

WIPO



PCIPD/1/4

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: May 17, 1999

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

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PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

First Session
Geneva, May 31 to June 4, 1999

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
AND THE WIPO WORLDWIDE ACADEMY

Prepared by the International Bureau

1. The establishment of the WIPO Worldwide Academy (WWA) in March 1998 was a direct response to assisting countries in attaining specialized knowledge and skills so as to enable them to derive benefits from the intellectual property system. Thus, while WIPO has been traditionally engaged in providing assistance and training to its Member States in the use of intellectual property, the WWA was created for the purpose of consolidating these training activities under a central coordinating mechanism and offering a forum for policy advisors and decision-makers in government to debate the importance and implications of intellectual property in the economic and social development of their countries.

2. The overall objective of the WWA is to serve as a center of excellence in providing teaching, training, advisory and research services on intellectual property. This service is in line with the overall main objective of WIPO, which is to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world through cooperation among States and, where appropriate, in collaboration with other organizations. Thus, through its role as a central mechanism for human resources development, the WWA, in addition to its training activities, is in a unique position to provide advisory services to Member States on the courses and training programs offered by WIPO as a whole as well as the cooperating institutions and universities.

3. Under this new institutional scheme, it is also hoped that the WWA will be in a better position to address the ever-increasing training needs of Member States in both introductory-level, as well as specialized courses. Moreover, since not all countries are at the same level of development or awareness about the multi-faceted issues related to intellectual property, it has become apparent that training modules need to be developed in order to suit the specific needs and demands of individual countries.

4. The globalization and liberalization of the economy, coupled with unprecedented developments in communication via the electronic media, has opened up unique opportunities for trade, while posing, at the same time, equally great problems for the protection of intellectual innovations. This challenge has evoked the need to inform and educate especially concerned groups on issues relating to intellectual property, in particular, journalists, judges, law enforcement officials, lawmakers, as well as the public at-large. In order to meet the demands generated by these groups, the WWA is challenged with the need to devise new ways and means of reaching out to an expanded audience, while at the same time continuing to meet the specific needs of regular users of its training programs. Furthermore, in order to ensure that its activities are relevant for, and have the desired impact on, the target audience, special assessment mechanisms have to be instituted.

5. In 1998 alone, 2,582 requests for training were received by the WWA, compared to 1,979 for 1997. While 996 fellowships for various training programs and other study visits were awarded in 1997, the number of such fellowships once available will show a larger increase for 1998 due to expanded programs offered.

6. Thus, it was precisely in an effort to satisfy the rising demand by Member States for human resources development, that in 1998 the WWA created the distance learning program. Distance learning courses are in fact considered to be a cost-effective complement to traditional training methods, as well as a means of increasing the range of training beneficiaries. The added value brought by distance learning courses to WIPO's traditional training activities has been recognized by Member States.

7. The program is geared towards offering courses on intellectual property through a Web-based platform, suitable for using a range of technologies, according to the needs of specific target groups, in different regions, and with a different degree of access to information technology infrastructure.

8. The methodology for distance learning was developed following an initial analysis of training needs among users and beneficiaries of the intellectual property system. This analysis revealed the need to develop a series of courses both at the introductory level, intended for a wide target audience of government officials, intellectual property administrators, practitioners, law students, etc., as well as at a more specialized level, based on actual demand of clearly defined target group

9. Distance learning courses are being designed primarily for delivery via the Internet, using a format which allows for student-teacher interaction, student tests, course monitoring, on-line registration and evaluation systems. CD-ROM and print versions are also envisaged, depending on the assessment of users' demand. Both self-learning and tutor-supported modules are being developed. Efforts are also under way to establish a core faculty to provide tutorial and support services that will enable the successful delivery of courses.

