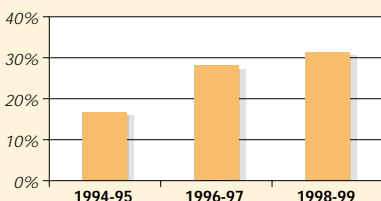
At the committee meeting, member states expressed broad support for the approach taken by the Director General of WIPO in presenting the proposed budget and program. Many delegations applauded the transparency and the results-oriented methodology that characterized the process. One delegation noted that WIPO was viewed as one of the leading United Nations organizations in regard to transparency, results-

based budgeting and accountability. For the first time, WIPO's draft program and budget includes performance indicators that will allow member states to assess the extent to which the expected results have been achieved.

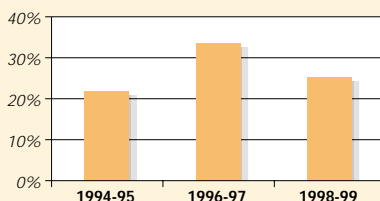
Some committee members expressed concern at the increase in the budget and said they would have preferred a zero-growth budget. The Director General explained that there is an ever-growing demand for WIPO services by the business community. He underlined the importance of helping countries implement the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) after January 1, 2000, and stressed the fact that an increase in the budget did not imply an increase in the contributions of member states, since WIPO is largely self-financing. In fact, he noted the new program and budget proposes a decrease in the contributions by member states.

At the end of the discussions, the Committee Chairman, Arturo Hernández Basave (Mexico), noted broad support for the content and format of the program and budget document. Summing up the session's deliberations, he said that though some questions were raised - as is normal in any budget process - there was overall consensus support for the Director General's proposals.

Budgeted income growth



Budgeted expenditure growth



Visits

Director General pledges support for the inventive and innovative potential of Moldovan creators

The Director General reaffirmed the Organization's commitment to supporting efforts by the Republic of Moldova to strengthen its intellectual property system during an intensive two-day visit from April 22 to 24.

In a meeting with Prime Minister Ion Sturza, Dr. Idris welcomed the active participation of the Republic of Moldova in WIPO-administered intellectual property treaties. He pledged the Organization's continued assistance in promoting greater understanding of intellectual property issues in Moldova as a tool for economic, social and cultural development.

The Director General reiterated this message to a gathering of parliamentarians. "I am certain that the intellectual property system will make an important contribution to convert innovation into wealth", he said, "and that wealth

would mean economic development and economic growth of the country."

He met with Mr. Oleg Stratulat, Vice Prime Minister, Mr. I. Leanca, First Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dumitru Diacov, Chairman of the Parliament, Mr. Andrei Andriesh, President of the Academy of Science, Mr. Eugen Stashkov, Director General of the State Agency on Industrial Property Protection and other high-level officials. He also held talks with representatives of the Commission on Culture, Commission on Education, Commission on Industry and Privatization, and members of the academic community.

Dr Idris also attended a formal ceremony at the State University of the Republic of Moldova during which he was awarded an honorary doctoral degree. During his acceptance speech, he confirmed

"WIPO's unreserved commitment to the pursuit of international cooperation in the field of intellectual property to render special support to inventors".

In his meetings, the Director General pointed out that intellectual property was emerging as a major component of knowledge-based economies. "On the eve of the 21st Century, knowledge and information have emerged as a very important and critical source of production," he said. Referring to the phenomenal growth experienced by the information and knowledge-based software and entertainment industries, he noted that "these industries owe their success to creativity, they owe their success to knowledge, but they also owe their success to information...and at the heart of this stands the intellectual property system".

Photo: Wang Binying



Dr. Kamil Idris together with Mr. Eugen M. Stashkov, Director General of the State Agency on Industrial Property Protection is greeted with a "warmest welcome" a traditional gift of bread and salt.

Since gaining independence in 1991, the Republic of Moldova has made significant headway in enacting legislation in the fields of industrial property and copyright. The Republic of Moldova became a member of WIPO in December 1991 and has since ratified key WIPO-administered conventions, such as the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works.

