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Subject: Draft agreement on a Unified Patent Court and draft Statute  
- Revised Presidency text

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Delegations will find in the Annex a revised Presidency compromise proposal concerning the draft agreement, focusing on the changes necessary to bring it in line with the Union *acquis*, in view of the Friends of the Presidency Group on 21 October 2011.

Changes in relation to the previous version are marked. The provisions in italics marked with square brackets are still being developed as their final version depends either on the drafting technique to be adopted or on the content of the planned Commission proposal on changes to the *acquis* itself.

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**DRAFT AGREEMENT ON A UNIFIED PATENT COURT**

THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM,

[enumeration of other Member States]

hereinafter referred to as the CONTRACTING MEMBER STATES,

- (1) CONSIDERING that co-operation amongst the Member States of the European Union in the field of patents contributes significantly to the integration process in Europe, in particular to the establishment of an internal market within the European Union characterized by the free movement of goods and services and the creation of a system ensuring that competition in the internal market is not distorted,
- (2) CONSIDERING that the fragmented market for patents and the significant variations between national court systems are detrimental for innovation, in particular for small and medium sized enterprises which have difficulties to enforce their patents and to defend themselves against unfounded claims and patents which should be revoked,
- (3) CONSIDERING that the European Patent Convention (“EPC”) which has been ratified by all Member States of the European Union provides for a single procedure for granting European patents by the European Patent Office (“EPO”),

- (4) CONSIDERING that by virtue of Regulation xxx ... implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection, proprietors of the patent can request unitary effect of European patents so as to obtain unitary patent protection in the Member States participating in the enhanced cooperation,
- (5) WISHING to improve the enforcement of patents and the defence against unfounded claims and patents which should be revoked and to enhance legal certainty by setting up a Unified Patent Court for litigation related to the infringement and validity of patents,
- (6) CONSIDERING that the Unified Patent Court shall be designed to ensure expeditious and high quality decisions, striking a fair balance between the interests of right holders and other parties and taking into account the need for proportionality and flexibility,
- (7) CONSIDERING that the Unified Patent Court will be a court common to the Contracting Member States and thus part of their judicial systems ,with exclusive competence in respect of European patents with unitary effect and European patents designating one or more Contracting Member States,
- (8) CONSIDERING that the Court of Justice of the European Union shall ensure the uniformity of the Union legal order and the primacy of European Union law,
- (9) RECALLING the obligations of the Contracting Member States under the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), including the obligation of sincere cooperation as set out in Article 4(3) TEU and the obligation to ensure through the Court the full application and respect for Union law in their respective territories and the judicial protection of an individual's right under that law,

- (10) CONSIDERING that, as any national court, the Unified Patent Court must respect and apply Union law and in collaboration with the Court of Justice of the European Union as guardian of the Union law ensure the correct application and uniform interpretation of Union law; the Unified Patent Court must in particular cooperate with the Court of Justice of the European Union through the proper interpretation of Union law by relying on the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union and through requesting preliminary rulings in accordance with Article 267 of the TFEU,
- (11) CONSIDERING that the Contracting Member States should, in line with the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union on non-contractual liability, be liable for damages caused by infringements of Union law by the Unified Patent Court, including omissions to request preliminary rulings from the Court of Justice of the European Union,
- (12) CONSIDERING that infringements of Union law by the Unified Patent Court, including the omission to request preliminary rulings from the Court of Justice of the European Union, are directly attributable to the Contracting Member States and therefore, in case of an infringement of Union law by the Unified Patent Court, infringement proceedings shall be available on the basis of Article 258, 259 and 260 of the TFEU against any Contracting Member State to ensure the respect of the primacy and proper application of Union law,
- (13) RECALLING the primacy of Union law, including the TEU, the TFEU, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the general principles of Union law as developed by the Court of Justice of the European Union, and in particular the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal and a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal, the jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union and secondary Union law,

- (14) CONSIDERING that the present Agreement shall be open to accession by any Member State of the European Union; Member States which have decided not to participate in the enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection may participate in the agreement in respect of European patents valid on their respective territory,
- (15) CONSIDERING that this Agreement shall enter into force on [*date*] or, if earlier, on the first day of the [...] month of the [...th] deposit, provided that the Contracting Member States who will have deposited their instruments of ratification include the three States in which the highest number of European patents was in force in the year preceding the year in which the Diplomatic Conference for the signature of the Agreement takes place, in the territories of those Contracting Member States who deposited the instrument of ratification.

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

## **PART I – GENERAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS**

### **CHAPTER I – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 1**

#### **Unified Patent Court**

A Unified Patent Court for the settlement of litigation related to European patents and European patents with unitary effect is hereby established.

The Unified Patent Court shall be a court common to the Contracting Member States and thus subject to the same obligations under Union law as any national court of the Contracting Member States.

#### **Article 2**

#### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this Agreement:

- (1) "Court" means the Unified Patent Court created by this agreement.
- (2) "Member State" means a Member State of the European Union.
- (3) "Contracting Member State" means any Member State party to this Agreement.
- (4) "EPC" means the Convention on the Grant of European Patents of 5 October 1973, as amended.
- (5) "European Patent" means a patent without unitary effect granted under the provisions of the EPC insofar as it is granted for one or more Contracting Member States.

- (6) "European Patent with unitary effect" means a patent granted under the provisions of the EPC which benefits from unitary effect in the territories of the participating Member States by virtue of Regulation ### implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection.
- (7) "Patent" means a European patent and a European patent with unitary effect.
- (8) "EPO" means the organ carrying out the granting of European patents as established by Article 4, paragraph 2(a), of the EPC and the registering of unitary effect in accordance with Article 12 (1) (b) of Regulation ### implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection.
- (9) "Supplementary protection certificate" means a supplementary protection certificate granted under Regulation (EC) No 469/2009<sup>1</sup> or under Regulation (EC) No 1610/96<sup>2</sup>.
- (10) "Statute" means the Statute of the Court which shall be an integral part of this Agreement.
- (11) "Rules of Procedure" means the Rules of Procedure of the Court as established in accordance with Article 22.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 469/2009 of 6 May 2009 concerning the supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products, OJ L 152, 16.6.2009, p.1.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1610/96 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 concerning the creation of a supplementary certificate for plant protection products, OJ L 198, 8.8.1996, p.30.

**Article 3**  
**Scope of application**

This Agreement shall apply to any:

- (a) European patent with unitary effect;
- (b) supplementary protection certificate issued for a patent;
- (c) European patent which has not yet lapsed at the date of entry into force of this agreement according to Article 59 or was granted after that date, without prejudice to Article 58; and
- (d) application for a patent which is pending at the date of entry into force of this agreement according to Article 59 or which is filed after that date.

**Article 3a**  
**Legal status**

- (1) The Court shall have legal personality in each Contracting Member State and shall enjoy the most extensive legal capacity accorded to legal persons under the national law of that State.
- (2) *Deleted.*
- (3) The Court shall be represented by the President of the Court of Appeal who shall be elected in accordance with the Statute.

### **Article 3b**

#### **Liability**

- (1) The contractual liability of the Court shall be governed by the law applicable to the contract in question.
- (2) The non-contractual liability of the Court in respect of any damage caused by it or its staff in the performance of their duties shall be governed by the law of the Contracting Member State in which the seat of the division of the Court of First Instance, Court of Appeal, Registry and any sub-registry of the Court concerned by the liability is situated. This provision is without prejudice to the application of Article 14c.

## **CHAPTER II – INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 4**

#### **The Court**

- (1) The Court shall comprise a Court of First Instance, a Court of Appeal and a Registry.
- (2) The Court shall perform the functions assigned to it by this Agreement.

**Article 5**  
**The Court of First Instance**

- (1) The Court of First Instance shall comprise a central division as well as local and regional divisions.
- (1a) The central division shall have its seat in [...].
- (2) A local division shall be set up in a Contracting Member State upon its request in accordance with the Statute.
- (3) An additional local division shall be set up in a Contracting Member State upon its request when more than one hundred patent cases per calendar year have been commenced in that Contracting Member State during three successive years prior to or subsequent to the date of entry into force according to Article 59. The number of divisions in one Contracting Member State shall not exceed three.
- (4) A Contracting Member State hosting a local division shall designate its seat and provide the facilities necessary for that purpose.
- (5) A regional division shall be set up for two or more Contracting Member States, upon their request in accordance with the Statute. Such Contracting Member States shall designate the seat of the division concerned. The regional division may hear cases in multiple locations.

## Article 6

### Composition of the panels of the Court of First Instance

- (1) Any panel of the Court of First Instance shall have a multinational composition. Without prejudice to paragraph 5 of this Article and to Article 15a(2), it shall sit in a composition of three judges.
- (2) Any panel of a local division shall sit in a composition of two legally qualified judges, who shall be nationals of the Contracting Member State hosting the local division concerned, and one legally qualified judge of a different nationality from the Pool of Judges referred to in Article 13.
- (2a) Any panel of a local division in a Contracting Member State where, during a period of three successive years prior or subsequent to the entry into force of this Agreement, less than fifty cases per year have been commenced, shall sit in a composition of one legally qualified judge who is a national of the Contracting Member State hosting the local division concerned and two legally qualified judges who are not nationals of the Contracting Member State concerned and are allocated from the Pool of Judges in accordance with Article 13(3) on a case by case basis.
- (3) In a Contracting Member State where during a period of three successive years, prior or subsequent to the entry into force of this Agreement, more than fifty patent cases per calendar year have been commenced, the third judge referred to in paragraph 2 shall serve at the local division on a long term basis, where this is necessary for the efficient functioning of divisions with a high work load.

- (4) Any panel of a regional division shall sit in a composition of two permanent legally qualified judges chosen from a regional list of judges, who shall be nationals of the Contracting Member States concerned, and one legally qualified judge from the Pool of Judges who shall not be a national of the Contracting Member States concerned.
- (5) Without prejudice to paragraphs 2 and 4, any panel of a local or regional division may request, where appropriate, and after having heard the parties, the President of the Court of First Instance to allocate from the Pool of Judges a technically qualified judge with qualifications and experience in the field of technology concerned. In cases where such a technically qualified judge is allocated, no further technically qualified judge has to be allocated under Article 15a(2)(a).
- (6) Any panel of the central division shall sit in a composition of two legally qualified judges and one technically qualified judge allocated from the Pool of Judges with qualifications and experience in the field of technology concerned.
- (7) Without prejudice to paragraphs 1 to 6 and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, parties may agree to have their case heard by a single judge.
- (8) Any panel of the Court of First Instance shall be chaired by a legally qualified judge.

