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REPORT ON THE COMMITTEE ON WIPO STANDARDS (CWS)

Document prepared by the Secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. During the reporting period, the Committee on WIPO Standards (hereinafter referred to as “the Committee”, or “the CWS”) held its eleventh session from December 4 to 8, 2023, chaired by Ms. Åsa Viken (Sweden).
2. The session continued the exchange of views on the development and implementation of WIPO Standards by the intellectual property (IP) community, and views on policies, recommendations and statements of principle relating to IP data, global information system related matters, information services on the global system, data dissemination and documentation, in accordance with the mandate of the Committee described in the organizational matters and [special rules of procedure of the CWS](#), which was adopted at the tenth session of the CWS.
3. Discussions were based on a number of proposals, documents, and presentations submitted by various CWS Task Forces, delegations, and the Secretariat. The exchange of views and experiences on these various submissions contributed to a better understanding of each topic. All the discussion materials and the adopted meeting report of the [eleventh session](#) are available on the WIPO website.
4. The CWS unanimously elected, for its next two consecutive sessions, the twelfth and thirteenth sessions, Mr. Michael Cristiano (Australia) as Chair, whose term began with the closure of the eleventh session.

CWS WORK PROGRAM AND TASKS

5. The CWS reviewed, at the eleventh session, its work program, which included 24 Tasks, and considered proposals for adding three new Tasks. The CWS also noted that 10 new offices from developing countries nominated their experts to participate in several of its Task Forces in 2023. At the eleventh session, the CWS reviewed relevant activities of all Tasks and agreed on the discontinuation of four Tasks, the creation of one Task and the revision to seven Tasks. Thus, 21 Tasks remain in the work program.

6. To determine the prioritization of its Tasks, the CWS reviewed the draft survey questionnaire that was prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the leaders of the CWS Task Forces. Many of the delegations indicated the need for prioritization to ensure that they would be able to continue to contribute effectively. Considering the feedback from several delegations, the Secretariat withdrew the draft questionnaire and proposed to present an improved draft survey questionnaire for consideration at the twelfth session of the Committee.

7. The CWS received progress reports from 12 Task Forces: 3D, Application Programming Interface (API), Blockchain, Design Representation, Digital Transformation, Information Communication Technologies (ICT) Strategy for Standards, Legal Status, Name Standardization, Part 7, Public Access to Patent Information (PAPI), Sequence Listings, and XML4IP.

DEVELOPMENT OF WIPO STANDARDS

8. The CWS considered proposals for two new WIPO Standards, and proposals for the revisions of four existing Standards: ST.26, ST.61, ST.88 and ST.96, to cope with new demands from offices, IP users, and other stakeholders.

9. With regard to the new WIPO standards, the following proposals were presented:

- Recommendations on the data package format for the electronic exchange of priority documents and certified copies; and
- Recommendations on the data cleaning of names.

No new standard was adopted at the eleventh session as further relevant work would be required on the draft Standards. The Committee requested that its Digital Transformation Task Force and Name Standardization Task Force, respectively, continue their work to prepare improved proposals for consideration at its twelfth session. Furthermore, the CWS encouraged offices to start with their planning activities to implement the new standard on the data package format for priority documents, including any necessary information technology (IT) system upgrades.

10. Revisions to the following three WIPO Standards were approved:

- WIPO ST.26 (presentation of nucleotide and amino acid sequence listings using XML): the approved new version 1.7, which includes primarily editorial changes to improve clarity as well as additional examples, will enter into force from July 1, 2024;
- WIPO ST.61 (exchange of trademark legal status data); and
- WIPO ST.88 (electronic representation of industrial designs).

11. With regard to proposal for improvement of copyright orphan work metadata in WIPO Standard ST.96, the CWS agreed that a meeting or seminar be organized so that copyright and technical experts could collaborate on improving the draft proposal. The CWS noted that a

revised proposal for the copyright orphan work metadata would be presented at its twelfth session for consideration.

12. The CWS noted that the version 7.1 of WIPO Standard ST.96 was approved by the XML4IP Task Force and published in April 2023. According to a CWS special arrangement, the XML4IP Task Force is temporarily authorized to approve revisions of WIPO Standard ST.96 to expedite the process.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WIPO STANDARDS BY OFFICES

13. The CWS Members and Observers shared their practices or plans for the implementation of WIPO Standards, in particular, Standards ST.26, ST.27, ST.37, ST.61, ST.87, ST.90, ST.91 and ST.96. The CWS noted collaborative efforts of offices to implement WIPO Standards and the support of the International Bureau by providing trainings and relevant software tools, including WIPO Sequence Suite. The CWS encouraged offices to participate in its Task Forces to ensure that the Standards continue to meet their needs.

POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO IP DATA, INFORMATION SYSTEM AND INFORMATION SERVICES

14. The CWS Members shared their strategies and policies on ICT and digital transformation, on the basis of presentations by several delegations.