WIPO Worldwide Academy

Students receive thorough briefing on IP at the April Academy

From April 19 to 27, the WIPO Academy held an intensive course on intellectual property for participants from English-speaking countries in Africa and the Caribbean.

On their first day the students were given an introduction to WIPO, its objectives and its work with developing countries. This overview of the work of the Organization was complemented by lectures on the basic principles of industrial property and copyright.

With the general background work completed the students went on to consider WIPO's system of international registrations; the PCT for patents, the Madrid system for trademarks and the Hague Agreement for industrial designs.

Students were also taken on a visit to the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property in Berne where they were able to compare the approach of a European national intellectual property office with that of WIPO and that in their own country.

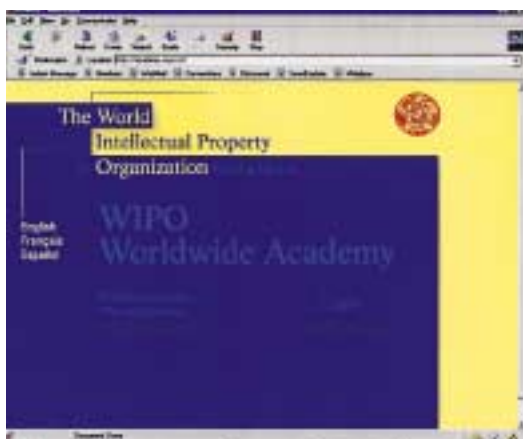
The course also considered the important role of new technology in the field of intellectual property protection with lectures on:

- the use of intellectual property to promote technological growth
- the impact of new technologies on the protection of intellectual property rights

- protecting intellectual property in the 21st century, challenges and opportunities

- a demonstration of the WIPO Internet and Intranet

Another area of significant importance for the course concerned concrete examples of the role of intellectual property in promoting socio-economic development. The examples took the form of country reports from Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Jamaica, Malawi, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This topic was followed by a field trip to the Nestlé factory in Vevey, where students had a tour of the newly refurbished headquarters, video presentations on Nestlé's patent



To register for a WIPO Academy distance learning course visit <http://academy.wipo.int>

WWA's first electronic forum commences work on findings

In March, the Worldwide Academy brought to a successful close its first on-line electronic forum and began analyzing its findings. The forum was set up to gather information and views on strategies for the development of new intellectual property teaching methods for students at undergraduate and graduate levels in both traditional law programs and in engineering and business faculties worldwide. The forum also served as a means for the Academy to draw attention to the advantages of using modern information to deliver technology-

based training, teaching and advisory services, and to extend teaching services to much wider audiences than was previously possible.

Participants were invited to participate by e-mail or via the Internet and the findings generated by this first electronic forum will provide a firm basis on which to develop a full range of information technology-based, complementary training, teaching and advisory services. These will include:

- new and enhanced curricula and training materials relevant to the

Date set for the Patent Law Treaty Diplomatic Conference

and trademark activities together with a overview of their activities in Africa and the Caribbean.

In addition to lectures on these traditional areas of WIPO's work, the students also received an insight into WIPO's work on emerging global issues, in particular intellectual property protection of traditional knowledge and biodiversity, a relatively new area for WIPO on which the Organization has been gathering material with fact-finding missions since June 1998.

The course concluded with a look at legislative and practical aspects of enforcement of intellectual property rights.

needs of an increasing field of intellectual property actors;

- effective distance learning mechanisms via the Internet such as virtual classrooms, video conferencing and downloadable up-to-date teaching materials;
- improved cooperation between national and regional training institutions.

To register for a WIPO Academy distance learning course go to <http://academy.wipo.int>

After three and a half years of discussions on the draft Patent Law Treaty (PLT), WIPO member states recently made significant progress towards achieving harmonization of patent formalities throughout the world. The Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) discussed the draft PLT in detail at its second session from April 12 to 23, 1999 in Geneva, and concluded with agreement on a number of questions, including a date for the diplomatic conference (May 11 to June 2, 2000).