**Article 7**  
**The Court of Appeal**

- (1) Any panel of the Court of Appeal shall sit in a multinational composition of five judges. It shall sit in a composition of three legally qualified judges and two technically qualified judges with qualifications and experience in the field of technology concerned.
- (2) Any panel of the Court of Appeal shall be chaired by a legally qualified judge.
- (3) The panels of the Court of Appeal shall be set up in accordance with the Statute.
- (4) The Court of Appeal shall have its seat in [...].

**Article 8**  
**The Registry**

- (1) A Registry shall be set up at the seat of the Court of Appeal. It shall be managed by the Registrar and perform the functions assigned to it in accordance with the Statute. Subject to conditions set out in this Agreement and the Rules of Procedure, the Registry shall be public.
- (2) Sub-registries shall be set up at all divisions of the Court of First Instance.
- (3) The Registry shall keep records of all cases before the Court. Upon filing, the sub-registry concerned shall notify every case to the Registry.
- (4) The Court shall appoint the Registrar in accordance with Article 17 of the Statute and lay down the rules governing his service.

**Article 9**  
**Committees**

An Administrative Committee, a Budget Committee and an Advisory Committee shall be set up in order to ensure the effective implementation and operation of this Agreement. They shall in particular exercise the duties foreseen by this Agreement and the Statute.

**CHAPTER III – JUDGES OF THE COURT**

**Article 10**  
**Eligibility criteria**

- (1) The Court shall comprise both legally qualified judges and technically qualified judges. Judges shall ensure the highest standards of competence and proven experience in the field of patent litigation.
- (2) Legally qualified judges shall possess the qualifications required for appointment to judicial offices in a Contracting Member State.
- (3) Technically qualified judges shall have a university degree and proven expertise in a field of technology. They shall also have proven knowledge of civil law and procedure relevant in patent litigation.

**Article 11**  
**Appointment procedure**

- (1) The Advisory Committee shall establish a list of the most suitable candidates to be appointed as judges of the Court, in accordance with the Statute.
- (2) On the basis of this list, the Administrative Committee shall appoint the judges of the Court acting by common accord.
- (3) The implementing provisions for the appointment shall be provided for in the Statute.

**Article 12**  
**Judicial independence and impartiality**

- (1) The Court, its judges and the Registrar shall enjoy judicial independence. In the performance of their duties, the judges shall not be bound by any instructions.
- (2) Legally qualified judges and technically qualified judges who are full-time judges of the Court may not engage in any occupation, whether gainful or not, unless otherwise provided for in this Article or where an exception is granted by the Administrative Committee.
- (3) The exercise of the office of judges shall not exclude the exercise of other judicial functions at the national level.

- (4) The exercise of the office of technically qualified judges who are part-time judges of the Court pursuant to Article 13(2) shall not exclude the exercise of other functions provided there is no conflict of interest.
- (5) In case of a conflict of interest, a judge shall not take part in proceedings. Rules governing conflicts of interest shall be provided for in the Statute.

**Article 13**  
**Pool of Judges**

- (1) A Pool of Judges shall be set up in accordance with the Statute.
- (2) The Pool of Judges shall be composed of all legally qualified judges and technically qualified judges from the Court of First Instance who are full-time judges of the Court. Moreover, it shall comprise technically qualified judges who are part-time judges of the Court. It shall be ensured that the Pool of Judges includes at least one technically qualified judge with qualifications and experience per field of technology.
- (3) Where provided in this Agreement or the Statute, the judges from the Pool of Judges shall be allocated to the division concerned by the President of the Court of First Instance.  
The allocation of judges shall be based on their legal or technical expertise, linguistic skills and relevant experience. The allocation of judges shall guarantee the same high quality of work and the same high level of legal and technical expertise in all panels of the Court of First Instance.

**Article 14**  
**Training framework**

- (1) A training framework for judges shall be set up in accordance with the Statute in order to improve and increase available patent litigation expertise and to ensure a broad geographic distribution of such specific knowledge and experience.
  
- (2) The training framework shall in particular focus on:
  - (a) internships in national patent courts or divisions of the Court of First Instance hearing a substantial number of patent litigation cases;
  
  - (b) improvement of language skills;
  
  - (c) technical aspects of patent law;
  
  - (d) the dissemination of knowledge and experience in civil procedure for technically qualified judges;
  
  - (e) the preparation of candidate-judges.
  
- (3) The training framework will provide for continuous training. Regular meetings will be organized between all judges of the Court in order to discuss developments in patent law and to ensure consistency of jurisprudence.

## CHAPTER IIIA – THE PRIMACY AND INTERPRETATION OF UNION LAW

### Article 14a

#### Primacy and respect of Union law

The Court shall apply Union law in its entirety and respect its primacy.

### Article 14b

#### Requests for preliminary rulings

- (1) As a court common to the Contracting Member States and part of their judicial system, the Court shall cooperate with the Court of Justice of the European Union to ensure the proper application and uniform interpretation of Union law, as any national court, in accordance with Article 267 of the TFEU in particular. Decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union shall be binding on the Court.
- (2) For the purposes of Article 267 of the TFEU, the Court of Appeal shall be considered a court against whose decisions there is no judicial remedy.

### Article 14c

#### Liability for damage caused by infringements of Union law

- (1) The Contracting Member States are jointly and severally liable for damage resulting from an infringement of Union law by the Court of Appeal, in accordance with the Union law concerning non-contractual liability of Member States for damage caused by their national courts breaching Union law.

- (2) Any action seeking compensation for such damage shall be brought against the Contracting Member State where the claimant has his residence or principal place of business before the competent authority of that Contracting Member State. Where the claimant does not have his residence or principal place of business in a Contracting Member State, he may bring such an action against the Contracting Member State where the Court of Appeal has its seat, before the competent authority of that Contracting Member State. The competent authority shall apply the *lex fori*, with the exception of its private international law, to all questions not regulated by Union law or by this Agreement. The claimant is entitled to obtain the entire amount of damages awarded by the competent authority from the Contracting Member State against which the action was brought.
- (3) The Contracting Member State that has paid damages is entitled to obtain proportional contribution from the other Contracting Member States. The detailed rules governing the Contracting Member States' contribution under this paragraph shall be determined by the Administrative Committee.

#### **Article 14d**

#### **Responsibility of the Contracting Member States**

- (1) *Moved to recital 9*
- (2) Actions of the Court are directly attributable to each Contracting Member State individually, including for the purposes of Articles 258, 259 and 260 TFEU, and to all Contracting Member States collectively.

## CHAPTER IIIB – SOURCES OF LAW AND SUBSTANTIVE LAW

### Article 14e Sources of law

- (1) In full compliance with Article 14a, when hearing a case brought before it under this Agreement, the Court shall base its decisions on:
  - (a) this Agreement;
  - (b) Union law, including Regulation [...] of the Council and the European Parliament implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection and Regulation [...] of the Council implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection with regard to the applicable translation arrangements;
  - (c) the EPC;
  - (d) other international agreements applicable to patents and binding on all the Contracting Member States; and
  - (e) national law.
  
- (2) To the extent that the Court shall base its decisions on national law, including where relevant the law of non-contracting States, the applicable law shall be determined:
  - (a) by directly applicable provisions of Union law, or
  - (b) in the absence of directly applicable provisions of Union law or where the latter do not apply, by international instruments containing private international law rules; or
  - (c) in the absence of provisions referred to in (a) and (b), by national provisions on private international law as determined by the Court.

*[(3) The law of non-contracting States shall be applicable where relevant and as provided by provisions of Union law, in particular on the basis of Regulations 593/2008 (Rome I) and 864/2007 (Rome II), or by international instruments.]*

#### **Article 14f**

##### **Right to prevent the direct use of the invention**

A European patent shall confer on its proprietor the right to prevent any third party not having the proprietor's consent from the following:

- (a) making, offering, placing on the market or using a product which is the subject matter of the patent, or importing or storing the product for those purposes;
- (b) using a process which is the subject matter of the patent or, where the third party knows, or should have known, that the use of the process is prohibited without the consent of the proprietor of the patent, from offering the process for use;
- (c) offering, placing on the market, using, importing or storing for those purposes a product obtained directly by a process which is the subject matter of the patent.

#### **Article 14g**

##### **Right to prevent the indirect use of the invention**

- (1) A European patent shall confer on its proprietor the right to prevent any third party from supplying or offering to supply within the territory of protection any person without the proprietor's consent, other than a party entitled to exploit the patented invention, with means, relating to an essential element of that invention, for putting it into effect therein, when the third party knows, or should have known, that those means are suitable and intended for putting that invention into effect.

- (2) Paragraph 1 shall not apply when the means are staple commercial products, except where the third party induces the person supplied to perform any of the acts prohibited by Article 14f.
- (3) Persons performing the acts referred to in Article 14h (a) to (d) shall not be considered to be parties entitled to exploit the invention within the meaning of paragraph 1.

**Article 14h**  
**Limitations of the effects of the European patent**

The rights conferred by the European patent shall not extend to any of the following:

- (a) acts done privately and for non-commercial purposes;
- (b) acts done for experimental purposes relating to the subject matter of the patented invention;
- (c) acts carried out solely for the purpose of conducting the necessary tests and trials in accordance with Article 13(6) of Directive 2001/82/EC<sup>3</sup> or Article 10(6) of Directive 2001/83/EC<sup>4</sup> in respect of any patent covering the product within the meaning of either of those Directives;
- (d) the extemporaneous preparation for individual cases in a pharmacy of a medicine in accordance with a medical prescription nor acts concerning the medicine so prepared;

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<sup>3</sup> Directive 2001/82/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to veterinary medicinal products (OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p.1), as amended.

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use (OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, p.67), as amended.

