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CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

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UPOV POLICY FOR FINANCING SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS

Document prepared by the Office of the Union

1. The Consultative Committee, at its eighty-third session, held in Geneva on March 30, 2012, requested the Office of the Union to prepare a document on the UPOV policy for financing speakers and participants, for consideration at its eighty-fourth session, to be held in Geneva, on October 31, 2012. This document explains the background to this matter and considers particular aspects where UPOV has a different practice to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) policy, as follows:

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BACKGROUND

2. In implementing the Program and Budget, the Office of the Union organizes a number of activities where funding is provided for speakers and/or participants. This is reflected in the Program and Budget as "Third Party Travel" as follows (see document C/45/4 Rev.2 "Program and Budget for the 2012-2013 Biennium", Annex III "Definitions of Budget Headings"):

"Third Party Travel

"Travel expenses and daily subsistence allowances for government officials, participants and lecturers attending UPOV-sponsored meetings."

3. For administrative efficiency, UPOV follows the WIPO policies and procedures for third party travel as far as possible. However, there are certain differences between the WIPO policy and UPOV's current practice. At its eighty-second session, held in Geneva on October 19 and on the morning of October 20, 2011, the Consultative Committee considered document CC/82/7, which explained that WIPO was in the process of reviewing its policy for financing speakers and participants. On that basis, the Consultative Committee requested the Office of the Union to prepare a document on the policy for financing speakers and participants, for consideration at its eighty-third session (see document CC/82/15 "Report", paragraph 47).

POLICY FOR FINANCING THIRD PARTY SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS

4. The WIPO policy for financing third party expenses is followed by UPOV, except with regard to certain aspects of air travel, daily subsistence allowance (DSA), funding of third parties from the private sector and honoraria, as follows:

Air Travel

5. The WIPO policy for air travel for third party speakers, lecturers, experts and participants to the Assemblies of Member States and Standing Committee meetings is as follows:

- (a) For travel lasting fewer than nine hours, travelers shall travel in economy;
- (b) For travel lasting more than nine hours, travelers will be authorized to travel in business class.

Any exceptions to the above shall be approved by the Director General of WIPO. Participants in meetings other than those mentioned above, held in Geneva or abroad, fellowships and interviewees, are only entitled to economy class.

6. UPOV currently offers to cover the cost of travel in economy class for all flights for third party travelers. There are no substantial problems in operating a different practice for UPOV in this respect and it is planned that no change be made to the current UPOV practice.

Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA)

7. The DSA is deemed by WIPO to comprise its total contribution towards such expenses as meals, lodging, gratuities and payment for miscellaneous services.

8. The WIPO policy includes a provision that, when meals and/or lodging are provided free of charge by official sources, the standard rate of the travel subsistence allowance shall be reduced by 30 percent if meals are provided, by 50 percent if lodging is provided and by 80 percent if both meals and lodging are provided.

9. In general, UPOV follows the WIPO DSA calculation policy. However, in cases where UPOV arranges to pay for accommodation directly, UPOV applies a reduced DSA that is different from the DSA rate applied by WIPO. There are no substantial problems in operating a different practice for UPOV in this respect and it is planned that no change be made to the current UPOV practice.

Third Parties from the Private Sector

10. The WIPO policy on travel and related expenses by third parties has no categories within "third party", i.e. the same policy is applied to all persons.

11. The UPOV practice has been, in general, not to cover travel and related expenses for persons from the private sector. This practice has led to some difficulties of interpretation with regard to "private sector", for example with regard to farmers, non-profit organizations representing private sector interests etc.. There have also been some difficulties in obtaining speakers from the private sector, particularly from small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to contribute to activities in regions or fora where they have no existing activities. On that basis, it is planned to request that relevant third parties from the private sector be encouraged to participate at their own cost but, as considered appropriate by the Office of the Union, UPOV would provide travel and related expenses.

Honoraria

12. WIPO defines honoraria as monies to be paid to individuals invited to give one or more presentations at WIPO-sponsored or co-sponsored events and clarifies that the payment of honoraria is intended as a token of appreciation for accepting the speaking engagement; honoraria are not intended to cover the cost of services provided by the speaker.

13. UPOV does not pay honoraria. There are no substantial problems in operating a different practice for UPOV in this respect and it is planned that no change be made to the current UPOV practice.

14. The Consultative Committee is invited to note that UPOV plans to follow the WIPO policy for financing third party expenses, except that UPOV would:

(a) continue to cover the cost of air travel in economy class only;

(b) continue to pay a reduced DSA that is different from the DSA rate applied by WIPO, where UPOV arranges to pay for accommodation directly;

(c) request that relevant third parties from the private sector be encouraged to participate at their own cost but, as considered appropriate by the Office of the Union, provide travel and related expenses; and

(d) continue not to pay honoraria.

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