The proposed treaty is designed to streamline the requirements set out by patent offices for the filing of patent applications and the maintenance of patents. These requirements concern issues such as obtaining a filing date and formalities relating to an application, including electronic filing, representation, conditions for extension of time limits and restoration of rights and priority claims. To keep the draft treaty as simple as possible and to avoid creating different international standards for patent formalities, its provisions refer as far as possible to those of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and its regulations.

The SCP agreed upon most of the provisions that would constitute the basic proposal for the diplomatic conference. One outstanding question is the provision concerning an extension of time limit and reinstatement of rights. Further understanding of different national systems in this respect is required before steps can be taken towards international harmonization in this area. The committee also decided that provisions which provide for a reference to the form and contents of international applications under the PCT still need further elaboration.

The SCP also discussed fee reductions by patent offices. The committee agreed that fee reductions under certain circumstances would benefit inventors and will discuss this issue further at its next session.

The meeting was attended by delegations of 71 member states, four intergovernmental organizations, and 21 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The next meeting of the SCP will take place in early September in Geneva.

Cooperation for development

WIPO carries out intensive program on compliance with the TRIPS Agreement in Africa—focus on LDCs

During March and April WIPO organized three subregional meetings on the central theme of the implementation of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). All three symposia commenced with a thorough overview of the TRIPS Agreement.

Victoria Falls

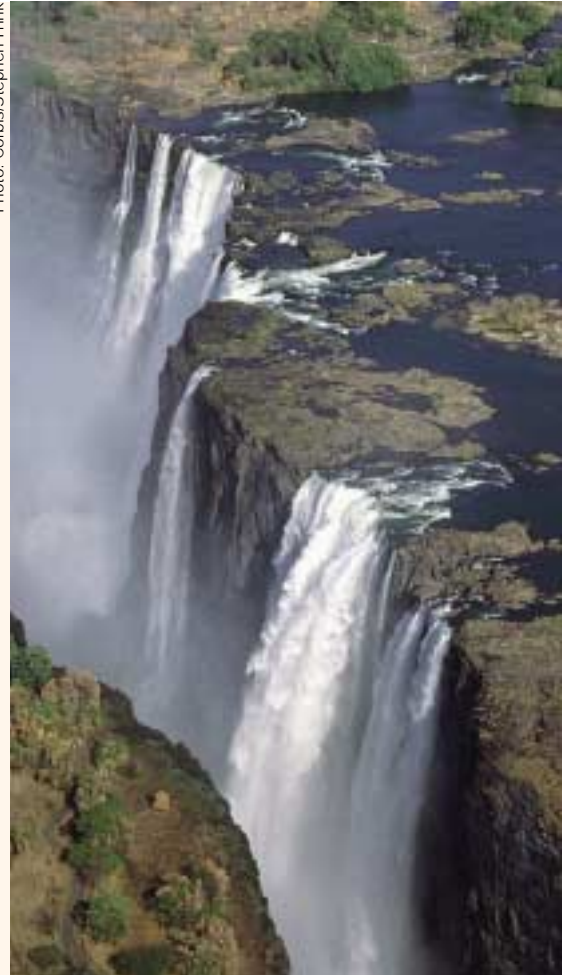
The first took place from March 29-31 against the stirring background of Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. It was organized with the assistance of both ARIPO (the African Regional Industrial Property Organization) and the Government of Zimbabwe, and was attended by participants from the English-speaking countries of Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

Discussions on the general requirements of TRIPS included:

- the protection of expressions of folklore
- the prospect of negotiations on establishing a multilateral system of notification and registration of geographical indications for wines

With regard to the enforcement of intellectual property rights, participants noted that customs authorities in many developing countries are mainly concerned with the prevention of smuggling and the subsequent loss of revenue. They agreed that such authorities need to change their role and move more towards protecting society and the consumer.