- (e) the use on board vessels of countries other than Contracting Member States of the patented invention, in the body of the vessel, in the machinery, tackle, gear and other accessories, when such vessels temporarily or accidentally enter the waters of Contracting Member States, provided that the invention is used there exclusively for the needs of the vessel;
- (f) the use of the patented invention in the construction or operation of aircraft or land vehicles or other means of transport of non-Contracting States, or of accessories to such aircraft or land vehicles, when these temporarily or accidentally enter the territory of Contracting Member States;
- (g) the acts specified in Article 27 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944<sup>5</sup>, where these acts concern the aircraft of a country other than a Contracting Member State;
- (h) the use by a farmer of the product of his crop for propagation or multiplication on his own holding, provided that the reproductive vegetable material was sold or otherwise commercialized by the patent proprietor or with his consent to the farmer, for agricultural purposes. The scope and the detailed methods of the use area laid down in to Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No. 2100/94<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>5</sup> International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), "Chicago Convention", Document 7300/9 (9th edition, 2006)

<sup>6</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 of 27 July 1994 on Community plant variety rights (OJ L 227, 1.9.1994, p.1.)

- (i) the use by a farmer of protected livestock for farming purposes, on condition that the breeding animals or other animal reproductive material were sold or otherwise commercialised to the farmer by the patent proprietor or with his/her consent. Such use includes the provision of the animal or other animal reproductive material for the purposes of his/her agricultural activity, but not the sale as part in the framework of or for the purpose of commercial reproductive activity;
- (j) the acts and the use of the obtained information as allowed under Articles 5 and 6 of Council Directive 2009/24/EC<sup>7</sup>, in particular, by its provisions on decompilation and interoperability; and
- (k) the acts allowed pursuant to Article 10 of Directive 98/44/EC<sup>8</sup>.

#### **Article 14i**

#### **Right based on prior use of the invention**

Any person, who, if a national patent had been granted in respect of an invention, would have had, in a Contracting Member State, a right based on prior use of that invention or a right of personal possession of that invention, shall enjoy, in that Contracting Member State, the same rights in respect of a European patent for the same invention.

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<sup>7</sup> Directive 2009/24/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 on the legal protection of computer programs (OJ L 111, 05/05/2009, p.16-22).

<sup>8</sup> Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 1998 on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions (OJ L 213, 30.7.1998, p.13).

## CHAPTER IV – COMPETENCE, JURISDICTION AND EFFECTS OF DECISIONS

### Article 15

#### Competence of the Court

- (1) The Court shall have exclusive competence in respect of:
- (a) actions for actual or threatened infringements of patents and supplementary protection certificates and related defences, including counterclaims concerning licences;
  - (a1) actions for declarations of non-infringement;
  - (b) actions for provisional and protective measures and injunctions;
  - (c) actions for revocation of patents;
  - (c1) counterclaims for revocation of patents;
  - (d) actions for damages or compensation derived from the provisional protection conferred by a published patent application;
  - (e) actions relating to the use of the invention prior to the granting of the patent or to the right based on prior use of the invention;

- (f) actions on compensation for licences on the basis of Article 11 of Regulation implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection; and
  - (g) actions concerning decisions of the European Patent Office in carrying out the tasks referred to in Article 12 of Regulation implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the creation of unitary patent protection.
- (2) The national courts of the Contracting Member States shall remain competent for actions related to European patents and European patent with unitary effect which do not come within the exclusive competence of the Court.

### **Article 15a**

#### **Competence of the divisions of the Court of First Instance**

- (1) Without prejudice to paragraph 6 actions referred to in Article 15(1)(a), (b), (d) and (e) shall be brought before:
- (a) the local division hosted by the Contracting Member State where the actual or threatened infringement has occurred or may occur, or the regional division in which this Contracting Member State participates; or
  - (b) the local division hosted by the Contracting Member State where the defendant or, in the case of multiple defendants, one of the defendants has his residence or principal place of business, or the regional division in which this Contracting Member State participates.

Actions against defendants having their residence or principal place of business outside the territory of the Contracting Member States shall be brought before the local or regional division in accordance with point (a).

If the Contracting Member State concerned does not host a local division and does not participate in a regional division, actions shall be brought before the central division.

- (2) A counterclaim for revocation (Article 15(1)(c1)) can be brought in the case of an action for infringement (Article 15(1)(a)). The local or regional division concerned shall, after having heard the parties, have the discretion either to:
  - (a) proceed with both the infringement action and with the counterclaim for revocation and request the President of the Court of First Instance to allocate from the Pool of Judges a technically qualified judge with qualifications and experience in the field of technology concerned;
  - (b) refer the counterclaim for decision to the central division and suspend or proceed with the infringement proceedings; or
  - (c) with agreement of the parties, refer the case for decision to the central division.
- (3) Actions referred to in Article 15(1)(a1) and (c) shall be brought before the central division. If, however, an action for infringement (Article 15(1)(a)) has been initiated between the same parties relating to the same patent before a local or a regional division, these actions may only be brought before the same local or regional division.

- (3a) Actions referred to in Article 15(1)(f) and (g) shall be brought before the central division.
- (4) If an action for revocation (Article 15(1)(c)) is pending before the central division, an action for infringement (Article 15(1)(a)) between the same parties on the same patent may be initiated at any division in accordance with paragraph 1. The local or regional division concerned shall have the discretion to proceed in accordance with paragraph 2.
- (5) An action for declaration of non-infringement (Article 15(1)(a1)) pending before the central division shall be stayed once an infringement action (Article 15(1)(a)) related to the same patent between the same parties or between the holder of an exclusive licence and the party requesting a declaration of non-infringement is initiated within three months as of the date on which the action was initiated before the central division before a local or regional division.
- (6) Parties may agree to bring actions referred to in Article 15(1)(a)-(e) before the division of their choice, including the central division.
- (7) The actions referred to in Article 15(1)(c) and (c1) can be brought without the plaintiff having to initiate an opposition procedure before the European Patent Office.
- (8) Any party shall inform the Court of any pending revocation, limitation or opposition proceedings before the European Patent Office, and of any request for accelerated processing before the European Patent Office. The Court may stay its proceedings when a rapid decision may be expected from the European Patent Office.

*[Article 15b*

***Relation with the jurisdiction of courts of States not party to this Agreement***

- (1) The Court shall have jurisdiction any time the court or courts of a Contracting Member State would have jurisdiction on the basis of Regulation (EC) 44/2001<sup>9</sup> or, where applicable, on the basis of the Convention on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters (Lugano Convention).*
- (2) Where proceedings involving the same cause of action and between the same parties are brought in this Court and (a) court(s) of States not party to this Agreement, the Court shall of its own motion stay its proceedings until the jurisdiction of the court first seized is established.*
- (3) Where the jurisdiction of the court of a State not party to this Agreement is established, the Court shall decline jurisdiction in favour of that court. ]*

**Article 16**

*[Territorial effects of decisions ]*

Decisions of the Court shall cover, in the case of a European patent with unitary effect, the territory of the Contracting Member States in which the patent has unitary effect and, in the case of a European patent, the territory of those Contracting Member States for which the European patent has taken effect.

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<sup>9</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 44/2001 of 22 December 2000 on jurisdiction and the recognition and enforcement of judgments in civil and commercial matters, OJ L 12, 16.1.2001, p. 1–23.

## CHAPTER V – Patent Mediation and Arbitration

### Article 17

#### Patent mediation and arbitration centre

- (1) A patent mediation and arbitration centre ("the Centre") is hereby established. It shall have its seat in [...].
- (2) The Centre shall provide facilities for mediation and arbitration of patent disputes falling within the scope of this Agreement. However, a patent may not be declared fully or partially invalid or be fully or partially invalidated in mediation or arbitration proceedings.
- (3) In the interim procedure referred to in Article 32(2) the judge acting as Rapporteur shall explore with the parties the possibilities for a settlement through mediation and arbitration, and for the use of the facilities of the Centre.
- (4) The Centre shall establish Mediation and Arbitration Rules.
- (5) The Centre shall draw up a list of mediators and arbitrators to assist the parties in the settlement of their dispute.

## **PART II – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 18**

#### **Budget of the Court**

- (1) The budget of the Court shall be financed by the Court's own financial revenues. The budget shall be balanced.
- (2) The Court's own financial revenues shall comprise court fees and other revenues.
- (3) Court fees shall be fixed by the Administrative Committee. The Court fees shall be fixed at such a level as to ensure a right balance between the principle of fair access to justice, in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises and micro entities and an adequate contribution of the parties for the costs incurred by the Court, recognising the economic benefits to the parties involved, and the objective of a self-financing Court with balanced finances. The level of the Court fees shall be reviewed periodically by the Administrative Committee. Targeted support measures for small and medium-sized enterprises and micro entities might be considered.
- (4) If the Court is unable to balance its budget out of its own resources, the Contracting Member States shall remit to it special financial contributions.

**Article 19**  
**Financing of the Court**

- (1) The operating costs of the Court shall be covered by the budget of the Court, in accordance with the Statute. Contracting Member States setting up a local division shall provide the facilities necessary for that purpose.
- (2) On the date of entry into force according to Article 59(1), the Contracting Member States shall provide initial financial contributions necessary for the setting up of the Court.

**Article 20**  
**Financing of the training framework for judges**

The training framework for judges shall be financed by the budget of the Court.

**Article 21**  
**Financing of the Centre**

The operating costs of the Centre shall be financed in accordance with the Statute.

## **PART III – ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURAL PROVISIONS**

### **CHAPTER I – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 21a**

##### **Statute**

- (1) The Statute shall lay down the details of the organisation and functioning of the Court.
- (2) The Statute is attached to this Agreement. It may be amended by decision of the Administrative Committee, on the basis of a proposal of the Court or a proposal of a Contracting Member State after the consultation with the Court. However, such amendments shall not contradict or alter this Agreement.
- (3) The Statute shall guarantee that the functioning of the Court is organised in the most efficient and cost effective manner and shall ensure equitable access to justice.

#### **Article 22**

##### **Rules of Procedure**

- (1) The Rules of Procedure shall lay down the details of the proceedings before the Court. They shall comply with this Agreement and the Statute.

- (2) The Rules of Procedure shall be adopted by the Administrative Committee on the basis of broad consultations with the stakeholders and after having received an opinion of the Court. The opinion of the European Commission on the compatibility of the Rules of Procedure with Union law shall be requested.

The Rules of Procedure may be amended by a decision of the Administrative Committee, on the basis of a proposal from the Court and after consultation with the European Commission. However, such amendments shall not contradict or alter this Agreement or the Statute.

