





and will likely propose a Diplomatic Conference in the near future. It will also deal with other timely and vital Industrial Property issues, such as: central recording of changes in patents and patent applications, and the disclosure of technical information on the Internet and its impact on patentability, so as to ascertain the feasibility of harmonizing rules concerning patent-law implications of Internet disclosure of patent information, and whether such exposure creates any impact on patentability.

One of the most important initiatives currently in progress at WIPO is the creation and deployment of the WIPO Global Information Network. This Network will address the needs of Member States with fast and cost-effective communications, materials and services related to intellectual property rights, administration and enforcement, worldwide. It will be designed to connect approximately 300 intellectual property offices and administrations globally to WIPO, and to each other. The availability and convenience of information, Intellectual Property Digital Libraries, distance learning opportunities, WIPO services, and other benefits will be of particular importance to developing countries, countries in transition, and least-developed countries, as well as to all governmental personnel and other professionals involved in intellectual property. Through this project, WIPO will provide intellectual property offices with technical assistance in furtherance of the development of their information infrastructure and office automation, thereby, among other benefits, facilitating the streamlining and modernization of the administrative work connected with implementation of the TRIPS Agreement.

Preparations are being made for a Diplomatic Conference on the Hague Agreement for the International Deposit of Industrial Designs. Such a Conference would most likely take place in 1999, and preparations focus on the potential adoption of a new act to expand its geographical scope, and also to make the Hague system simpler, cheaper to use and generally more responsive to creators of designs and industry in general.

The WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications will, in July 1998, examine aspects of well-known marks and trademark licences,

under multilateral environmental agreements; and, the need for and possible nature and scope of new or adapted forms of protection for "expressions of folklore".

The WIPO Worldwide Academy (WWA) has been created and has given an entirely new significance in these current times in which human resource development is of paramount importance. The WWA will be WIPO's central mechanism for training and developmental activities relative to government managers, policy advisors, administrators and others needing or deserving intellectual property training. A multi-faceted approach will be used in the WWA, which includes, among other elements, interregional training courses, fellowships and internships; different fora focusing on different aspects of intellectual property; conferences; and a distance learning centre. WIPO believes that the enhanced benefits and expanded services produced through the WIPO Worldwide Academy will be a crucial