Photo: Corbis/Stephen Frink



Victoria Falls crashing in Zimbabwe

These discussions were followed by two roundtables. The first addressed the state of IP legislation in the invited countries and the differences between the various standards of proof to support a claim for infringement in the different jurisdictions. The discussions also considered

- the possibility of more time being accorded for least developed countries (LDCs) to comply with TRIPS
- the possible advantages that developing countries may gain in providing plant variety protection.



Participants at the Banjul symposium where the focus was upon least developed countries

A second roundtable followed on the joint initiative by WIPO and the WTO to provide technical assistance to help countries in meeting the deadline for compliance with TRIPS and included discussion on ARIPO's request to be granted observer status in the TRIPS council; that most industrialized countries have completed work on their legislation to comply with TRIPS and that WIPO's assistance in this matter is not confined to its member states.

Douala

The second symposium took place in Douala from April 6-8 and focused upon French-speaking countries from Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Senegal. It was organized in cooperation with the Government of Cameroon.

Subjects covered during the three days included:

- the economic consequences of piracy
- how to improve IP protection
- the economic consequences of TRIPS
- the status of national legislation in the participating countries.

The discussions came to a close with a roundtable that devised a follow-up schedule with national committees to monitor compliance with TRIPS.

Banjul

The final symposium took place from April 12 to 14 and was organized with the cooperation of the Government of the Gambia. In addition to focusing on TRIPS, this symposium targeted the least developed English-speaking countries of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia.

During the discussions of the general provisions of TRIPS, issues addressed included:

- the work of local artists being illegally reproduced in neighboring countries
- WIPO's work on global intellectual property issues including the protection of folklore
- WIPO's work with regard to transfer of technology
- whether ARIPO could also deal with copyright issues

Participants also saw a video on the infringement of intellectual property rights that described the new role of customs officers. This was followed by a discussion on the damage caused by pirated goods to a country's economy.

During the two roundtables that followed the main presentations, participants welcomed the news that WIPO had established a Least Developed Countries Unit to help these countries make progress, in particular, in new and emerging areas such as electronic commerce, the Internet and global intellectual property issues.

All three symposia generated a significant amount of interest and participants stated that they had been most illustrative in identifying changes that would be required to legislation and where new legislation would be needed.

It is hoped that the symposia will have facilitated the taking of the necessary steps at a national level to ensure compliance with TRIPS.



An opening address at the Banjul Symposium was given by Mrs. Sallah-Njie, Solicitor General and Legal Secretary, Gambia (centre)

WIPO and Moroccan IP office organize study visit



Participants at the Moroccan Industrial Property Office which has served as a pilot training office for the region for some time

Five representatives from intellectual property offices in Algeria, Djibouti and Tunisia took part in a study visit on the Madrid system from March, 1-4 at WIPO headquarters, continuing from March, 8-12 at the Moroccan Industrial Property Office, Casablanca. The aim of the study visit was to familiarize the participants with the reg-

istration procedures under the Madrid Agreement and Protocol. The training at WIPO commenced with an overview of the registration system and a guided tour of the registry. This was followed by an introduction to ROMARIN, the CD-ROM containing a searchable database of all WIPO international registrations.

Additional topics included:

- The role of a national office as originating office
- The automation of international registration systems
- The international classification system for marks

The visit to Geneva concluded with two presentations. The first illustrated WIPO activities in its cooperation for development program and the second set out training courses offered by the WIPO Worldwide Academy.

At the Moroccan Industrial Property Office, which has served as a pilot training office for the region for some time, participants learned during an extensive tour of the facilities, how the office processes international applications.



Innovation promotion

WIPO medals

Benin

On the occasion of the 3rd Exhibition of Invention and Technological Innovation - INNOTECH 99, three WIPO Gold Medals were awarded on April 26, 1999.

Mr. André SOVI GUIDI received the WIPO Gold Medal for the 1999 best inventor in Benin for the invention of a machine for the hermetic capsuling of bottles.

