

Report to FICPI Australia AGM on FICPI Activities 23 July 2005

FICPI has been particularly active in the 12 months since our last meeting.

CET

CET and Bureau meetings were held in Paris from 22 to 23 January 2005. I did not attend because they occurred during our summer holidays. The next CET meeting took place in Quebec on 14 June 2005. This preceded the ABC Meeting (American British & Canadian combined groups). The January meeting put the final touches to the programme for the Lisbon Forum. The June meeting settled a programme for the World Congress in 2006 which I will manage. A Bureau meeting took place in Quebec also. A meeting of the Executive Meeting (ExCo) took place in Seoul from 28 April to 5 May. This meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Bureau and a meeting of the CET. A CET meeting also took place at the conclusion of the ExCo. The main purpose of this CET meeting was to prepare for the meeting to take place in Quebec in June.

ExCos

As indicated, a meeting took place in Seoul in April/May this year. Four resolutions were passed, relating to:

- Unpublished prior art
- Prior art effect of documents in any language
- Harmonisation and Genetic resources
- Patent Attorney Services in Europe

USPTO

A delegation of FICPI officials visited the USPTO on 13 June 2005 and held extensive discussions with Jon Dudas, the new Head of the USPTO. The FICPI delegates were Francis Ahner, Danny Huntington, David Bannerman, Jan Modin, Kazuaki Takami, Coleen Morrison, Ray Stewart and myself. We discussed the new Patents Bill that is currently before the US Congress. Dudas was at pains to explain that this is not a USPTO Bill but a Bill raised by individual Congressmen with the support of some others. The USPTO will be making submissions on the Bill. They are generally in favour of the proposals.

Dudas also explained the position with the multi-lateral discussions that followed the discussions in Casablanca. In Casablanca, WIPO was proposing to take back the initiative but still experienced difficulties with the under-developed countries. As a consequence, the trilaterals met in Washington together with Australian and Canadian Patent Offices representatives. The new group will be called the “multi-laterals” and we are fortunate that this includes Australia. The unfortunate aspect of these meetings is that they are confined to officials and do not include representation from NGOs such as FICPI, AIPPI and AIPLA (the users of the patent system).

Future Meetings

A Masters Course in US Drafting Technique (similar to the course conducted in Australia in conjunction with our annual meeting last year) will take place in England from 14 to 17 October 2005. The course will be led by David Carmichael and myself, and will include as tutors:

- His Honour Judge Paul Michel, Chief Judge of Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (USA)
- Mr Dan Collopy, Fantasy Corporation
- Mr Joseph Kolasch, Patent Attorney, Birch Stewart Kolasch & Birch LLP
- Mr Bill G Schuurman, Patent Attorney, Vinson & Elkins LLP
- Mr Raymond Stewart, Patent Attorney, Birch Stewart Kolasch & Birch LLP

A meeting of the Executive Committee will take place in Lisbon from 29 October to 2 November and this will be followed by a Forum on 3 to 5 November. The timing of the Forum allows people to get to the CIPA Congress in London to take place on 8 and 9 November and there is also time for people to get to New Delhi for the APAA meeting that takes place between 12 to 16 November.

The ExCo will be preceded by the usual Bureau and CET meetings. There will also be a short CET meeting at the conclusion of the ExCo and meetings of the CET Groups will take place following the Forum. Members of the CET Groups should make themselves available after the final working session of the Forum on 4 November.

There will be a meeting of the CET in Vienna in January 2006 followed by a meeting of the Bureau on 30 January. The CET meeting will put the final touches to the programme for the World Congress.

Importantly, the World Congress takes place from 27 May to 3 June 2006. As usual, the Congress will be preceded by meetings of the Bureau, the Council and the CET. Of course, there is the usual short ExCos to take place before the Congress commences (for elections) and after it finishes (for resolutions).

Monthly meetings of the Bureau have been taking place, generally on the first Monday of each month. These are arranged by telephone conference and they are very important in ensuring that the administrative work of FICPI continues.

The following ExCo is scheduled for Chile in the first week of December 2006.

It was agreed at the ExCo in Seoul that FICPI should establish a Permanent Secretariat. This will be provided by Alexandra Louage, the secretary of Jean-Jacques Joly. She will work from home as a detachment from Jean-Jacques' firm and she will be in a position to do much of the work currently undertaken by Presidents of Commissions. It is proposed that the MAP and DOC Commissions be abandoned as these are activities the Secretariat can handle.

Newsletters

With greater reliance on the FICPI webpage to convey information and the increasing costs of printed publications, FICPI is producing FICPI Information less frequently. Printed publications are to be produced at least once per year.

I apologise for my inability to attend this meeting in Broome and wish you all very well and a successful meeting.

Malcolm Royal
Convenor of Council