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**INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW VARIETIES OF PLANTS**  
GENEVA

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL COMMITTEE**

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**Geneva, March 25, 1999**

THE GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK OF WIPO

*Document prepared by the Office of the Union*

1. The Annex to this document contains a brief description prepared by the responsible service of the proposed WIPO Global Information Network ("WIPOnet").
2. The purpose of this document is to draw the existence of the WIPOnet project to the attention of the members of the Administrative and Legal Committee of UPOV in order that the member States can begin to consider how access to WIPOnet might in the future enhance communication between the Offices of UPOV member States and data transfer.

[Annex follows]

## **WIPO GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK**

March 24, 1999

In March, 1998, the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO approved the establishment of a program to implement a Global Information Network for intellectual property offices. The program, known as WIPONET, covers a wide range of services, including network connectivity, intellectual property information services, and training. WIPONET will provide a broad spectrum of features and services to WIPO member States.

The fundamental infrastructure for electronic business transactions will be global network connectivity for the exchange of digital information. WIPONET will provide the basic infrastructure needed for Intellectual Property (IP) offices and the IP community (including member States and users of UPOV) to enter this new arena in a coordinated, well-supported manner. The provision of global IP-related connectivity and network services will accelerate the entry of the IP community into the digital era.

These services include:

- Allowing emerging IP offices to bypass the traditional hardware intensive, high-cost individual intellectual property automation systems and have immediate access to well-maintained, quality data collections through a secure network.
- Improved access to intellectual property information by developing countries, thereby providing a tool for technology transfer and economic development to the benefit of these countries and their inventors, industry, universities, research and development institutions.
- The development of human resources at individual offices, through training programs supported by WIPONET distance learning technologies and systems.
- The general public and intellectual property community will also benefit from WIPONET.

For these communities, WIPONET will provide:

- An enhanced communications, hardware, and security infrastructure for the electronic filing and exchange of intellectual property applications.
- Improved access to intellectual property information maintained within the Intellectual Property Digital Library (IPDL) system.
- Improved awareness of intellectual property and intellectual property protection systems through IP "portals" geared at various levels towards the general public.

The WIPONET Program is clearly of great significance to various activities using electronic data interchange and communications that will be undertaken by the Intellectual Property community. In particular, these activities will greatly enhance the efficiency of IP rights registration and the dissemination of IP information. WIPONET will provide the basic enabling mechanism for these electronic transactions and activities within the IP community, in an expeditious, efficient, and standardized manner.

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