Mrs. Sébastienne ADJADOGBÉDJI received the WIPO Gold Medal for the best invention presented in the exhibition by a woman-inventor for a process to obtain milk from soybean.

Mr. Philippe HOUNSOU received the WIPO Gold Medal for the best invention presented in the exhibition by a young inventor for the invention of a cordless telephone system for three for use in a radio station.

Copyright

Roundtables address rights of broadcasting organizations and protection of databases

Two roundtables on the protection of the rights of broadcasting organizations and on the protection of databases were organized in April in accordance with the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights in November 1998.

Minsk

The first was held in Minsk, Republic of Belarus, from April 14 to 16. The aim of this roundtable was to facilitate discussion among the countries of the region to help them clarify their positions on the protection of the rights of broadcasting organizations as well as possible *sui generis* protection of databases, to be considered during the Second Session of the Standing Committee (Geneva, May 4 to 11, 1999).

Discussions in the course of the roundtable showed that, regarding new international norms for

broadcasting organizations, there is generally a positive attitude in the countries of the region, since their national copyright laws already include some rights to be granted to the broadcasting organizations under a possible new treaty (for example, the right of re-broadcasting and the right of cable distribution of their broadcasts). Participants asked for further studies on a specific system for databases. They requested that both matters be kept on the agenda of the Standing Committee.

The following countries attended the Minsk roundtable, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

Vilnius

The roundtable in Vilnius, Lithuania was opened on April 20 by Mr. Saulius Saltenis, Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania.

Discussions and comments centered on new technologies, particularly the Internet and its effects on the current and future state of the database industry and the need for adequate protection for that industry's products and services. On the topic of the rights of broadcasting organizations, lively discussions were held on broadcasters as users

of works, performances and phonograms and as holders of improved neighboring rights' protection. These discussions were of great interest to the audience, mainly because of the possible conflict of interests with authors and other beneficiaries of neighboring rights.

Several participants referred to the experience of the European Community in these areas and the overall situation in the region, including bilateral agreements with the EC.

Participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovakia attended the roundtable.

African regional symposium on the Internet treaties

WIPO held a regional symposium on its "Internet" treaties—the Copyright Treaty (WCT) and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT)—in March in Windhoek, Namibia with the cooperation of the Namibian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The symposium commenced with a comparative overview of copyright legislation in Africa before focusing on the two new Internet treaties in detail. Topics covered included:

- existing and new rights under the treaties
- the new WIPO treaties and the TRIPS Agreement, with a focus on the enforcement of rights
- technological means of protection, rights management, liability of on-line service and access providers.

The symposium concluded with country reports of the implementation of the treaties in Africa.



Global registration systems

WIPO joins forces to promote the PCT in Latin America

WIPO, in cooperation with the European Patent Office (EPO), the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office (OEPM) and the Industrial Property Office of Uruguay organized a March seminar in Montevideo, Uruguay, to promote the accession of Latin American countries to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

At present only two Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America, Cuba and Mexico, are members of the PCT.

The Seminar opened with an introduction to the PCT, followed by a

presentation on the European system and the contribution of the PCT to the international patent system.

Representatives of the Spanish Patent Office and EPO offered an examination of the role of the institutional players of the PCT system, the WIPO secretariat, the international searching authorities and the preliminary examination authorities, based on their own experiences.

The Brazilian and Cuban offices also described their experiences in the administration of the PCT sys-

tem, as receiving, designated and elected offices. During this part of the program, presentations were made by speakers from WIPO, the EPO, the OEPM, and the patent offices of Brazil (INPI), and Cuba (OCPI).

Large-scale users of the PCT system from the United States, Switzerland and Spain together with patent attorneys from Mexico and Spain closed the presentations with a discussion of the advantages offered by the PCT system.

There followed a roundtable on the advantages for Latin American

countries of their accession to the PCT, with the participation of the officials invited from the national offices, all of whom viewed the accession of their countries to the PCT, as a way of modernizing their national patent systems.

