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PCT-SAFE PROJECT STATUS REPORT

Document prepared by the International Bureau

INTRODUCTION

1. In September 2001 the Assemblies of Member States of WIPO approved the Program and Budget for 2002-2003 which contained, under Main Program 15, Information Technology, a project plan and budget for the PCT Electronic Filing project for the biennium. This document contains a status report on the Project which has since been renamed Secure Applications Filed Electronically (PCT-SAFE).

STATUS REPORT ON THE PCT-SAFE PROJECT

Establishment of the Project Budget

2. In December 2000, the Director General decided to make PCT electronic filing a separate project within the IT Projects Division. This was in recognition by the International Bureau of the importance of PCT electronic filing to Contracting States, as well as the complexity of the identified requirements. This restructuring was discussed by the Standing Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT) Information Technologies Projects Working Group (ITPWG) during its first session held in September 2001 and the results of this discussion are as follows (see document SCIT/ITPWG/1/13):

“115. In concluding the debate on the PCT Electronic Filing Project, the ITPWG agreed on the scope and budget for the project as contained in document PBC/3/3, and recommended it for approval by the Program and Budget Committee at its next session in September 2001.

116. In agreeing the proposed budget level of 18.3 million Swiss francs, the Working Group decided that the Program and Budget Committee should be advised of the two major risks that may impact the successful implementation of agreed deliverables within budget and timeframes. These being: the costs of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) as per comments made in the report by PriceWaterhouseCoopers; and that the Annex F¹ standard is not yet proven and may require a refinement and changes. The Working Group also recognized the opportunity to leverage existing electronic filing systems which may result in a decrease in the level of funds required.”

3. Following the report of the ITPWG the Program and Budget Committee decided to recommend to the WIPO General Assembly the approval of the Revised Draft Program and Budget for 2002-2003 containing the amended budget for the PCT Electronic Filing Project.

Software Harmonization

4. One of the first tasks of the PCT-SAFE Project has been a review of the United States Patent and Trademark Office's (USPTO) Electronic Filing System (EFS) and the European Patent Office's (EPO) *epoline*® system, with a view to evaluating the possibility of leveraging their technology in the development of the PCT-SAFE product. Upon the completion of this exercise, the International Bureau found that the technology in the client and server components of the *epoline*® system could be reused for the purposes of the PCT-SAFE Project. The EFS was found to be a well built, stable system, but its architecture did not match PCT requirements as well as *epoline*®. Further to the decision to re-use *epoline*® components the International Bureau will make software for the preparation of PCT related data available to the EPO. It is expected that these activities will contribute to the harmonization of electronic filing software in accordance with the submissions by several non-governmental organizations concerning the electronic filing of patent applications (see documents PCT/R/1/23 and PCT/R/1/26²).

Status of Issues Raised by the SCIT ITPWG

5. The following three issues concerning the PCT-SAFE Project were raised at the first session of the ITPWG held in September 2001.

	Issue	Status
(i)	The potential cost risk for the implementation of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI).	The International Bureau will evaluate the possibility of leveraging existing PKI services available under WIPONET.

¹ Annex F refers to Annex F of the PCT Administrative Instructions

² Available on WIPO's Internet site at http://www.wipo.int/pct/en/reform/index_1.htm

(ii)	The potential risk that the Annex F standard is not yet proven and may require a refinement and changes.	Step 1 of the High-Level-Plan aims to validate the Annex F standard. Furthermore, a proposed procedure (involving consultation with Member States) and an associated website supporting proposals for change to the Annex F standard has been established.
(iii)	The opportunity to leverage existing electronic filing systems may result in a decrease in the level of funds required.	The PCT-SAFE client and server software will leverage technology existing in the EPO's <i>epoline@</i> system. However, the level of funds required for PCT-SAFE is not expected to decrease, as this exercise did not decrease the degree of software customization, system specification and verification required for the client and server components.

PCT-SAFE High-Level Plan

6. At the thirtieth session of the Assembly of the PCT Union, held in September 2001, it was decided that, as a result of consultations between the International Bureau and national IP Offices that had already produced electronic filing software, there was a need to revise the high-level project plan for the Electronic Filing Project. The new version of the high-level plan was published, on the WIPO website (http://pcteasy.wipo.int/efiling_standards/PCT-EF-HLPP1.doc) in August 2001 as planned, which formed the definitive basis for PCT-SAFE project implementation.

Project Status

7. The Annex to this document contains a detailed Summary of Progress for the PCT-SAFE Project up to mid-May 2002. Overall, the status of the Project is the following:

- (i) the project is on time in relation to the high-level plan; and
- (ii) the project is on budget.

8. Other notable achievements not covered by the high-level plan include:

- (i) production of a fully operational Alpha version of the software, based on *epoline@* and PCT-EASY;
- (ii) adoption of PCT-SAFE as the name for the PCT Electronic Filing Project and its associated software; and
- (iii) the establishment of a proposed procedure and associated website to support proposals for change to the PCT E-filing standard.

9. *The Assembly of the PCT Union is invited to take note of the progress of the PCT-SAFE Project as contained in this document.*

[Annex follows]

ANNEX

**PROGRESS OF THE PCT-SAFE PROJECT AGAINST MILESTONES PUBLISHED
IN THE HIGH-LEVEL PROJECT PLAN (AUGUST 2001 VERSION)**

1. The status of the PCT-SAFE Project milestones planned for the period up to mid-May 2002 is summarized in the table below using the same sequences and descriptions as published in the PCT Electronic Filing (now PCT-SAFE) Project High Level Project Plan in August 2001.

