

C. PCT 1378

April 15, 2013

PCT Working Group Electronic Forum

This Circular is addressed to Offices of all States that are invited to attend sessions of the PCT Working Group, to Geneva-based missions and foreign ministries of those States, and all other organizations which are invited to attend sessions of the PCT Working Group (as members or observers).

The purpose of this Circular is to inform you about the establishment of the PCT Working Group Electronic Forum. This new electronic forum is intended to provide a platform for all PCT stakeholders for informal dialogue on PCT related matters, notably to informally propose and discuss ideas for improving the functioning of the PCT system. Further information on the forum can be found through the following link:

<https://www3.wipo.int/confluence/display/pctwg/PCT+Working+Group+Electronic+Forum>.

In order to allow for the participation of all stakeholders in the PCT system, access to the forum will be open for anyone to view. However, to be able to post related material and to make comments on the forum, it will be necessary to log in using a WIPO user account. A link is provided on the forum providing details as to how to set up such a user account.

As the first subject of discussion on the new forum, the Japan Patent Office has proposed the issue of improving the linkage between the international and national phases of the PCT procedure. A page dedicated to this issue has been created on the forum, on which the Japan Patent Office has posted some comments along with a set of guidelines used by it to provide guidance to its examiners on the use of prior art search results and examination results provided by other Offices, including during the national phase before the Japan Patent Office as a designated/elected Office.

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Other designated Offices are invited to post any similar guidelines they may use to provide such guidance on the utilization of international work products in the national phase, to share and discuss their practices on the linkage between the international and national phases, and to make proposals as to how to improve that linkage.

Comments and suggestions on this subject are also welcome from all other interested parties.

To conclude a first round of discussions on this topic, the International Bureau would be grateful for the posting of related material and of comments by June 30, 2013.

Comments are also invited about the PCT Working Group electronic forum itself, preferably by email to the following address: pctbdd@wipo.int.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Pooley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "P".

James Pooley
Deputy Director General