15. The CWS reviewed a set of 10 new draft recommendations on ICT and IP administration, with corresponding actions, which was presented by the ICT Strategy Task Force. Considering the feedback from the CWS and its further discussion after the eleventh session, the Task Force prepared a revised set of recommendations. As requested by the CWS, the Secretariat issued a circular inviting offices to comment on the revised draft recommendations. The results of the responses to the circular will be reported at its twelfth session.

16. The CWS noted the progress report on the project of global identifier for natural persons and legal entities, with the next step of the project, which was prepared by the International Bureau. The Committee also noted presentations made by five offices which participated in Phase I of the project and their full support for the Project. The International Bureau reported that the Project aims at providing a single global identifier per natural person or legal entity to identify them consistently, accurately and securely across IP systems and jurisdictions globally. Several delegations expressed their general support and interest, and some others shared foreseeable challenges and potential issues regarding data protection and with existing digital identity, which would be considered in Phase II.

17. The CWS considered two proposals regarding IP data exchange framework and platform, which were presented by the Delegations of Japan and Saudi Arabia. The CWS considered that the two proposals were interlinked and agreed that an improved consolidated proposal, with more concrete and achievable goals, be prepared by the two delegations and presented at its twelfth session.

18. The Committee noted that 23 offices had provided 53 Annual Technical Reports (ATRs) in 2023. Six additional offices participated, and nine additional ATRs were received in 2023 compared to 2022.

TECHNICAL COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

19. Concerning the provision of technical advice and assistance for capacity building to offices in relation to WIPO Standards, the CWS took note of the report (see annexed document CWS/11/10) on activities of the International Bureau undertaken during 2022, as requested by the WIPO General Assembly at its fortieth session held in October 2011. The CWS

also noted that this document would serve as the basis of the relevant report to be presented to the WIPO General Assembly to be held in 2024.

20. The CWS discussed the development of common ICT solutions for use by offices on the basis of solutions presented by the International Bureau and by the Delegation of Saudi Arabia.

21. The CWS noted the cooperative project between the International Bureau and the API Task Force Member Offices in developing a unified API catalog. The CWS further noted that the project aims to build a catalog that would index APIs provided by IP institutions and the pilot would end in the first half of 2024. The CWS also noted the cooperative technical projects shared by the Representative of the Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), which included the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.91, the development of a Eurasian IP register and the establishment of a common patent platform that would utilize various WIPO Standards.

22. The WIPO General Assembly is invited to take note of the "Report on the Committee on WIPO Standards" (document WO/GA/57/8).

[Document CWS/11/10 follows]

Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

Eleventh Session
Geneva, December 4 to 8, 2023

REPORT BY THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU ON THE PROVISION OF TECHNICAL
ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING TO INDUSTRIAL
PROPERTY OFFICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE MANDATE OF THE CWS

Document prepared by the International Bureau

INTRODUCTION

1. This report aims to implement the decision taken by the General Assembly in 2011 relating to the mandate of the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) and to provide regular written reports on the details of activities undertaken during the year 2022, in which the Secretariat or the International Bureau of WIPO “endeavor[ed] to provide technical advice and assistance for capacity building to IP Offices (IPOs) by undertaking projects regarding *dissemination of IP Standards information*” (see paragraph 190 of document WO/GA/40/19). A complete list of such activities is available under the Technical Assistance Database (www.wipo.int/tad).

2. As WIPO Standards are implemented in various systems and WIPO software tools such as the WIPO Sequence Suite and IP Office Business Solutions, the following activities also implicitly cover dissemination of relevant IP Standards information.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ADVICE ON THE USE OF WIPO STANDARDS

3. In 2022, the International Bureau provided technical advice to assist IPOs and users to utilize WIPO Standards through emails and online conferences.

4. The International Bureau received a series of requests for technical assistance and training in 2022, regarding the use of the WIPO Sequence Suite, in languages other than English. In response, the International Bureau hosted training in collaboration with expert speakers provided by IPOs in the remaining nine PCT publication languages. WIPO Sequence Validator training was also provided in Spanish in response to a specific request by the Dominican Republic Intellectual Property Office (ONAPI). Further information on training or webinars on the use of WIPO Standards is available on WIPO website at: <https://www.wipo.int/cws/en/trainings.html>.

5. To further support IPOs and applicants to implement WIPO Standard ST.26, the International Bureau continued to improve WIPO Sequence Suite software, in close collaboration with IPOs. The goal of the development project conducted in the first half of 2022 was to achieve the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) for the users at the "go-live" date of July 1, 2022. This was successfully delivered in mid-June 2022. Further information on the software, including the latest downloads and user manual, are available on the WIPO website at: <https://www.wipo.int/standards/en/sequence/index.html>.

6. The International Bureau also developed a knowledge base for the WIPO Sequence Suite and WIPO Standard ST.26, which contains questions posed by users of WIPO ST.26 and WIPO Sequence Suite, with standard answers provided. Bugs which have been reported for WIPO Sequence are also published on the knowledge base. Finally, the International Bureau also implemented a three-tier support model to manage requests for support and established a mailing list for users of WIPO Sequence through which important information regarding bugs and release dates is communicated.