- (3) The Rules of Procedure shall guarantee that the decisions of the Court are of the highest quality and that proceedings are organised in the most efficient and cost effective manner. They shall ensure a fair balance between the legitimate interests of all parties. They shall provide for the required level of discretion for the judges without impairing predictability of proceedings for the parties.

[...]

### **Article 23**

#### **Proportionality and fairness**

- (1) The Court shall deal with litigation in ways which are proportionate to its importance and complexity.
- (2) The Court shall ensure that the rules, procedures and remedies provided for in this Agreement and in the Statute are used in a fair and equitable manner and shall not distort competition.

**Article 24**  
**Case management**

The Court shall actively manage the cases before it in accordance with the Rules of Procedure without impairing the freedom of the parties to determine the subject-matter and the supporting evidence of their case.

**Article 25**  
**Electronic procedures**

The Court shall make best use of electronic procedures, such as electronic filing of submissions of the parties and stating of evidence in electronic form, as well as video conferencing for overall communication, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

**Article 26**  
**Public proceedings**

The proceedings shall be open to the public unless the Court decides to make them, to the extent necessary, confidential in the interest of one of the parties or other affected persons, or in the general interest of justice or public order.

**Article 27**  
**Parties**

- (1) Any natural or legal person, or any body equivalent to a legal person entitled to initiate proceedings in accordance with its national law, shall have access to the Court in order to initiate proceedings, to defend itself against actions, or to seek application of the procedures and remedies provided for in this Agreement and in the Rules of Procedure.

- (2) The holder of an exclusive licence in respect of a patent shall be entitled to initiate proceedings before the Court in the same way as the proprietor of a patent, provided that the proprietor is given prior notice, unless the licensing agreement provides otherwise.
- (3) The holder of a non-exclusive licence shall not be entitled to initiate proceedings before the Court, unless the patent proprietor is given prior notice and in so far as expressly permitted by the licence agreement.
- (4) In proceedings initiated by any licence holder, the patent proprietor shall be entitled to join them as a party.
- (5) The validity of a patent cannot be contested in infringement proceedings initiated by the holder of a licence where the proprietor of the patent does not take part in the proceedings. The party in infringement proceedings wanting to contest the validity of a patent shall have to initiate proceedings against the proprietor.
- (6) Any other natural or legal person, or any body equivalent to a legal person entitled to initiate proceedings in accordance with its national law, who is concerned by a patent, may initiate proceedings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

## **Article 28**

### **Representation**

- (1) Parties shall be represented by lawyers authorized to practise before a court of a Contracting Member State.

- (2) Parties may alternatively be represented by European Patent Attorneys who are entitled to act as professional representatives before the European Patent Office pursuant to Article 134 of the EPC and who have appropriate qualifications such as a European Patent Litigation Certificate.
- (2a) Representatives of the parties may be assisted by patent attorneys who shall be allowed to speak at hearings of the Court in accordance with the Rules or Procedure.
- (3) The requirements for qualifications pursuant to paragraph 2 shall be established by the Administrative Committee. A list of European Patent Attorneys entitled to represent parties before the Court shall be kept by the Registrar.
- (4) Representatives of the parties shall enjoy the rights and immunities necessary to the independent exercise of their duties, under the conditions laid down in the Rules of Procedure.
- (5) Representatives of the parties shall be obliged not to misrepresent cases or facts before the Court either knowingly or with good reasons to know.

## CHAPTER II – LANGUAGES OF PROCEEDINGS

### Article 29

#### Language of proceedings at the Court of First Instance

- (1) The language of proceedings before any local or regional division shall be an official European Union language which is the official language or one of the official languages of the Contracting Member State hosting the relevant division, or the official language(s) designated by Contracting Member States sharing a regional division.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph 1, Contracting Member States may designate one or more of the official languages of the European Patent Office as the language of proceedings of their local or regional division.
- (3) Parties may agree on the use of the language in which the patent was granted as language of proceedings, subject to approval by the competent panel. If the panel does not approve their choice, the parties may request that the case be referred to the central division.
- (4) [At the request of one of the parties and after having heard the other parties] / [With the agreement of the parties] the competent panel of a local or regional division may, on grounds of convenience and fairness, decide on the use of the language in which the patent was granted as language of proceedings.
- (5) The language of proceedings at the central division is the language in which the patent concerned was granted.

### **Article 30**

#### **Language of proceedings at the Court of Appeal**

- (1) The language of proceedings before the Court of Appeal shall be the language of proceedings before the Court of First Instance.
- (2) Parties may agree on the use of the language in which the patent was granted as language of proceedings.
- (3) In exceptional cases and to the extent deemed appropriate, the Court of Appeal may decide on another official language of a Contracting Member State as the language of proceedings for the whole or part of the proceedings, subject to agreement by the parties.

### **Article 31**

#### **Other language arrangements**

- (1) Any panel of the Court of First Instance and the Court of Appeal may, to the extent deemed appropriate, dispense with translation requirements.
- (2) At the request of one of the parties, and to the extent deemed appropriate, any division of the Court of First Instance and the Court of Appeal shall provide interpretation facilities to assist the parties concerned at oral proceedings.

- (3) Notwithstanding Article 29(5), in cases where an action for infringement is brought before the central division, the defendant shall have the right to obtain, upon request, translations of relevant documents in the language of the Contracting Member State where he has his residence or principal place of business in the following circumstances:
- (a) jurisdiction is entrusted on the central division in accordance with Article 15a (1), and
  - (b) the language of proceedings at the central division is a language which is not an official language of the Contracting Member State where the defendant has his residence or principal place of business or exercises business activities, and
  - (c) the defendant does not have knowledge of the language of the proceedings.

## CHAPTER III – PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE COURT

### Article 32

#### Written, interim and oral procedures

- (1) The proceedings before the Court shall consist of a written, an interim and an oral procedure, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. All procedures shall be organized in a flexible and balanced manner.
- (2) In the interim procedure, after the written procedure and if appropriate, the judge acting as Rapporteur, subject to a mandate of the full panel and designated in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, shall be responsible for convening an interim hearing. That judge shall in particular explore the possibility for a settlement.
- (3) The oral procedure shall give parties the opportunity to explain properly their arguments. The Court may, with the agreement of the parties, dispense with the oral procedure.

**Article 33**  
**Means of evidence**

- (1) In proceedings before the Court, the means of giving or obtaining evidence shall include in particular the following:
- (a) hearing the parties;
  - (b) requests for information;
  - (c) production of documents;
  - (d) hearing witnesses;
  - (e) opinions by experts;
  - (f) inspection;
  - (g) comparative tests or experiments;
  - (h) sworn statements in writing (affidavits).
- (2) The Rules of Procedure shall govern the procedure for taking such evidence. Questioning of witnesses and experts shall be under the control of the Court and be limited to what is necessary.

**Article 33a**  
**Burden of proof**

The burden of the proof of facts shall be on the party relying on those facts.

**Article 34**  
**Reversal of burden of proof**

- (1) If the subject-matter of a patent is a process for obtaining a product, the identical product when produced without the consent of the proprietor shall, in the absence of proof to the contrary, be deemed to have been obtained by the patented process.
- (2) The same shall apply if there is a substantial likelihood that the identical product was made by the process and the proprietor of the patent has been unable, despite reasonable efforts, to determine the process actually used.
- (3) In the adduction of proof to the contrary, the legitimate interests of the defendant in protecting his manufacturing and trade secrets shall be taken into account.

**CHAPTER IV – POWERS OF THE COURT**

**Article 34a**  
**General**

- (1) The Court may impose such measures, procedures and remedies as are laid down in this Agreement and may make its orders subject to other conditions, in accordance with the Statute and the Rules of Procedure.
- (2) The Court shall take due account of the interest of the parties and shall, before making an order, give any party an opportunity to be heard unless this is incompatible with an effective enforcement of such order.

## **Article 35**

### **Order to produce evidence**

- (1) Where a party has presented reasonably available evidence sufficient to support its claims and has, in substantiating those claims, specified evidence which lies in the control of the opposing party or a third party, the Court may order that party to produce such evidence. Such order shall not result in an obligation of self-incrimination.
- (2) On application by a party the Court may order, under the same conditions as specified in paragraph 1, the communication of banking, financial or commercial documents under the control of the opposing party, subject to article 40.

## **Article 35a**

### **Order to preserve evidence and to inspect property**

- (1) The Court may, even before the commencement of proceedings on the merits of the case, on application by a party who has presented reasonably available evidence to support the claim that the patent right has been infringed or is about to be infringed, order prompt and effective provisional measures to preserve relevant evidence in respect of the alleged infringement.
- (2) Such measures may include the detailed description, with or without the taking of samples, or the physical seizure of the infringing goods, and, in appropriate cases, the materials and implements used in the production and/or distribution of these goods and the documents relating thereto.

[(2a) The inspection of the premises shall be conducted by a person appointed by the Court in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.]

- (3) At the inspection of the premises the requesting party shall not be present itself but may be represented by an independent professional practitioner whose name has to be specified in the Court's order.
  - (4) The measures shall be taken, if necessary without the other party having been heard, in particular where any delay is likely to cause irreparable harm to the proprietor of the patent, or where there is a demonstrable risk of evidence being destroyed.
  - (5) Where measures to preserve evidence are adopted without the other party having been heard, the parties affected shall be given notice, without delay and at the latest immediately after the execution of the measures. A review, including a right to be heard, shall take place upon request of the parties affected with a view to deciding, within a reasonable period after the notification of the measures, whether the measures shall be modified, revoked or confirmed.
- (5a) The measures to preserve evidence may be subject to the provision of security or an equivalent assurance intended to ensure compensation for any prejudice suffered by the defendant as provided for in paragraph 7.

- (6) The Court shall ensure that the measures to preserve evidence are revoked or otherwise cease to have effect, upon request of the defendant, without prejudice to the damages which may be claimed, if the applicant does not initiate, within a period not exceeding 31 calendar days or 20 working days, whichever is the longer, proceedings leading to a decision on the merits of the case before the Court.
- (7) Where the measures to preserve evidence are revoked, or where they lapse due to any act or omission by the applicant, or where it is subsequently found that there has been no infringement or threat of infringement of the patent right, the Court may order the applicant, upon request of the defendant, to provide the defendant appropriate compensation for any injury caused by those measures.

**Article 35b**  
**Freezing orders**

The Court may order a party to refrain from removing from its jurisdiction any assets located there, or from dealing in any assets, whether located within its jurisdiction or not.