10. From its beginning only in March 1998, the distance learning program has made major strides, starting with the development of a first introductory course on intellectual property, to be launched as a pilot on June 1, 1999. Comprised of six modules, on Patents, Trademarks, Copyright, Related Rights, Industrial Designs and International Registration Systems, the course is based on a design methodology proposed by the Open University, United Kingdom, in close cooperation with WIPO experts and the WWA.

11. About 20-25 participants will enroll in the on-line pilot course for a period of six weeks from June 1, to July 15, 1999. They will be chosen, with the assistance of ARIPO, from within the Organization's Member States, following consultations which had taken place with ARIPO in the early development stages of the project.

12. Following an evaluation of the pilot experience, the course will be consolidated, translated from its original English language into French and Spanish, and offered worldwide, over fixed periods of six weeks, as of October 1999.

13. A calendar of distance learning course offerings will be prepared for the Introductory, as well as other specialized courses scheduled to be delivered as of late 1999 and into the next biennium. These specialized courses, currently under development, will be targeted at specific groups (e.g. examiners, patent and trademark agents, agricultural scientists, etc.) and will focus on specific subjects, such as TRIPS obligations, patent search, electronic commerce, protection of indigenous knowledge and folklore, protection of plant varieties and intellectual property implications in areas of biotechnology research and commercialization.

14. Course content will be elaborated in cooperation with experts, both in the above-mentioned substantive areas of intellectual property, and in the pedagogy of distance learning course design. For this purpose, a number of partnerships have been explored with educational institutions already involved in the teaching of intellectual property and in distance learning. Partnership agreements have already been negotiated with selected universities—the University of South Africa (UNISA), Cornell University, United States of America, Queen Mary and Westfield College of the University of London, United Kingdom. Universities in Latin America (Universidad de los Andes, Venezuela), in the Arab countries

(University of Cairo) and in Asia (University of Bangalore) have been identified, with a view to cooperating with the WWA in the design and development of distance learning courses.

15. An important feature of distance learning is its ability to ensure the sustainability of training programs, especially at the regional level, where the strengthening of training capacities is an important objective of the WWA's human resources development strategy.

16. In this regard, efforts have also been made for the establishment of regional training center facilities in ARIPO and OAPI, where the delivery of distance learning courses will be closely linked to the progressive implementation of the WIPONET project. Provisions have also been made to install videoconferencing systems in those regional training centers.

17. In 1998, the distance learning program also strived to provide an analysis of current intellectual property teaching strategies in faculties of law, business and engineering, through an electronic conference organized for members of the International Association for the Advancement of Teaching and Research of Intellectual Property (ATRIP). Valuable insights have been gathered in the conference final recommendations, with a view to influence future trends in intellectual property teaching, including by means of distance learning.

18. Among its final findings, it was recommended that the content of the program on intellectual property should not only be lecture based, but should also include seminars and in-depth case studies as well. For business and engineering students, the approach should be based on practical aspects of intellectual property rights. In the case of business students, the program should also include intellectual property management (strategies, searches, etc.). It was also recommended that at undergraduate level, industrial property and copyright should be merged. Moreover, the importance of an interdisciplinary approach was emphasized, in order for students to realize the impact of law on technology and business. Students could in addition to that, be trained how to use the intellectual property laws strategically in order to gain benefits for their companies. Web-based training (distance learning) was also viewed as a most viable means for training and it was suggested that the WWA could make an important contribution in this regard. The establishment of regional training centers for this purpose was recommended.

19. The WWA intends to enhance its cooperation with the ATRIP in other ways as well. For example, in July 1999, the WWA will host ATRIP's annual Conference at the WIPO Headquarters. At that Conference, the WWA intends to request ATRIP to prepare a bibliography in various languages on the currently available literature in the field of intellectual property that would assist the WWA in drawing up materials for use in its training programs.

20. The WWA has continued to carry out its training activities through its professional training program whose objectives are to offer introductory and advanced training courses for managers and technical staff of intellectual property offices, and internship programs for on the job-training and supported student research.