7. The Secretariat continues to be committed to providing technical assistance and training regarding WIPO Standards on demand, depending on the availability of resources.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE IN IP INSTITUTIONS USING WIPO STANDARDS

8. WIPO's program of IP Office Business Solutions aims to enhance national and regional IPOs' business systems and technical infrastructure in order to help them provide more cost-effective and higher-quality services to their own stakeholders. The assistance provided is aligned with the Development Agenda recommendations aiming at strengthening institutional and technical infrastructure of IPOs and other institutions. The services include technical consultancy; business needs assessment; project scoping and planning; business process analysis; ongoing development and deployment of customized business systems solutions for the administration of IP rights and for the exchange of priority documents and of search and examination results; establishment of IP databases; assistance with digitization of IP records and preparation of data for online publications and electronic data exchange; training and knowledge transfer to staff of IP institutions and support for the systems provided by WIPO. The assistance takes into account WIPO Standards on IP data and information where appropriate. On-site or virtual training, mentoring and regional training workshops account for a significant portion of the activities and are critical in achieving the desired results.

9. At the end of 2021, 91 IPOs from developing countries in all regions were actively using WIPO's IP Office Business Solutions for the administration of their IP rights, in which WIPO Standards are integrated. Fifty-five IPOs were participating in one of the online exchange platforms offered by WIPO (the Centralized Access to Search and Examination and the Digital Access Service). A key focus is to upgrade the service level of IPOs by assisting them to move to online services for filing and for IP information dissemination. More information is available on the website of WIPO's technical assistance program for IPOs at: https://www.wipo.int/global_ip/en/activities/ip_office_business_solutions/

10. Under WIPO's program of Global Databases, the International Bureau ran a project jointly with the European Patent Office (EPO) to assist IPOs in producing searchable full text for their front file patent publication in WIPO ST.36 XML format with embedded TIFF images. The International Bureau configured its OCR solution to each Office's specific requirements such as language, layout and bookmarks. Thirty-five IPOs have received the software and been trained to use it in the last five years, with thirteen of them having managed to launch it in production. As a result, the produced full text documents are included and made searchable in WIPO's PATENTSCOPE. A pilot online training took place with three Offices having been already trained in the past but that had not been able to start the project in production due to shortage of resources. Training to use an advanced user interface remotely with many special cases due to the source data has been a challenge and only one of these three IPOs managed to produce a small number of full text documents that were loaded in PATENTSCOPE. In addition, in 2022, supported by the Japan Fund-in-Trust program, the International Bureau ran a project to transform into full-text XML, 22,000 published patent documents from the Philippines IPO that are now searchable in PATENTSCOPE.

CAPACITY BUILDING OF IP OFFICERS AND EXAMINERS FOR THE UTILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL TOOLS

11. On July 1, 2022, WIPO Standard ST.26 came into force around the world. The successful transition of both patent applicants and IPOs to the use of this new Standard ST.26 was the result of a close collaboration with offices which are members of the CWS Sequence Listings Task Force.

12. Following requests, the International Bureau provided an advanced training seminar organized on November 19, 2021, by WIPO Academy via an online platform on patent search and examination in the fields of pharmaceutical and biotechnology by using the International Patent Classification (IPC) for officials and examiners at the Indian IPO, which was not reported last year in document CWS/10/20. The training program included how to use the relevant WIPO Standards.

13. Following requests, the International Bureau provided virtual training courses and seminars in 2022 on the use of International Classifications for trademarks and industrial designs for officials and examiners of IPOs. In this context, the relevance of related WIPO Standards was explained.

- Training on the Vienna Classification for trademark examiners, Mozambique IPO, on November 14, 2022; and
- Training on the Nice Classification for trademark examiners, Brunei Darussalam IPO, from November 28 to 30, 2022.

BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WIPO STANDARDS

14. In order to increase awareness of WIPO Standards in developing countries and to facilitate the physical participation by more developing countries in the preparation of new or revised WIPO Standard(s), following the decision of the General Assembly in October 2011, the participation at the tenth session of the CWS of eighth developing countries or least developed countries (LDCs) was funded by the International Bureau.

IP DATA EXCHANGE

15. The International Bureau has been working together with many IPOs, particularly in certain groups of developing countries, to promote the exchange of IP data with a view to providing users in those countries with greater access to IP information originating from those IPOs. The exchange of IP data was organized, when possible, in accordance with relevant WIPO Standards. The trademark collections of the following countries have been included in Global Brand Database during the year 2022 in chronological order: Bulgaria, Indonesia, Montenegro; the patent collections of the following countries have been included in PATENTSCOPE during the year 2022: Switzerland. The industrial design collections of Bulgaria, Israel and Philippines have also been added in WIPO's Global Design Database in 2022.

16. The CWS is invited to take note of the 2022 activities of the International Bureau, related to providing technical advice and assistance for capacity building to IPOs, regarding dissemination of IP standards information. This document will serve as a basis of the relevant report to be presented to the WIPO General Assembly to be held in 2024, as requested at its 40th session held in October 2011 (see paragraph 190 of document WO/GA/40/19).

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