Photo: Corbis/Dave G. Houser



Montevideo Seaport, Uruguay

More than 120 people attended the seminar, including Government representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

WIPO international designs bulletin now on CD-ROM

Users of the Hague Agreement can now receive the images published in the WIPO International Designs Bulletin on CD-ROM. This is a further step by WIPO towards full automation of its administrative procedures by keeping abreast of technological developments. This policy has resulted in a reduction of 20 per cent in the publication fees paid by applicants to register a design.

The new monthly publication on CD-ROM began on March 31,

includes all bibliographic data and reproductions of designs contained in new deposits registered and will be cumulative. This means that users can search one year's worth of international registrations using just two disks. Each disk, containing about nine month's worth of registrations, will accumulate data from the preceding months until it is "full". In a major development, searches can now be done according to various criteria, such as designated countries, the type of article or the name of depositor.



Introduction of the CD-ROM is a further development in making the Hague system a more cost-effective service for users.

What is the Hague Agreement?

The Hague Agreement offers a unique, simple and cost-effective alternative to individuals seeking to register an industrial design in more than one country. Rather than making separate national deposits in each country where protection is sought, the Hague system offers users the possibility to designate protection in any of the 29 member states. Once an international deposit is made, it is published in the International Designs Bulletin.

New members of WIPO treaties January-March 1999

Industrial property

Paris Convention

The Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property was concluded in 1883 and is one of the pillars of the international intellectual property system as we know it today. It applies to industrial property in the widest sense, including inventions, marks, industrial designs, utility models (a kind of "small patent" provided for by the laws of some countries), trade names (designations under which an industrial or commercial activity is carried on), geographical indications (indications of source and appellations of origin) and the repression of unfair competition.

Ecuador and Papua New Guinea adhered to the Paris Convention bringing the total number of Contracting States to 153.

Madrid Protocol

The Madrid Protocol was concluded in 1989 in order to introduce certain new features into the Madrid system. These features address the difficulties that prevent certain countries from adhering to the Madrid Agreement by rendering the system more flexible and more compatible with the domestic legislation of these countries.

Austria adhered to the Madrid Protocol, bringing the total number of Contracting States to 37.

Lisbon Agreement

The Lisbon Agreement provides for the protection of appellations of origin, that is, the "geographical name of a country, region, or locality, which serves to designate a product originating therein, the quality and characteristics of which are due exclusively or essentially to the geographic environment, including natural and human factors" (Article 2). Such names are registered by the International Bureau of WIPO in Geneva upon the request of the competent authorities of the interested contracting State. The International Bureau communicates the registration to the other Contracting States. Except for a contracting State which declares, within one year, that it cannot ensure the protection of a registered name, all Contracting States must protect the internationally registered name as long as it continues to be protected in the country of origin.

Yugoslavia adhered to the Lisbon Agreement bringing the total number of Contracting States to 19.

Copyright

Berne Convention

The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was concluded in 1886. The Convention sets out and defines minimum standards of protection of the economic and moral rights of authors of literary and artistic works.

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan adhered to the Berne Convention bringing the total number of Contracting States to 136.

Brussels Convention

The Convention provides for the obligation of each contracting State to take adequate measures to prevent the unauthorized distribution on or from its territory of any program-carrying signal transmitted by satellite. The distribution is unauthorized if it has not been authorized by the organization—typically a broadcasting organization—which has decided what the program consists of. The obligation exists in respect of organizations that are nationals of a contracting State. The provisions of this Convention are not applicable, however, where the distribution of signals is made from a direct broadcasting satellite.

Costa Rica adhered to the Brussels Convention bringing the total number of Contracting States to 23.



National news

WIPO Director General takes part in centenary celebrations of the Austrian Patent Office

On April 22, the Director General took part in a ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the Austrian Patent Office, in the presence of the President of the Republic, H.E. Thomas Klestil and the Minister of Economic Affairs, Hannes Farnleitner. Dr. Idris highlighted the achievements of the Austrian Patent Office over the past century, saying the institution has "been at the forefront of international cooperation in the protection of international intellectual property rights."