**Article 36**  
**Court experts**

- (1) Without prejudice to the possibility for the parties to produce expert evidence, the Court may at any time appoint court experts in order to provide expertise for specific aspects of the case. The Court shall provide to the court expert appointed in a case all information necessary to give his expert advice.
- (2) To this end, an indicative list of experts shall be drawn up by the Court in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and kept by the Registrar.

- (3) The court experts shall guarantee independence and impartiality. Rules governing conflicts of interest applicable to judges shall by analogy apply to court experts.
- (4) Expert advice given to the Court shall be made available to the parties who shall have the possibility to comment on the advice given.

### **Article 37**

#### **Provisional and protective measures**

- (1) The Court may grant injunctions against an alleged infringer or against a third party whose intermediary services are used by the alleged infringer, on a provisional basis, intended to prevent any imminent infringement, to forbid the continuation of the alleged infringement or to make such continuation subject to the lodging of guarantees.
- (2) The Court shall have the discretion to weigh up the interests of the parties and in particular to take into account the potential harm for either of the parties resulting from the granting or the refusal of the injunction.
- (3) The Court may also order the seizure or delivery up of the goods suspected of infringing a patent so as to prevent their entry into or movement within the channels of commerce. If the injured party demonstrates circumstances likely to endanger the recovery of damages, the Court may order the precautionary seizure of the movable and immovable property of the alleged infringer, including the blocking of his/her bank accounts and other assets.

- (4) The Court may, in respect of the measures referred to in paragraphs 1 and 3, require the applicant to provide any reasonable evidence in order to satisfy itself with a sufficient degree of certainty that the applicant is the right-holder and that the applicant's right is being infringed, or that such infringement is imminent.
- (5) Article 35a(4)-(7) shall apply by analogy to the measures referred to in this Article.

#### **Article 37a**

#### **Permanent injunctions**

- (1) Where a decision is taken finding an infringement of a patent, the Court may grant an injunction aimed at prohibiting the continuation of the infringement. The Court may also grant such injunctions against an intermediary whose services are being used by a third party to infringe a patent.
- (2) Where appropriate, such injunction shall be subject to a periodic penalty payment payable to the Court with a view to ensuring compliance.

#### **Article 38**

#### **Corrective measures in infringement proceedings**

- (1) Without prejudice to any damages due to the injured party by reason of the infringement, and without compensation of any sort, the Court may order, at the request of the applicant, that appropriate measures be taken with regard to goods found to be infringing patent rights and, in appropriate cases, with regard to materials and implements principally used in the creation or manufacture of those goods.

- (2) Such measures shall include:
  - (a) declaration of the fact of infringement;
  - (b) recall from the channels of commerce;
  - (c) depriving the product from its infringing property;
  - (d) definitive removal from the channels of commerce; or
  - (e) destruction.
- (3) The Court shall order that those measures be carried out at the expense of the infringer, unless particular reasons are invoked for not doing so.
- (4) In considering a request for corrective measures, the need for proportionality between the seriousness of the infringement and the remedies ordered, the willingness of the party concerned to convert the materials into a non-infringing state, as well as the interests of third parties shall be taken into account.

## Article 38a

### Decision on the validity of a patent

- (1) The Court shall decide on the validity of a patent on the basis of a direct action for revocation or a counterclaim for revocation.
- (2) The Court may revoke a patent, either entirely or partly, only on the grounds referred to in Article 138(1) of the EPC.
- (3) Without prejudice to Article 138(3) of the EPC, if the grounds for revocation affect the patent only in part, the patent shall be limited by a corresponding amendment of the claims and revoked in part.
- (4) To the extent that a patent has been revoked it shall be deemed not to have had, from the outset, in the case of a European patent or a European patent with unitary effect, the effects specified in Articles 64 and 67 of the EPC.
- (5) Where the Court, in a final decision, has revoked a patent, either entirely or partly, it shall send a copy of the decision to the European Patent Office and, with respect to a European patent, to the national patent office of any Contracting Member State concerned.

## Article 39

### Power to order the communication of information

- (1) The Court may, in response to a justified and proportionate request of the plaintiff and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, order an alleged infringer to inform the plaintiff of:
  - (a) the origin and distribution channels of the infringing goods or processes;
  - (b) the quantities produced, manufactured, delivered, received or ordered, as well as the price obtained for the goods in question; and
  - (c) the identity of any third person involved in the production or distribution of infringing goods or in the use of an infringing process.
  
- (2) The Court may, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, also order any other person who, on a commercial scale:
  - (a) was found in the possession of infringing goods or in the use of an infringing process;
  - (b) was found to be providing services used in infringing activities; or
  - (c) was indicated by the person referred to in (a) or (b) as being involved in the production, manufacture or distribution of the goods or processes or in the provision of the services, to provide the plaintiff with the information referred to in paragraph 1.

## **Article 40**

### **Protection of confidential information**

To protect a party's or a third party's trade secrets, personal data or other confidential information, or to prevent an abuse of evidence, the Court may order that the collection and use of evidence in proceedings before it be restricted or prohibited or that access to such evidence be restricted to certain persons.

## **Article 41**

### **Award of damages**

- (1) The Court shall, at the request of the injured party, order the infringer who knowingly, or with reasonable grounds to know, engaged in a patent infringing activity, to pay the injured party damages appropriate to the prejudice actually suffered as a result of the infringement.
- (2) The injured party shall, to the extent possible, be restored in the position it would have been in if no infringement had taken place. The infringer shall not benefit from the infringement. However, damages shall not be punitive.
- (3) When the Court sets the damages:
  - (a) it shall take into account all appropriate aspects, such as the negative economic consequences, including lost profits, which the injured party has suffered, any unfair profits made by the infringer and, in appropriate cases, elements other than economic factors, such as the moral prejudice caused to the injured party by the infringement; or
  - (b) as an alternative to (a), it may, in appropriate cases, set the damages as a lump sum on the basis of elements such as at least the amount of the royalties or fees which would have been due if the infringer had requested authorisation to use the patent in question.

- (4) Where the infringer did not knowingly or with reasonable grounds to know engage in infringing activity, the Court may order the recovery of profits or the payment of compensation.

#### **Article 42**

##### **Legal costs**

- (1) Reasonable and proportionate legal costs and other expenses incurred by the successful party shall, as a general rule, be borne by the unsuccessful party, unless equity requires otherwise.
- (2) Where a party succeeds only in part or in exceptional circumstances, the Court may order that costs be apportioned equitably or that the parties bear their own costs.
- (3) A party should bear any unnecessary costs it has caused the Court or another party.
- (4) At the request of the defendant the Court may order the plaintiff to provide adequate security for the legal costs and other expenses incurred by the defendant which the plaintiff may be liable to bear, in particular in cases referred to in Articles 35, 35a, 35b and 37.

#### **Article 43**

##### **Court fees**

- (1) Parties to proceedings before the Court shall pay court fees.
- (2) Court fees shall be paid in advance. Any party which has not paid a prescribed court fee may be excluded from further participation in the proceedings.

## **Article 44**

### **Legal aid**

- (1) A party who is a natural person and wholly or in part unable to meet the costs of the proceedings may at any time apply for legal aid. The conditions for granting of legal aid shall be laid down in the Rules of Procedure.
- (2) The Court shall decide whether legal aid should be granted in full or in part, or whether it should be refused, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
- (3) On a proposal from the Court, the Administrative Committee shall set the level of and rules on bearing the costs of legal aid.

## **Article 44a**

### **Period of limitation**

Proceedings relating to all forms of financial compensation may be initiated until five years from the date on which the requesting party became, or had reasonable grounds to become, aware of the facts justifying the proceedings.

## CHAPTER V – APPEALS

### Article 45

#### Appeal

- (1) An appeal against a decision of the Court of First Instance may be brought before the Court of Appeal by any party which has been unsuccessful, in whole or in part, in its submissions.
- (1a) An appeal may be brought against a final decision of the Court of First Instance or against an order referred to in Articles 29(4), 35, 35a, 35b, 37 or 39. Any other order may only be appealed together with the final decision, unless the Court of Appeal grants leave to appeal.
- (2) An appeal shall be brought within two months of the date of the notification of a final decision of the Court of First Instance or within fifteen calendar days of the date of the notification of an order referred to in paragraph 1a.
- (3) The appeal against a decision of the Court of First Instance may be based on points of law and matters of fact.
- (4) New facts and new evidence may only be introduced if the submission thereof by the party concerned could not reasonably have been expected during proceedings before the Court of First Instance, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

## **Article 46**

### **Effects of an appeal**

- (1) Without prejudice to paragraph 2, an appeal shall not have suspensive effect unless the Court of Appeal decides otherwise at the motivated request of one of the parties. The Rules of Procedure shall guarantee that such a decision is taken without delay.
- (2) An appeal against a decision on actions or counterclaims for revocation shall always have suspensive effect.
- (3) The appeal against an order referred to in Articles 29(4), 35, 35a, 35b, 37 or 39 shall not prevent the continuation of the principal proceedings. However, the Court may not give a final decision in the principal proceedings before the decision concerning an appealed order has been given.

## **Article 47**

### **Decision on appeal and referral back**

- (1) If the appeal is well-founded, the Court of Appeal shall revoke the decision of the Court of First Instance and give a final decision. The Court of Appeal may in exceptional cases and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure refer the case back to the Court of First Instance for decision.
- (2) Where a case is referred back to the Court of First Instance it shall be bound by the decision of the Court of Appeal on points of law.

## **CHAPTER VI - DECISIONS**

### **Article 49**

#### **Basis for decisions and right to be heard**

- (1) The Court shall decide in accordance with the requests submitted by the parties. The Court shall not award more than is requested.
- (2) The decisions on the merits may only be based on grounds or evidence on which the parties have had an opportunity to present their comments.
- (3) Decisions on the merits may only be based on the grounds, facts and evidence submitted by the parties or introduced into the procedure by an order of the Court.
- (4) The Court shall evaluate evidence freely and independently.

### **Article 50**

#### **Formal requirements**

- (1) The decision of the Court shall be reasoned and shall be given in writing in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
- (2) The decision of the Court shall be delivered in the language of proceedings.