21. In connection with the training courses, as mentioned earlier, in 1998 the WWA received 2,582 requests from Member States for conventional and new training activities. These included requests for interregional introductory and advanced specialized courses in various aspects of intellectual property. Specialized and more advanced courses were offered in patent information, search and examination; assessment of inventions and technology management; collective management of copyright and related rights; and trademarks and

appellations of origin. Over 500 participants from some 105 countries benefited from these courses during the period under review. Other requests were responded to and met under the activities carried out by Regional Bureaus.

22. Due to the rising level of activities related to the protection of intellectual property in member countries, the demand for tailor-made programs has also continued to increase steadily. In response to this demand, the WWA expanded the scope of its training programs to include courses and seminars on administrative aspects of intellectual property systems. Thus, interregional general introductory seminars followed by practical training in various institutions were organized in cooperation with regional and national property intellectual offices.

23. With a view to providing a sharper focus and meeting the demand for more specialized training, the WWA organized from March 1998 to March 1999 around 70 interregional training courses and seminars, followed by practical training for specific target groups. These courses addressed not only persons working in intellectual property offices, but also those involved with research work in universities and research and development (R & D) institutions, as well as chambers of commerce and industry. In all, more than 35 cooperating States and organizations (list attached) were involved in carrying out these training courses. These courses included:

(i) interregional specialized training courses on streamlining patent search and examination (in cooperation with the European Patent Office), for around 60 patent examiners; and six courses on the usefulness of technical information contained in patent documents, and on the use of new technologies (Internet, CD-ROMs, On-line Databases...) for some 60 technical staff in charge of the documentation and information services.

(ii) two interregional advanced training courses (English/French and Spanish) on the legal, administrative and economic aspects of industrial property, for management and staff of national and regional intellectual property offices and policy-level staff in ministries in charge of intellectual property matters (in cooperation with the Center for International Industrial Property Studies (CEIPI), and the French National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI), and the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office, respectively).

(iii) two interregional training courses, (English and French) on the legal and administrative aspects of trademarks, and one specialized training course on the management of trademark operations and information services for officials in charge of the trademark and industrial design departments in intellectual property offices (in cooperation with the Benelux Trademark Office and the Canadian Intellectual Property Office, respectively).

24. At the introductory and advanced levels, the WWA's training activities were focussed at some of the following areas in which courses and seminars were organized:

(i) a seminar on copyright and related rights for about 110 officials in charge of copyright administration, followed by practical training at various authors' societies and institutions involved in the collective management of copyrights.

(ii) a worldwide seminar on copyright and related rights for 19 experts and officials in charge of enforcement of intellectual property rights held in March at the International Copyright Institute of the United States Copyright Office in Washington D.C.

(iii) an advanced course on administrative issues in the patent and trademark procedures, for 15 managers and administrators of industrial property offices.

25. Study visits to intellectual property offices were also organized for 161 officials from developing countries. Those visits took place in different intellectual property offices, and were aimed at exchanging information and undertaking on-the-job training.

26. Due to the ever-increasing demand, it is expected that contacts with more cooperating countries and institutions will be made. In this connection, contacts were made, for example, with two universities in Côte d'Ivoire for the possible establishment of cooperation agreements with the WWA's training programs. Furthermore, the WWA requested the cooperation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop training activities with a view to maximizing training opportunities and to develop enhanced training materials.

27. For all the professional courses offered during the reporting period and beyond, the WWA will apply new and effective evaluation techniques, designed to measure the course impact and relevance to the users.

28. In addition, in the future, special efforts will be made to create new programs and modules to better meet the needs of Member States for specialized training and also to find innovative ways and means of delivery, including via video-conferencing, in cooperation with the distance learning program. The new programs and modules will be demand driven and will respond to an identified need by member States or other target groups.

