

Summary of the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO Convention) (1967)

The WIPO Convention, the constituent instrument of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), was signed at Stockholm on July 14, 1967, entered into force in 1970 and was amended in 1979. WIPO is an intergovernmental organization that became in 1974 one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system of organizations.

The origins of WIPO go back to 1883 and 1886 when the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, respectively, were concluded. Both Conventions provided for the establishment of an "International Bureau". The two bureaus were united in 1893 and, in 1970, were replaced by the World Intellectual Property Organization, by virtue of the WIPO Convention.

WIPO's two main objectives are **(i)** to promote the protection of intellectual property worldwide; and **(ii)** to ensure administrative cooperation among the intellectual property Unions established by the treaties that WIPO administers.

In order to attain these objectives, WIPO, in addition to performing the administrative tasks of the Unions, undertakes a number of activities, including: **(i)** normative activities, involving the setting of norms and standards for the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights through the conclusion of international treaties; **(ii)** program activities, involving legal and technical assistance to States in the field of intellectual property; **(iii)** international classification and standardization activities, involving cooperation among industrial property offices concerning patent, trademark and industrial design documentation; and **(iv)** registration and filing activities, involving services related to international applications for patents for inventions and for the registration of marks and industrial designs.

Membership in WIPO is open to any State that is a member of any of the Unions and to any other State satisfying one of the following conditions: **(i)** it is a member of the United Nations, any of the specialized agencies brought into relationship with the United Nations, or the International Atomic Energy Agency; **(ii)** it is a party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice; or **(iii)** it has been invited by the General Assembly of WIPO to become a party to the Convention. There are no obligations arising from membership of WIPO concerning other treaties administered by WIPO. Accession to WIPO is effected by means of the deposit with the Director General of WIPO of an instrument of accession to the WIPO Convention.

The WIPO Convention establishes three main organs: the WIPO General Assembly, the WIPO Conference and the WIPO Coordination Committee. The WIPO General Assembly is composed of the Member States of WIPO which are also members of any of the Unions. Its main functions are, *inter alia*, the appointment of the Director General upon nomination by the Coordination Committee, review and approval of the reports of the Director General and the reports and activities of the Coordination Committee, adoption of the biennial budget common to the Unions, and adoption of the financial regulations of the Organization.

The WIPO Conference is composed of the States party to the WIPO Convention. It is, *inter alia*, the competent body for adopting amendments to the Convention. The WIPO Coordination Committee is composed of members elected from among the members of the Executive Committee of the Paris Union and the Executive Committee of the Berne Union. Its main functions are to give advice to the organs of the Unions, the General Assembly, the Conference, and to the Director General, on all administrative and financial matters of interest to these bodies. It also prepares the draft agenda of the General Assembly and the draft agenda of the Conference. Where appropriate, the Coordination Committee nominates a candidate for the post of Director General for appointment by the General Assembly.

The principal sources of income of WIPO's regular budget are the fees paid by the users of the international registration and filing services, and the contributions paid by the governments of Member States. Each State belongs to one of 14 classes, which determines the amount of its contribution. Class I, with the highest contribution, involves the payment of 25 contribution units, whereas Class *Ster*, with the lowest contribution, involves the payment of 1/32 of one contribution unit. By virtue of the unitary contribution system adopted by Member States in 1993, the amount of each State's contribution is the same whether that State is a member only of WIPO, or only of one or more Unions, or of both WIPO and one or more Unions.

The Secretariat of the Organization is called the International Bureau. The executive head of the International Bureau is the Director General who is appointed by the WIPO General Assembly and is assisted by two or more Deputy Directors General.

The headquarters of the Organization are in Geneva, Switzerland. The Organization has Liaison Offices in Brazil (Rio de Janeiro), Japan (Tokyo), Singapore (Singapore) and the United States of America (at the United Nations in New York).

The Organization benefits from the privileges and immunities granted to international organizations and their officials in the fulfillment of its objectives and exercise of its functions, and has concluded a headquarters agreement with the Swiss Confederation to that effect.



WIPO leads the development of a balanced and effective global intellectual property ecosystem to promote innovation and creativity for a better and more sustainable future.

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