**Article 51**  
**Dissenting opinions**

- (1) Decisions of the Court shall be taken by a majority of the panel, in accordance with the Statute. In case of equal votes the vote of the presiding judge shall prevail.
- (2) In exceptional circumstances any judge of the panel may express his dissenting opinion separately from the decision of the Court.

**Article 52**  
**Settlement**

The parties may, at any time in the course of proceedings, conclude their case by way of settlement confirmed by a decision of the Court. A patent may not be declared fully or partially invalid or be fully or partially invalidated by way of settlement.

**Article 54**  
**Publication of decisions**

The Court may order, at the request of the applicant and at the expense of the infringer, appropriate measures for the dissemination of the information concerning the decision, including displaying the decision and publishing it in full or in part in public media.

## **Article 55**

### **Rehearing**

- (1) A request for rehearing after a final decision may exceptionally be made to the Court of Appeal in the following circumstances:
  - (a) on discovery of a fact by the party requesting the rehearing, which is of such a nature as to be a decisive factor and which, when the decision was given, was unknown to the party requesting the rehearing, in particular on the basis of an act which was held, by a final court decision, to constitute a criminal offence; or
  - (b) in the event of a fundamental procedural defect, in particular when a defendant who did not appear before the Court was not served with the document initiating the proceedings or an equivalent document in sufficient time and in such a way as to enable him to arrange for the defence.
- (2) A request for a rehearing shall be filed within 10 years from the date of the decision but not later than two months from the date of the discovery of the new fact or of the procedural defect. Such request shall not have suspensive effect unless the Court of Appeal decides otherwise.
- (3) If the request for a rehearing is founded, the Court of Appeal shall set aside, in whole or in part, the decision under review and re-open the proceedings for a new trial and decision, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

- (4) Persons using patents which are the subject-matter of a decision under review and who are acting in good faith should be allowed to continue the use.

## **Article 56**

### **Enforcement of decisions**

- (1) Decisions of the Court shall be enforceable in any Contracting Member State. An order for the enforcement of a decision shall be appended to the decision by the Court.
- (2) Where appropriate, the enforcement of a decision may be subject to the provision of security or an equivalent assurance to ensure compensation for any prejudice suffered, in particular in the case of injunctions.
- (3) Without prejudice to the provisions of this Agreement and the Statute, the enforcement procedures shall be governed by the law of the Contracting Member State where the enforcement takes place. Any decision of the Court shall be enforced under the same conditions as a decision given in the Contracting State where the enforcement takes place.
- (4) If a party does not comply with the terms of an order of the Court, that party may be sanctioned with a periodic penalty payment payable to the Court. The individual penalty shall be proportionate to the importance of the order to be enforced. The periodic penalty payment shall be ordered without prejudice to the party's right to claim damages or security.

## PART IIIA – IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION OF THE AGREEMENT

### Article 57

#### The Administrative Committee

- (1) The Administrative Committee shall be composed of one representative of each Contracting Member State. The European Commission shall be represented at the meetings of the Administrative Committee as observer.
- (2) Any Contracting Member State shall have one vote.
- (3) The Administrative Committee shall adopt its decisions by a majority of three quarters of the Contracting Member States represented and voting, except where this Agreement or the Statute provides otherwise.
- (4) The Administrative Committee shall adopt its rules of procedure.
- (5) The Administrative Committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members. The duration of the term of office shall be three years. The term of office shall be renewable.

**Article 57a**  
**The Budget Committee**

- (1) The Budget Committee shall be composed of one representative of each Contracting Member State.
- (2) Any Contracting Member State shall have one vote.
- (3) The Budget Committee shall take its decisions by a simple majority of the representatives of the Contracting Member States. However, a majority of three-quarters of the representatives of the Contracting Member States shall be required for the adoption of the budget.
- (4) The Budget Committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members. The duration of the term of office shall be three years. The term of office shall be renewable.

**Article 57b**  
**The Advisory Committee**

- (1) The Advisory Committee shall:
  - (a) assist the Administrative Committee in the preparation of the appointment of the judges of the Court;

- (b) make proposals to the Presidium for the guidelines for the training framework for judges referred to in Article 14; and
  - (c) deliver opinions to the Administrative Committee concerning the requirements for qualifications referred to in Article 28(2).
- (2) The Advisory Committee shall comprise patent judges and practitioners in patent law and patent litigation with the highest recognised competence. They shall be appointed, in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Statute, for a term of six years. They may be re-appointed.
- (3) The composition of the Advisory Committee shall ensure a broad range of relevant expertise and the representation of each of the Contracting Member States. The members of the Advisory Committee shall be completely independent in the performance of their duties and shall not be bound by any instructions.
- (4) The Advisory Committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members. It shall adopt its rules of procedure.

## **PART IV – TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 58**

#### **Transitional period**

- (1) During a transitional period of five years after the date of entry into force according to Article 59, proceedings for infringement or for revocation of a European patent may still be initiated before the national courts or other competent authorities of a Contracting Member State having jurisdiction under national law as determined by Union law.
- (2) Any proceedings pending before a national court at the end of the transitional period shall continue to be subject to the transitional regime.
- (3) Unless proceedings have already been initiated before the Court, holders of European patents or patent applications granted or applied for prior to the date of entry into force according to Article 59 shall have the possibility to opt out from the exclusive competence of the Court. To this end they shall notify their opt-out to the Registry by the latest one month before expiry of the transitional period.
- (4) Unless proceedings have already been initiated before a national court, holders of European patents who made use of the opt-out in accordance with paragraph 3 shall be entitled to withdraw their opt-out at any moment. In this event they shall notify the Registry accordingly.

## **PART V – FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 58a**

#### **Ratification and depositing**

This Agreement shall be ratified by the Contracting Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with [the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union (hereinafter referred to as "the depository")].

### **Article 58b**

#### **Membership**

- (1) This Agreement shall be open to accession by any Member State.
- (2) Instruments of accession shall be deposited with [the depository].

### **Article 58c**

#### **Duration of the Agreement**

This Agreement shall be of unlimited duration.

## **Article 58d**

### **Revision**

- (1) Either six years after the entry into force of this Agreement or once 2000 infringement cases have been decided by the Court, whichever is the later point in time, and if necessary at regular intervals thereafter, a broad consultation with users shall be carried out by the Administrative Committee on the functioning, the efficiency and the implications of the provisions regarding the composition of the panels of the Court of First Instance and the jurisdiction in respect of actions and counterclaims for revocation. On the basis of this consultation and an opinion of the Court, the Administrative Committee may decide to revise Articles 6 and 15a of this Agreement.
- (2) The Administrative Committee may amend this Agreement to bring it into line with an international treaty relating to patents or Union legislation. Unanimity of the Contracting Member States shall be required.

## **Article 58f**

### **Languages of the Agreement**

This Agreement is drawn up in a single original, in the [...] languages, all of them being equally authentic.

**Article 59**  
**Entry into force**

- (1) This Agreement shall enter into force on *[date]* or on the first day of the *[...]* month after the deposit of the last instrument of ratification by *[...]* Contracting Member States in accordance with Article 58a, including the three States in which the highest number of European patents was in force in the year preceding the year in which the Diplomatic Conference for the signature of the Agreement takes place, whichever is earlier.
  
- (2) In respect of any State which is eligible to accede to this Agreement in accordance with the provisions of Article 58b and which subsequently expresses its consent to be bound by it, this Agreement shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the deposit of the instruments of ratification by that Member State.

**Article 60**  
**Entry into operation**

*[To be developed]*

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorised thereto, have signed this Agreement,

Done at ..... the

  

\_\_\_\_\_

**Draft Statute of the Unified Patent Court**

**Article 1**

**Scope of the Statute**

This Statute contains institutional and financial arrangements for the Unified Patent Court as established under Article 1 of the Agreement.

**CHAPTER I - JUDGES**

**Article 2**

**Eligibility of judges**

- (1) Any person who is a national of a Contracting Member State and fulfils the conditions required by Article 10 of the Agreement and this Statute may be appointed as a judge.
- (2) The judges shall have a good command of at least one official language of the European Patent Office.

**Article 3**  
**Appointment of judges**

- (1) Pursuant to the procedure set out in Article 11 of the Agreement, judges shall be appointed by the Administrative Committee acting by common accord on the basis of proposals from the Advisory Committee.
- (2) Vacancies shall be publicly advertised and shall indicate the relevant eligibility criteria. The Advisory Committee shall give an opinion on candidates' suitability to perform the duties of a judge of the Court. The opinion shall comprise a list of most suitable candidates. The list shall contain at least twice as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled in.
- (3) When appointing judges, the Administrative Committee shall ensure a balanced composition of the Court on as broad geographical basis as possible among nationals of the Contracting Member States.
- (4) The judges shall be appointed for a period of six years. They may be reappointed.
- (5) The Administrative Committee shall appoint as many judges as are needed for the well functioning of the Court. Initially the Administrative Committee shall appoint the necessary number of judges for setting up at least one panel pursuant to Article 14 in each of the divisions of the Court of First Instance and at least two panels pursuant to Article 16 in the Court of Appeal.

- (6) The decision of the Administrative Committee appointing full-time legally and technically qualified judges shall state the instance of the Court and/or the division of the Court of First Instance for which each judge is appointed and the fields of technology for which a technically qualified judge is appointed.
- (7) Part-time technically qualified judges shall be appointed as judges of the Court and included in the Pool of Judges on the basis of their specific qualifications and experience.  
The appointment of these judges to the Court shall ensure that all fields of technology are covered.

**Article 3a**  
**Judges' term of office**

1. The term of office of a judge shall begin on the date laid down in the instrument of appointment.
2. In the absence of any provision regarding the date, the term shall begin on the date of the instrument.

### **Article 3b**

#### **Appointment of the members of the Advisory Committee**

- (1) Each Contracting Member State shall propose a member of the Advisory Committee who fulfils the requirements of Article 57b, paragraph 2, of the Agreement.
- (2) The members of the Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the Administrative Committee acting by common accord.
- (3) *Moved to Article 57b(3).*

### **Article 4**

#### **Oath**

Before taking up his duties each judge shall, in open court, take an oath to perform his duties impartially and conscientiously and to preserve the secrecy of the deliberations of the Court.

### **Article 5**

#### **Impartiality**

- (1) Immediately after taking the oath, each judge shall sign a declaration by which he solemnly undertakes that, both during and after his term of office, he shall respect the obligations arising therefrom, in particular the duty to behave with integrity and discretion as regards the acceptance, after he has ceased to hold office, of certain appointments or benefits.