29. In 1998, the WWA also started to organize, for the first time, a summer internship program. The program is open to senior students from all regions of the world following a course of study in the intellectual property field and young professionals working in the area of intellectual property. Involving twelve students and young professionals, the program included lectures delivered by WIPO experts and on-the-job-training in the field of interest of individual interns. Based on the success of this first session, the summer internship program will be expanded in the following years.

30. Another activity, planned to be undertaken by the WWA starting in 1999 is the development, in cooperation with ATRIP, of curriculum for the teaching of intellectual property in Universities. This is in line with the overall mission of promoting human resources development, through the promotion of teaching of intellectual property and the award of long term fellowships for the study of intellectual property. The development of curriculum for the teaching of intellectual property and the award of fellowships is also intended to stimulate scholarship and research in intellectual property.

31. The WWA also instituted a policy-level training program to cater to a new target group of policy makers. It should be observed that the protection, administration and enforcement of intellectual property rights form an important element of the national infrastructure of every country, in order for it to meet its international obligations. These conditions must also be met if a country is to attain its broader national development goals.

32. Due to the above factors, there has been a rising demand from decision-makers, policy advisors and development managers to gain a deeper understanding of the issues related to intellectual property, as well as of the relationship between intellectual property protection and national development, international trade, emerging markets and globalization of the economy.

33. In response to the above demand, the WWA continue to organize, following its establishment in 1998, general Academy and special Academy sessions. The sessions are intended to give an overview and a better appreciation of the role of the intellectual property system in national and international development. General Academy sessions cover a broad range of topics on the protection, administration and enforcement of intellectual property rights. The experience of developing countries in this field is also given particular emphasis. These sessions are supplemented by special Academy sessions for specific target groups. The sessions also deal with special or topical issues, such as the enforcement of intellectual property rights and the implications of the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement. The questions relating to enforcement of intellectual property rights and the TRIPS Agreement are some of the most topical issues of our time, and their importance stems from the widespread violations of protected works occurring as a result of the current fast developing digital technologies.

34. Concerns over the TRIPS Agreement, on the other hand, center on the approaching deadline for compliance by developing countries members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), i.e., January 1, 2000. This fast approaching deadline has put pressure on the countries concerned to obtain a better understanding of the issues involved and adapt their national legislations to the requirements of the Agreement. The importance which Member States, as well as WIPO, attach to the TRIPS Agreement is demonstrated by the inclusion of this topic in most of the WWA's training activities.

35. The main objective of the general Academy sessions for decision-makers, policy advisors, development managers, diplomats and other target groups is to promote a policy debate and a deeper understanding of the practical implications deriving from the use of the intellectual property system. These sessions are also designed to provide a forum for sharing information and exchanging views on the experience of other developing countries in using the intellectual property system as a tool for their progressive development.

36. In June 1998, 15 senior officials from various regions attended the English session of the Academy held. Similarly, a Spanish session of the Academy was held in July 1998 and was attended by 15 senior officials from Latin American countries. The Arab session of the Academy was held in November/December 1998 and was attended by 14 senior officials from Arab speaking countries. An Academy session devoted to Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights and attended by 14 law enforcement officials from various regions was also organized in cooperation with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in Arlington, Virginia, United States of America in November 1998. Participants considered issues dealing with the administration and enforcement of intellectual property rights. They also visited the US Customs Bureau in Baltimore to take a first hand look at the practical experience of the United States in dealing with border measures and other issues related to the enforcement of intellectual property rights. In line with its' policy to utilize the new information technology, the WWA was able to conduct part of its' training via videoconferencing. The participants welcomed the use of this new technique and expressed the hope that it would become a regular training feature of the WWA programs.

37. In all, a total of 65 officials from 49 countries and one intergovernmental organization have thus far participated in the WIPO Academy sessions since March 1999 to December 1999 (see list attached). Due to the rising demand, the WWA intends to broaden the scope to cover a wider range of officials as well as increase the number of participants attending Academy sessions. In 1999, two Academy sessions are planned to take place. It is anticipated that at these sessions more officials from all regions will be able to participate and

share their views and experiences on the value of intellectual property, especially in the field of national development.