"More than a century ago, the city of Vienna saw the foundation of some of the vital pillars on which the modern intellectual property system is based," Dr. Idris said. He noted that the decision by the Austrian government in 1873 to offer protection to inventors exhibiting their creations at the Vienna World Exhibition set in motion a process that culminated in the adoption of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, a key intellectual property treaty.

The Director General also pointed out that "Among Austria's many contributions to the enhancement of intellectual property protection, the Austrian Patent Office played a most significant role in the creation of the Vienna Agreement Establishing an International Classification of the Figurative Elements of Marks."

Exhibitions

WIPO helps launch 27th Geneva International Exhibition of Inventions

On April 26, WIPO hosted the press conference to launch the 27th Geneva International Exhibition of Inventions; a showcase for inventors to obtain commercial backing and for the public to see the latest gadgets that will hopefully soon be on the market. For the past twenty years WIPO has participated in this international gathering of inventors that this year promises some 1,000 new inventions from 44 different countries.

WIPO's support of this exhibition is a sign of its commitment to the promotion of innovation at every level. WIPO will also offer two gold medals for the best inventor from a developing country and the most outstanding woman inventor.

Continuing the theme of women inventors, WIPO will also present at the general event "Women Invent" an exhibition portraying inventions by women from around the world. The inventions include



scientific, medical and technological innovations to everyday items like liquid corrector, coffee filters, and baby bouncers.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ELECTRONIC COMMERCE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

organized by the
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Geneva, September 14 to 16, 1999

The theme of the conference

The Conference will examine the impact of electronic commerce and the digital economy on intellectual property and the responses that are being formulated at the national and international level to that impact.

The Conference will be organized into a number of plenary sessions and a series of concurrent workshops. The plenary sessions will deal with the technological and business developments that have led to the emergence of electronic commerce as the major economic transformation to occur at the close of the twentieth century, the question of policy making for this global phenomenon, the principal challenges posed for the intellectual property system and the impact of electronic commerce on developing countries. The concurrent workshops will be devoted to developments in relation to specific sectors, such as publication, music and cinema, as well as to the changes to the delivery of intellectual property services that are being introduced to take advantage of the technologies underlying electronic commerce.

Speakers

Speakers will come from both the public and private sectors and will include Ministers and Chief Executives of major enterprises involved in electronic commerce. The names of the speakers will be posted on the Internet as they are confirmed, at the following address: <http://ecommerce.wipo.int>.

Venue and dates

The Conference will be held at the International Conference Center of Geneva (CICG), 15 rue de Varembé, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland.

It will run from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Participants are invited to register from 8.15 a.m. on the first day of the Conference.

Calendar of meetings

May 4 to 11 (Geneva)

Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (Second Session)

The Committee will continue its work concerning the preparation of a protocol or a separate treaty on audiovisual performances, concerning the protection of databases, and concerning the preparation of a treaty on the protection of the rights of broadcasting organizations.

Invitations: As members, the States members of WIPO and/or of the Berne Union, and the European Community; as observers, other States and certain organizations.

May 31 to June 3 (Geneva)

Permanent Committee on Intellectual Property Cooperation for Development (PCIPD) (First Session)

The Committee, as a result of the merger of the former Permanent Committee for Development Cooperation Related to Industrial Property (PC/IP) and Permanent Committee for Development Cooperation Related to Copyright and Neighboring Rights (PC/CR), will review and evaluate the activities carried out within the framework of the WIPO program for cooperation for development, under the current Program and Budget, and make recommendations on the future orientation of the said program.

Invitations: As members, the States members of WIPO; as observers, certain organizations.

June 7 to 11 (Geneva)

Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (Second Session, Second Part)

The Committee will complete its work with respect to provisions on the protection of well-known marks, and will begin its work with regard to the use of trademarks on the Internet.