- (2) A judge may not take part in the hearing of any case in which he:
- (a) has taken part as adviser;
  - (b) has been a party or acted for one of the parties;
  - (c) has been called upon to pronounce as a member of a court, tribunal, board of appeal, arbitration or mediation panel, a commission of inquiry or in any other capacity;
  - (d) has a personal or financial interest in the case or in relation to one of the parties; or
  - (e) is related to one of the parties or the representatives of the parties by family ties.
- (3) If, for some special reason, any judge considers that he should not take part in the judgement or examination of a particular case, he shall so inform the President of the Court of Appeal or, in the case of judges of the Court of First Instance, the President of the Court of First Instance. If, for some special reason, the President of the Court of Appeal or, in the case of judges of the Court of First Instance, the President of the Court of First Instance considers that a judge should not sit or make submissions in a particular case, he shall justify this in writing and notify the judge concerned accordingly.
- (4) Any party to the proceedings may object to a judge for any of the reasons mentioned in paragraph 2 or if the judge is suspected with good reason of partiality.

- (5) Any difficulty arising as to the application of this Article shall be settled by decision of the Presidium, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. The judge concerned shall be heard but shall not take part in the deliberations.

## **Article 6**

### **Immunity of judges**

- (1) The judges shall be immune from legal proceedings for acts performed by them or in relation to their official capacity. They shall continue to enjoy this immunity after they have ceased to hold office.
- (2) The Presidium may waive the immunity.
- (3) Where immunity has been waived and criminal proceedings are instituted against a judge, he shall be tried, in any of the Contracting Member States, only by the court competent to judge the members of the highest national judiciary.
- (4) The Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Union shall apply to the judges of the Court, without prejudice to the provisions relating to immunity from legal proceedings of judges which are set out in this Statute.

**Article 7**  
**End of duties**

- (1) Apart from normal replacement after expiry of his term pursuant to Article 3, paragraph 4, or death, the duties of a judge shall end when he resigns.
- (2) Where a judge resigns, his letter of resignation shall be addressed to the President of the Court of Appeal or, in the case of judges of the Court of First Instance, the President of the Court of First Instance for transmission to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee.
- (3) Save where Article 8 applies, a judge shall continue to hold office until his successor takes up his duties.
- (4) Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointment of a new judge for the remainder of his predecessor's term.

**Article 8**  
**Removal from office**

- (1) A judge may be deprived of his office or of other benefits in its stead only if the Presidium decides that he no longer fulfils the requisite conditions or meets the obligations arising from his office. The judge concerned shall be heard but shall not take part in the deliberations.
- (2) The Registrar of the Court shall communicate this decision to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee.

- (3) In the case of a decision depriving a judge of his office, a vacancy shall arise upon this latter notification.

## **Article 9**

### **Training**

- (1) Appropriate and regular training of judges shall be provided for within the training framework set up under Article 14 of the Agreement. The Presidium shall adopt Training Regulations ensuring the implementation and overall coherence of the training framework.
- (2) The training framework shall provide a platform for the exchange of expertise and a forum for discussion, in particular by:
- (a) organising courses, conferences, seminars, workshops and symposia;
  - (b) co-operating with international organisations and education institutes in the field of intellectual property; and
  - (c) promoting and supporting further vocational training.
- (3) An annual work programme and training guidelines shall be drawn up, which shall include for each judge an annual training plan identifying his main training needs in accordance with the Training Regulations.

- (4) The training framework shall in addition:
- (a) ensure appropriate training for candidate-judges and newly appointed judges of the Court;
  - (b) support projects aimed at facilitating co-operation between representatives, patent attorneys and the Court.

**Article 9a**  
**Remuneration**

The Administrative Committee shall set the remuneration of the President of the Court of Appeal, the President of the Court of First Instance, the judges, the Registrar, the Deputy-Registrar and the staff.

**CHAPTER II – ORGANISATIONAL PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 1 – COMMON PROVISIONS**

**Article 10**  
**President of the Court of Appeal**

- (1) The President of the Court of Appeal shall be elected by all judges of the Court of Appeal for a term of three years, from among their number. He may be re-elected twice.
- (2) The elections of the President of the Court of Appeal shall be by secret ballot. If a judge obtains an absolute majority he shall be elected. If no judge obtains an absolute majority, a second ballot shall be held and the judge obtaining the most votes shall be elected.

- (3) The President of the Court of Appeal shall direct the judicial activities and the administration of the Court of Appeal and chair the Court of Appeal sitting as a full Court.
- (4) If the office of the President of the Court of Appeal falls vacant before the usual date of expiry of his term, a successor shall be elected for the remainder thereof.

#### **Article 10a**

##### **President of the Court of First Instance**

- (1) The President of the Court of First Instance shall be elected by all judges of the Court of First Instance who are full-time judges, for a term of three years, from among their number. He may be re-elected twice.
- (2) The President of the Court of First Instance shall direct the judicial activities and the administration of the Court of First Instance.
- (3) Article 10, paragraphs 2 and 4, shall by analogy apply to the President of the Court of First Instance.

#### **Article 11**

##### **Presidium**

- (1) The Presidium shall be composed of the President of the Court of Appeal, who shall act as chairperson, the President of the Court of First Instance, two judges of the Court of Appeal elected from among their number, three judges of the Court of First Instance who are full-time judges of the Court elected from among their number, and the Registrar as a non-voting member.
- (2) The Presidium shall exercise the duties in accordance with this Statute. It may, without prejudice to its own responsibility, delegate certain tasks to one of its members.

- (3) The Presidium shall be responsible for the management of the Court and shall:
- (a) give an opinion on a proposal for the Rules of Procedure in accordance with Article 22 of the Agreement;
  - (b) draw up proposals for the amendment of the Rules of Procedure and proposals regarding the Financial Regulations of the Court;
  - (c) prepare the annual budget, the annual accounts and the annual report of the Court and submit them to the Budget Committee;
  - (d) establish the guidelines for the training programme for judges and supervise the implementation thereof;
  - (e) take decisions on the appointment and removal of the Registrar and the Deputy-Registrar;
  - (f) lay down the rules governing the Registry including the sub-registries.
- (4) Decisions of the Presidium referred to in Articles 5, 6 and 8 shall be taken in the absence of the Registrar.
- (5) The Presidium can take valid decisions only when all members, or their substitutes, are present. Decisions shall be taken by a majority of votes.

## **Article 12**

### **Staff**

- (1) The officials and other servants shall have a task to assist the President of the Court of Appeal, the President of the Court of First Instance, the judges and the Registrar. They shall be responsible to the Registrar, under the authority of the President of the Court of Appeal and the President of the Court of First Instance.
- (2) The Administrative Committee shall establish the Staff Regulations of officials and other servants of the Court.

## **Article 12a**

### **Judicial vacations**

1. On the basis of the consultation with the Presidium, the President of the Court of Appeal shall establish the duration of judicial vacations and the rules on observing official holidays.
2. During the vacations, the functions of the President of the Court of Appeal and the President of the Court of First Instance may be exercised by any judge invited by the respective President to take his place, keeping in touch with the Registrar. In a case of urgency, the President of the Court of Appeal may convene the judges.
3. The President of the Court of Appeal or the President of the Court of First Instance may, in proper circumstances, grant leave of absence to respectively judges of the Court of Appeal or judges of the Court of First Instance.

## SECTION 2 - THE COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE

### Article 13

#### Setting up and discontinuance of a local or regional division

- (1) A request from one or more Contracting Member States for the setting up of a local or regional division shall be addressed to the Chairman of the Administrative Committee. It shall indicate the seat(s) of the local or regional division.
- (2) The decision of the Administrative Committee setting up a local or regional division shall indicate the number of judges for the division concerned. The decision shall be published in [the Official Journal of the European Union.]
- (3) The Administrative Committee shall decide to discontinue a local or regional division on the request of the Contracting Member State hosting the local division or the Contracting Member States participating in the regional division. The decision to discontinue a local or regional division shall state the date after which no new cases may be brought before the division and the date on which the division will cease to exist.
- (4) As from the date on which a local or regional division ceases to exist, the judges assigned to this local or regional division shall be assigned to the central division, and cases still pending before the local or regional division together with the sub-registry and all of its documentation shall be transferred to the central division.

## **Article 14**

### **Panels**

- (1) The composition of the panels and the assignment of cases within a division to its panels shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure. One judge of the panel shall be appointed as the presiding judge, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
- (2) The panel may delegate, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, certain functions to one or more of its judges.
- (3) In cases where a single judge hears the case in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 7, of the Agreement, he shall carry out all functions of a panel.
- (4) One judge of the panel shall act as Rapporteur, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

## **Article 15**

### **Pool of Judges**

- (1) A list with the names of the judges included in the Pool of Judges shall be drawn up by the Registrar. In relation to each judge, the list shall at least indicate the languages used, the technical field of competence and experience as well as the cases previously handled by this judge.
- (2) A request addressed to the President of the Court of First Instance to assign a judge from the Pool of Judges shall indicate in particular the subject matter of the case, the official language of the European Patent Office used by the judges of the panel, the language of the proceedings and the field of technology required.

## **SECTION 3 – THE COURT OF APPEAL**

### **Article 16**

#### **Panels**

- (1) The composition of panels and the assignment of cases to panels shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure. One judge of the panel shall be appointed as the presiding judge, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.
- (2) When a case is of exceptional importance, and in particular when the decision may affect the unity and consistency of the jurisprudence of the Court, the Court of Appeal may decide, on the basis of a proposal from the presiding judge, to refer the case to the full Court.
- (3) The panel may delegate, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, certain functions to one or more of its judges.
- (4) One judge of the panel shall act as Rapporteur, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

## SECTION 4 – THE REGISTRY

### Article 17

#### **Appointment and removal from office of the Registrar**

- (1) The Presidium shall appoint the Registrar of the Court for a term of six years. He may be re-appointed.
- (2) Two weeks before the date fixed for making the appointment of the Registrar, the President of the Court of Appeal shall inform the Presidium of the applications which have been submitted for the post. The name of the Registrar shall be published in the [Official Journal].
- (3) Before he takes up his duties the Registrar shall take oath before the Presidium to perform his duties impartially and conscientiously.
- (4) The Registrar may be removed from office only if he no longer meets the obligations arising from his office. The Presidium shall take its decision after having heard the Registrar.
- (5) If the office of the Registrar falls vacant before the usual date of expiry of the term thereof, the Presidium shall appoint a new Registrar for a term of six years.
- (6) If the Registrar is absent or prevented from attending or where his post is vacant, the President of the Court of Appeal after having consulted the Presidium shall designate a member of the staff of the Court to carry out the duties of the Registrar.

