



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/CECI/IP/CONF.1/2007/1
30 May 2007

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

Team of Specialists on Intellectual Property

International Conference on “Intellectual Property Rights
Protection and Transforming Research and Development
Outputs into Intangible Assets in Economies in Transition”

Geneva, 25-26 July 2007

INFORMATION NOTICE

Note by the Secretariat *

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with a decision taken by the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE/CECI/2006/6 Annex II, Thematic area D) adopted at its first session held in Geneva on the 27-28 September 2006, the International Conference on “IPR Protection and Transforming R&D Outputs into Intangible Assets in Economies in Transition” will be organised at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 25-26 July 2007 in order to facilitate the exchange of experience and the discussion of good policies and practices on IPR commercialization, protection and enforcement.

2. This Information Notice gives details regarding the objectives, organization and participation in this Conference.

* This document was submitted late to take into account the results of the discussions at the Meeting of Experts on Financing for Innovative Development, Geneva, 3-4 May 2007.

3. Intellectual property refers to creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images, and designs used in commerce. It is divided into two categories: Industrial property, which includes inventions (patents), trademarks, industrial designs, and geographic indications of source; and Copyright, which includes literary and artistic works and architectural designs. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and those of broadcasters in their radio and television programmes. Governments foster intellectual property rights because a well-designed intellectual property regime increases national wealth and benefits consumers by stimulating research and investment into new technologies and innovative products, and by enabling the transfer of technology, including between countries at different stages of economic development. Innovative industries are key drivers of economic growth and are key providers of well-paying jobs, thus contributing to the achievement of broad development objectives.

II. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

4. The Programme of the Conference builds on the work accomplished in the area of intellectual property rights by a number of international organizations, in particular by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Patent Office, the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It also builds on the work done by the former UNECE Advisory Group on the Protection and Implementation of Intellectual Property Rights for Investment, and by private sector associations. UNECE endeavours to facilitate the dissemination of information on and implementation of the outcomes of this work, in particular in the transition economies of the UNECE region. In the same way, it tries to make available to the Governments of the UNECE member States the information on good practices and expertise accumulated in the area of intellectual property rights by its 56 member States.

5. The Conference will discuss good practices and policies on intellectual property commercialization, protection and enforcement in the UNECE region with a special focus on countries with economies in transition. It will address:

- (a) The role of IPRs in the transfer of technology from research institutions to the business community;
- (b) IP commercialization strategies of SMEs and entrepreneurs;
- (c) Issues in IP auditing, accounting and valuation;
- (d) Coordination of IPR enforcement at the policy and the institutional level; and
- (e) The interplay of civil, administrative and criminal remedies in IPR enforcement.

6. The importance of these issues varies among countries and there are no universally applicable solutions. At the same time, the exchange of opinions among governments, the business community, as well as independent views from academic experts are expected to facilitate the identification of good practices of dealing with these issues.

7. The discussion at the Conference is expected to contribute to drawing up recommendations to government bodies in charge of intellectual property policies and regulations, and to advance the agenda of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration. At the same time, the Conference will contribute to strengthening human and institutional capacity in the area

of intellectual property commercialization, protection and enforcement, in particular in countries with economies in transition. The outcome of the Conference will feed into future UNECE capacity-building activities, and facilitate access of stakeholders to the relevant expertise and information on good practices, including those practiced in transition countries themselves.

III. VENUE

8. The Conference will take place in Conference Room V, Palais des Nations, Geneva (Switzerland) on 25 and 26 July 2007 at the following address: 8-14, Avenue de la Paix.

IV. ORGANIZATION

9. The registration of participants will start at 8.30 a.m. on 25 July. The Conference will start on the same day at 10.00 and finish on 26 July at 18.00.

10. The Conference will be organised into several working sessions. The sessions' moderators will briefly introduce their topics; this will be followed by presentations and a general exchange of views. The moderators will conclude by summing up the discussion.

V. PARTICIPATION

11. Participation is open to interested parties from UNECE member countries and other member States of the United Nations, representatives of United Nations specialised agencies, other international and non-governmental organizations interested in the activities of UNECE. Broad participation of government officials, business community and academia is expected.

VI. CONFERENCE FEE AND OTHER EXPENSES

12. No conference fee is charged for the participation in the Conference. Travel and accommodation expenses are borne by the participants.

VII. PASSPORTS AND VISAS

13. All participants should be in possession of a valid passport, with an entry visa (if required), which can be obtained from the diplomatic representation of Switzerland accredited to their country of residence. It is advisable to make such visa applications well in advance of the date required. The UNECE secretariat will provide letters to the Swiss authorities (i.e. consulates) confirming the Conference attendance for those participants who need such a letter and request it directly from the UNECE Secretariat.

VIII. PRELIMINARY REGISTRATION

14. Interested parties are invited to fill out the Registration Form and return it by 10 July 2007 at the latest to the following address:

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Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Fax: (+41 22) 917 01 78
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IX. DOCUMENTATION

15. The UNECE Secretariat will prepare as background documents a draft Comparative Report on the Commercialization of Intellectual Assets and a note on Good Practices and Policies in Intellectual Property Rights Commercialization, Protection and Enforcement, which will be circulated to participants in advance.

16. The UNECE Secretariat will prepare a Provisional Programme, which will be circulated to participants in advance.

17. UNECE member States, members of the UNECE Team of Specialists on Intellectual Property, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and companies are invited to prepare papers relating to topics addressed in the Conference as indicated in item 5 of the Information Notice.

18. By 30 June 2007, the UNECE Secretariat should receive papers for presentation in one of the UNECE working languages (English, French or Russian). The UNECE Secretariat encourages the submission of papers in electronic format, preferably by e-mail. These will be distributed to registered participants by e-mail approximately two weeks before the Conference. A restricted number of paper copies also will be available in the meeting room during the Conference.

X. INTERPRETATION AND VISUAL AIDS

19. Simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Russian, facilities for projecting slides, as well as computer facilities for computer-aided presentations (e.g. Power Point) will be provided.

XI. TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS

20. Participants are requested to make their own hotel and travel arrangements to and from Geneva.

XII. FURTHER INFORMATION

21. Further information on the International Conference can be obtained from:

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