Invitations: As members, the States members of WIPO and other delegations that the Committee has admitted as members; as observers, other States and certain organizations.

June 14 and 15 (Geneva)

Standing Committee on Information Technologies (Third Session)

The Committee will discuss and prepare a draft strategic plan for the twenty-first century with a view to providing overall policy directions to all information technology-related activities within the SCIT.

Invitations: As members, the States members of WIPO and other delegations that the Committee has admitted as members; as observers, other States and certain organizations.

June 15 (Geneva)

Orientation Meeting on the Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a New Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Designs

The Secretariat of WIPO will give background information on the Diplomatic Conference (see below).

Invitations: All States and organizations invited to the Diplomatic Conference (see below).

June 16 to July 6 (Geneva)

Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a New Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Deposit of Industrial Designs

The Diplomatic Conference is expected to adopt a new Act of the Hague Agreement as well as Regulations thereunder.

Invitations: As ordinary members, the States members of WIPO; as special members, the African Intellectual Property Organization, the African Regional Industrial Property Organization and the European Community; and, as observers, the States members of the United Nations but not of WIPO as well as certain intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

July 5 to 7 (Geneva)

**Intergovernmental Committee, Rome Convention
(convened jointly with ILO and UNESCO)**

The Intergovernmental Committee will review the status of the international protection of neighboring rights under the Rome Convention.

Invitations: States members of the Intergovernmental Committee and, as observers, other States members of the United Nations and certain organizations.

August 2 and 3 (Geneva)

Roundtable on Intellectual Property and Indigenous Peoples

To facilitate an exchange of views among policymakers and indigenous people concerning more effective application and possible improvements of the intellectual property system to protect traditional knowledge.

Invitations: Member States of WIPO; international and national governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned; representatives of indigenous groups and local communities and members of the public.

September 14 to 16 (CICG Geneva)

Conference on Intellectual Property and Electronic Commerce

The Conference will address the impact of electronic commerce on intellectual property and will include plenary sessions on general developments in electronic commerce and their implications for intellectual property, as well as workshops on the various areas of WIPO's work program associated with electronic commerce, such as Internet domain names, the WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT) and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT), work on a protocol to the WPPT on audiovisual works, the use of trademarks on the Internet and the use of electronic commerce tools in the delivery of intellectual property services.

Invitations: Member States of WIPO, other States members of the United Nations, international/regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and any interested members of the public, against payment of a registration fee.

September 20 to 29 (Geneva)

**Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO
(Thirty-fourth Series of Meetings)**

All Bodies of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO will meet in their ordinary sessions.

Invitations: As members or observers, the States members of WIPO; as observers, other States and certain organizations.

November 8 to 10 (Geneva)

Information Meeting on Biotechnology

To study intellectual property aspects of biotechnology in relation to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the potential role of the industrial property system in facilitating access to and transfer of related technology.

Invitations: Member States of WIPO; international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

November 15 to 19 (Geneva)

Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (Third Session)

The Committee will continue its work based on the results of its second session (May 4 to 11, 1999).

Invitations: As Members, the States members of WIPO and/or of the Berne Union, and the European Community; as observers, other States and certain organizations.

Products

The following new products were issued by WIPO:

Patent Cooperation Treaty and Regulations Under the PCT (as in force from January 1, 1999) English No. 274(E), 18 Swiss francs.

General Information Brochure (Japanese) No. 400(J) free

WIPO publications may be obtained from the Information Products Section:

WIPO

34, chemin des Colombettes

P.O. Box 18

CH-1211 Geneva 20

Switzerland

phone: 41 22 338 91 11

fax: 41 22 740 18 12

e-mail: publications.mail@wipo.int

Orders should indicate: (a) the number or letter code of the publication desired, the language (E for English, F for French etc.), the number of copies; (b) the full address for mailing; (c) the mail mode (surface or air). Prices cover surface mail.

Bank transfers should be made to WIPO account No. 487080-81, at the Swiss Credit Bank, 1211 Geneva 70, Switzerland.