38. The WWA has also launched symposia for diplomats based in New York and Geneva to sensitize them to the importance of intellectual property rights as a tool for national development. In 1999, four such symposia are planned, two in New York and two in Geneva. In February, the first such symposia was held in New York which was jointly sponsored with UNITAR and was attended by 38 senior and middle level diplomats. Lectures delivered by WIPO staff covered a wide range of topics of interest to the diplomats. The evaluation conducted by UNITAR found the symposia to be a welcome addition to the WWA's training programs.

39. In addition, the WWA has planned to organize, starting in 1999, special Academy sessions in various regions. The first such session is planned to take place in China in June 1999. These special sessions are intended to bring together decision makers, policy advisers and senior officials from various regions to share their experiences and also to have a first hand look at practical experience of countries in a particular region in the utilization of the intellectual property system as an engine of national development.

40. Another activity of emerging importance undertaken by the WWA is the award and administration of the long-term fellowship program. In response to the emergence of intellectual property as a global issue, WIPO started in 1993 to award fellowships to nationals of developing countries to study for an advanced graduate degree in intellectual property at one of a number of recognized Universities or research institutions. The objective of the fellowship program has recently been oriented towards training persons teaching at universities or other schools of higher learning, or those who intend to teach intellectual property after completing their studies.

41. Since 1993, 53 fellowships have been granted. Another 13 such fellowships are to be offered for the 1999 academic year. In connection with this program, the WWA intends to forge partnerships with various other Universities, in addition to its traditional ones, where sponsored students could undertake their studies.

42. Another major activity that the WWA plans to embark upon in 1999, is the publication of a Yearbook on intellectual property. The Yearbook will solicit scholarly articles from published scholars and persons practicing or working in the field of intellectual property. It is expected that the Yearbook will become a valuable reference work for both scholars and practitioners alike.

43. Since its establishment just over one year ago, the WWA has set a high agenda for meeting the challenge inherent in the objective to serve as central coordinating mechanism for the human resources development and as a forum for managers and policy makers for discussing topical issues on intellectual property.

44. In the medium term and long term plan, the WWA will move rapidly in the development of modules for distance learning, on various subjects of intellectual property, identified in consultation with other sectors of WIPO, as well as cooperating universities and institutions. The WWA will also evaluate the methodology and design of its first distance learning course "Introduction to Intellectual Property", to be launched in June in cooperation with Member States of ARIPO. These lessons will greatly assist the WWA in further developing distance learning activities in the course of the year and beyond.

45. In the distance learning area, cooperation agreements with selected universities in all regions will be also concluded with a view to defining appropriate curricula leading to the award of joint academic qualifications.

46. While all the programs offered by the WWA will be evaluated with a view to measuring their impact, the need for evaluation of the practical training courses by the WWA will be further enhanced. Lessons learnt from a careful evaluation of the programs will, no doubt, ensure that the course to be offered in the future are carefully selected and organized in order to have the desired impact and meet the needs of the recipients.

47. In order to meet the demand for training materials, the WWA has embarked on drawing up relevant background reading material for its various training courses and academy sessions. The WWA hopes by the next biennium to have a wide variety of such materials for all its training courses.

48. Thus, with the ever rising demand for human resource development, the WWA will be expected to play an ever increasing role in offering courses that are relevant and meet the needs of Member States. In order to meet this challenge, it is expected that the WWA will also seek to strengthen its institutional capabilities, based on the experience learned since its inception.

49. In the long term, it is expected that the WWA will not only meet its challenge of providing training courses that are relevant to its Member States, but will also expand the number and raise the level of the courses offered.

50. The Permanent Committee is invited to review and note the contents of this document and to make any comments it may wish.

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