

19 March 2008

To the Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, Mrs. Hilde Skorpen

cc: Mr. Edward Kwakwa, WIPO Legal Counsel
cc: Mrs. Alicia Adamczak (Poland),
Mr. Toufiq Ali (Bangladesh),
Mr. Jorge Amigo (Mexico),
Mr. José Graça Aranha (Brazil),
Mr. Gjorgji Filipov (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia),
Mr. Francis Gurry (Australia),
Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan),
Mr. Enrique A. Manalo (Philippines),
Mr. Mauro Masi (Italy),
Mr. James Otieno Odek (Kenya),
Mr. Philippe Petit (France),
Mr. Bojan Pretnar (Slovenia),
Mr. Boris Simonov (Russian Federation),
Mr. Yoshiyuki Takagi (Japan),
Mr. José Delmer Urbizo (Honduras).

We, the undersigned civil society organizations would like to congratulate the candidates on their candidature for the position of Director-General of WIPO. We look forward to learning more about how the candidates would meet the challenge of mainstreaming development into the organization. This includes ensuring greater and more effective participation of all stakeholders affected by WIPO's capacity building, technical assistance, and norm-setting activities.

We believe that the legitimacy and future of WIPO depends on the organization presenting a strategic vision that is based on inputs from *all* sectors of society, including civil society organizations acting in the public interest.

It is in that spirit that the undersigned organizations invite all candidates, in their personal capacity as a candidate for Director-General of WIPO, to meet for half a day on April 15, 2008 in Geneva, with civil society organizations to discuss their vision for the future of WIPO, including WIPO's relationship with civil society.

The meeting will be held at the Maison des Associations in Geneva, open to all interested civil society organizations (as defined by ECOSOC) and other invited organizations. In the interests of transparency, it will be recorded and made available over the internet.

We hope that candidates for WIPO Director General would follow the precedent set by candidates for the post of WTO Director General (Pascal Lamy of France, Jaya Krishna Cuttaree of Mauritius and Luiz Felipe de Seixas Corrêa of Brazil) who, in January 2005, met with civil society organizations to discuss their vision and goals.

All candidates are asked to respond in writing to all the questions listed below. The responses will be disseminated on relevant listserves as well as during the meeting.

At the meeting, each candidate will be asked to give a 5 minute presentation on one or more of the questions listed below at the discretion of the moderator. The presentation would then be followed by a Q & A session.

For those candidates who are unable to participate in the meeting due to difficulties in travelling to Geneva, we would ask that they send their written views on the following important questions below, to the contact persons identified in this letter.

The questions are as follows:

1. What is your strategic vision for WIPO in addressing the challenges for IP regimes in the 21st century, for example, those elaborated by the European Patent Office in “Scenarios for the Future Compendium”? The compendium is available at <http://www.epo.org/topics/patent-system/scenarios-for-the-future.html>
2. What would be your three top priorities if elected as the Director General?
3. How do you think civil society can be better integrated into WIPO processes, particularly awareness-raising, technical assistance and norm-setting activities? For example, should civil society be given the regular opportunity to make submissions on substantive issues that WIPO would then disseminate to Member States and permanent observers?
4. How can WIPO ensure that its norm-setting processes are based on empirical evidence and an assessment of both negative and positive economic, environmental, social and human rights impacts?
5. How should WIPO mainstream the development agenda into all of its activities, particularly greater emphasis on policy space, use of flexibilities in favor of sustainable development objectives, and access to knowledge, especially for least developed countries?
6. What would be your priority recommendation for implementation in each cluster of the WIPO Development Agenda Recommendations and how would you implement it?
7. What action would you undertake when countries express concern over the negative impact of IPRs in particular areas such as education, libraries, access to medicines, and access to climate change technologies?
8. What benchmarks would you propose for yourself by which civil society could hold you accountable during your term?

We would kindly request the Chair of the Coordination Committee and the WIPO Secretariat to disseminate this letter to all candidates and WIPO Member States.

Kindly also be informed that this invitation will be shared with UN accredited media organizations.

The contact persons for your responses, questions and for coordination of the meeting are:

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We look forward to positive responses from the candidates and to a fruitful engagement on the crucial issues facing WIPO.

Organizations signing:

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Bharatiya Krshak Samat (Indian Farmers Organisation)
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
Edmonds Institute
Essential Action
Free Software Foundation Europe (FSFE)
Instituto Latinoamericano de Servicios Legales
International Environmental Law Research Center (IELRC)
International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)
International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN)
IP Justice
Knowledge Ecology International (KEI)
Library Copyright Alliance
Oxfam International
Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors (PIIPA)
Public Services International (PSI)
SEATINI
Third World Network (TWN)

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