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete³	Comment
1. Scope definition document made available for comment.	Jan. 2001	100	DONE
2. Core team for E-filing finalized.	July 2001	100	DONE
3. DTD for international application published.	July 2001	100	DONE
4. DTD for power of attorney published.	July 2001	100	DONE
5. USPTO and EPO electronic filing software installed for prototyping, and evaluation for possible customization.	Sept. 2001	100	DONE
6. Contents of Part 7 and Annex F finalized.	Oct. 2001	100	DONE
7. E-filing prototype database for RO/IB available.	Oct. 2001	100	DONE
8. Extended PCT-EASY prototype software ready.	Oct. 2001	100	DONE
9. RO/IB prototype server ready to receive electronically filed international applications.	Oct. 2001	100	DONE
10. RO/IB ready to issue prototype Low-Level digital certificates.	Oct. 2001	100	DONE
11. System requirements document made available for comment.	Nov. 2001	100	DONE
12. Contracts in place for third party developers.	Dec. 2001	50	Finalizing last two contracts out of six

³ Based following: 0% = Not started, 10% = Started, 50% = Ongoing, 100% = Complete

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete³	Comment
13. Detailed plan for PCT electronic filing finalized.	Dec. 2001	100	DONE
14. DTD (image based) for international preliminary examining report published.	Dec. 2001	50	Expected May 2002
15. DTD for PCT pamphlet published.	Dec. 2001	100	DTD has been developed to fully support text
16. DTD (image based) for priority documents published.	Dec. 2001	100	DONE
17. DTD (image based) for translations of international preliminary examining report published.	Dec. 2001	50	Expected May 2002
18. DTD for demand form published.	Dec. 2001	100	DONE
19. DTD for international search report published.	Dec. 2001	50	Expected May 2002
20. Inputs delivered to third party developers (conforming to quality procedures e.g. specification of requirements, use case scenarios, implementation plan).	Dec. 2001	50	Completed with the exception of XML authoring inputs, where finalization of a contract is required
21. Part 7 and Annex F⁴ in force (receiving Offices with technical capacity may accept applications in electronic form).	Dec. 2001	100	Major milestone completed
22. Prototyping completed: Lifecycle Architecture document available.	Dec. 2001	100	DONE
23. Third party developers start.	Dec. 2001	50	Completed with the exception of XML authoring developers, where finalization of a contract is required

⁴ Part 7 and Annex F refer to the PCT Administrative Instructions

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete³	Comment
24. IMPACT electronic filing training for formalities examiners completed.	Jan. 2002	0	Not required until August 2002
25. Participation of pilot applicants finalized.	Jan. 2002	50	Not required until August 2002
26. Scope definition document finalized.	Feb. 2002	100	DONE
27. System requirements document finalized.	Feb. 2002	100	DONE
28. Extended PCT-EASY software ready for beta testing by applicants.	April 2002	100	Testing is being carried out within WIPO
29. IMPACT E-filing database for RO/IB available for beta testing by formalities examiners.	April 2002	100	Testing is being carried out within WIPO
30. RO/IB ready to issue Low-Level digital certificates for beta testing by applicants.	April 2002	100	Testing is being carried out within WIPO
31. RO/IB server ready to receive electronically filed international applications by beta test applicants.	April 2002	100	Testing is being carried out within WIPO

2. The following milestones are planned for completion in the next reporting period covering the dates mid-May 2002 to mid-May 2003. This period includes milestones due for completion in Steps 1 and 2 of the High Level Project Plan.

STEP 1: PCT-SAFE PILOT MILESTONES

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete	Comment
32. Beta system verified, validated and signed-off.	June 2002	10	
33. E-filing database for RO/IB available for pilot testing by formalities examiners.	Sept. 2002	10	
34. Extended PCT-EASY software ready for pilot testing by applicants.	Sept. 2002	10	
35. RO/IB commences receipt of international applications in paper form with parallel electronic submission, prepared using extended PCT-EASY software.	Sept. 2002	10	

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete	Comment
36. RO/IB ready to issue Low-Level digital certificates for pilot testing by applicants.	Sept. 2002	10	
37. RO/IB server ready to receive electronically filed international applications by pilot test applicants.	Sept. 2002	10	
38. Part 7 and Annex F reviewed (in view of step 1 experience) and revised if necessary.	Dec. 2002	0	
39. PCT-EASY enterprise inputs delivered to third party developers.	Dec. 2002	0	
40. Pilot system verified, validated and signed-off.	Dec. 2002	0	
41. Step 1 closed.	Dec. 2002	10	

STEP 2: PCT-SAFE IMPLEMENTATION MILESTONES

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete	Comment
1. Prototype of enterprise version of PCT-EASY available.	Dec. 2002		
2. Beta version of RO server software available to other receiving Offices for deployment into their own environments.	Dec. 2002		
3. Annex F referred to SCIT for development into a WIPO Standard.	Dec. 2002		
4. DTDs for other PCT documents published.	Jan. 2003		
5. RO/IB server ready to receive electronically filed IAs on other physical media including DVD-R, Iomega Zip disk and Imation Superdisk diskette.	Feb. 2003		
6. Extended PCT-EASY ready to electronically file the demand form.	Feb. 2003		
7. Enterprise version of PCT-EASY available for beta testing by applicants.	Feb. 2003		
8. E-filing database for RO/IB integrated with IMPACT RO/IB stage delivery.	Mar. 2003		

Milestone	Estimated date	Percent Complete	Comment
9. RO/IB server integrated with IMPACT RO/IB stage delivery.	Mar. 2003		
10. RO/IB prepared to receive international applications in electronic form (without paper).	Mar. 2003		
11. RO/IB ready to pilot test interoperability of digital certificates.	Mar. 2003		
12. Pilot version of RO server software available to other receiving Offices for deployment into their own environments.	Mar. 2003		
13. Enterprise version of PCT-EASY available for pilot testing by applicants.	May 2003		

[End of Annex and of document]