**Article 18**  
**Duties of the Registrar**

- (1) The Registrar shall assist the Court, the President of the Court of Appeal, the President of the Court of First Instance and the judges in the performance of their functions. He shall be responsible for the organisation and activities of the Registry under the authority of the President of the Court of Appeal.
  
- (2) The Registrar shall in particular be responsible for:
  - (a) keeping the registry which includes records of all cases before the Court;
  
  - (b) keeping and administering lists drawn up in accordance with Articles 13, 28 and 36 of the Agreement;
  
  - (c) keeping and publishing a list of notifications of opt-outs in accordance with Article 58 of the Agreement;
  
  - (d) publishing the decisions of the Court, subject to the protection of confidential information;
  
  - (e) publishing annual reports with statistical data; and
  
  - (f) ensuring that the information on opt-outs in accordance with Article 58 of the Agreement is closely linked with the European Patent Office patent register.

**Article 19**  
**Keeping of the register**

- (1) Detailed rules for keeping the register of the Court shall be prescribed in the Instructions to the Registry, adopted by the Presidium.
- (2) The rules on access to documents of the Registry shall be provided for in the Rules of Procedure.

**Article 20**  
**Sub-registries and Deputy-Registrar**

- (1) A Deputy-Registrar shall be appointed for a term of six years by the Presidium. He may be re-appointed.
- (2) Article 17, paragraphs 2 to 6, shall apply by analogy.
- (3) The Deputy-Registrar shall be responsible for the organisation and activities of sub-registries under the authority of the Registrar and the President of the Court of First Instance. The duties of the Deputy-Registrar shall in particular include:
  - (a) keeping records of all cases before the relevant division of the Court of First Instance;
  - (b) notifying every case before the relevant division of the Court of First Instance to the Registry.
- (4) The Deputy-Registrar shall also provide administrative and secretarial assistance to the relevant division of the Court of First Instance.

## **CHAPTER III – FINANCIAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 22**

#### **Budget**

- (1) The budget shall be adopted by the Budget Committee on the proposal of the Presidium. It shall be drawn up in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles laid down in the Financial Regulations.
- (2) Within the budget, the Presidium may, in accordance with the Financial Regulations, transfer funds between the various headings or subheadings.
- (3) The Registrar shall be responsible for the implementation of the budget in accordance with the Financial Regulations.
- (4) The Registrar shall annually make a statement on the accounts of the preceding financial year relating to the implementation of the budget which shall be approved by the Presidium.

### **Article 23**

#### **Authorisation for expenditure**

- (1) The expenditure entered in the budget shall be authorised for the duration of one accounting period unless the Financial Regulations provide otherwise.

- (2) In accordance with the Financial Regulations, any appropriations, other than those relating to staff costs, which are unexpended at the end of the accounting period may be carried forward, but not beyond the end of the following accounting period.
- (3) Appropriations shall be set out under different headings according to type and purpose of the expenditure, and subdivided, as far as necessary, in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

#### **Article 24**

##### **Appropriations for unforeseeable expenditure**

- (1) The budget of the Court may contain appropriations for unforeseeable expenditure.
- (2) The employment of these appropriations by the Court shall be subject to the prior approval of the Budget Committee.

#### **Article 25**

##### **Accounting period**

The accounting period shall commence on 1 January and end on 31 December.

#### **Article 26**

##### **Preparation of the budget**

The Presidium shall submit the draft budget of the Court to the Budget Committee no later than the date prescribed in the Financial Regulations.

## **Article 27**

### **Provisional budget**

- (1) If, at the beginning of the accounting period, the budget has not been adopted by the Budget Committee, expenditures may be effected on a monthly basis per heading or other division of the budget, in accordance with the Financial Regulations, up to one-twelfth of the budget appropriations for the preceding accounting period, provided that the appropriations thus made available to the Presidium do not exceed one-twelfth of those provided for in the draft budget.
- (2) The Budget Committee may, subject to the observance of the other provisions laid down in paragraph 1, authorise expenditure in excess of one-twelfth of the appropriations.

## **Article 28**

### **Auditing of accounts**

- (1) The annual financial statements of the Court shall be examined by independent auditors. The auditors shall be appointed and if necessary dismissed by the Budget Committee.
- (2) The audit, which shall be based on professional auditing standards and shall take place, if necessary, in situ, shall ascertain that the budget has been implemented in a lawful and proper manner and that the financial administration of the Court has been conducted in accordance with the principles of economy and sound financial management. The auditors shall draw up a report after the end of each accounting period containing a signed audit opinion.

- (3) The Presidium shall submit to the Budget Committee the annual financial statements of the Court and the annual budget implementation statement for the preceding accounting period, together with the auditors' report.
- (4) The Budget Committee shall approve the annual accounts together with the auditors' report and shall discharge the Presidium in respect of the implementation of the budget.

### **Article 30**

#### **Financial Regulations**

- (1) The Financial Regulations shall lay down in particular:
  - (a) arrangements relating to the establishment and implementation of the budget and for the rendering and auditing of accounts;
  - (b) the method and procedure whereby the payments and contributions provided for in Article [...] and the initial financial contributions provided for in Article [...] are to be made available to the Court;
  - (c) the rules concerning the responsibilities of authorising and accounting officers and the arrangements for their supervision; and
  - (d) the generally accepted accounting principles on which the budget and the annual financial statements are to be based.
- (2) The Financial Regulations shall be adopted by the Administrative Committee on the proposal from the Court.

**Article 31**

**Income**

*[To be developed]*

**Article 32**

**Operating costs**

*[To be developed]*

**CHAPTER IV – PROCEDURAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 33**

**Secrecy of deliberations**

The deliberations of the Court shall be and shall remain secret.

**Article 34**

**Decisions**

- (1) When a panel sits in composition of an even number of judges, decisions of the Court shall be taken by a majority of the panel. In case of equal vote the vote of the presiding judge shall prevail.
- (2) In the event of one of the judges of a panel being prevented from attending, a judge from another panel may be called upon to sit in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

- (3) In cases where this Statute provides that the Court of Appeal shall take a decision sitting as a full court, such decision shall be valid only if it is taken by at least 3/4 of the judges comprising the full court.
- (4) Decisions of the Court shall contain the names of the judges deciding the case.
- (5) Decisions shall be signed by the judges deciding the case, by the Registrar for decisions of the Court of Appeal, and by the Deputy-Registrar for decisions of the Court of First Instance. They shall be read in open court.

### **Article 35**

#### **Dissenting opinions**

A dissenting opinion expressed separately by a judge of the panel in accordance with Article 51 of the Agreement shall be reasoned, given in writing and shall be signed by the judge expressing this opinion.

### **Article 36**

#### **Decision by default**

- (1) Where the defendant, after having been duly summoned, fails to file written submissions in defence or fails to appear at the oral hearing, at the request of the plaintiff a decision by default may be given in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. An objection may be lodged against the decision within one month of it being notified.
- (2) The objection shall not have the effect of staying enforcement of the decision by default unless the Court decides otherwise.

## Article 37

### Questions referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union

- (1) The procedures established by the Court of Justice of the European Union for referrals for preliminary rulings within the European Union shall apply, as far as appropriate.
- (2) Whenever the Court of First Instance or the Court of Appeal has decided to refer to the Court of Justice of the European Union a question of interpretation of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union or of the Treaty on European Union or a question on the validity or interpretation of acts of the institutions of the European Union, it shall stay its proceedings.

## CHAPTER V - FINAL PROVISIONS

*[To be developed]*

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**Preliminary list of topics to be included in the Rules of Procedure**

**I. Organisation of the Court**

**1. Working of the Court**

- Sessions, judicial vacations
- Dates, times and places of sitting of the Court (including the possibility for central and regional divisions to hold hearings in multiple locations)
- Inability to attend or absence of a judge
- Procedure of assignment of cases to panels
- Appointment and duties of judge-Rapporteur

**2. Registry**

- Appointment and oath of the Registrar
- Assistants of the Registrar
- Replacement of the Registrar
- Keeping of the Registry (including information on notifications about opt-outs)
- Procedure of publication of decisions

**3. Languages**

- Detailed language arrangements

**4. Parties**

- Initiation of proceedings by third parties (conditions, procedure)
- Special cases for a party to initiate proceedings (including proceedings initiated by an applicant for a patent or a prior user)
- Intervention in proceedings (application, conditions, invitation by the Court)

## **5. Representatives of parties**

- Requirements for representatives
- Requirements for European Patent Attorneys (including rules on EU patent litigation certificates or proof of patent litigation experience)
- Privileges, immunities and facilities of representatives
- Status of parties' representatives
- Misrepresentation
- Exclusion from proceedings

## **II. Procedure**

### **1. Written procedure**

- Lodging of pleadings
- Application (including its putting in order, serving and publication)
- Lodging of defence
- Second exchange of pleadings
- Offers to introduce further evidence
- New pleas in law
- Documents for consideration
- Confidentiality

### **2. Interim procedure**

- Conditions for convening an interim hearing
- Role of Judge-Rapporteur
- Mandate of a panel to Judge-Rapporteur
- Possibility for a settlement

### **3. Oral procedure**

- Public proceedings
- Decision of the Court to make proceedings confidential
- Holding of hearings
- Date of the hearing
- Absence of the parties from the hearing
- Conduct of the hearing
- Close of the oral procedure
- Minutes of the hearing
- Interpretation to assist the parties

### **4. Electronic procedures**

- Use of electronic procedures
- Electronic filing of submissions and evidence
- Electronic communication

### **5. Obtaining evidence**

- Means of obtaining evidence
- Procedure depending on means of obtaining evidence
- Witnesses (summoning, examination, duties, oath)
- Experts (appointment, duties, oath, report, objection)
- Court experts (drawing up a list of experts in specific technical fields, appointment)
- Order to produce evidence
- Order to preserve evidence and to inspect property
- Freezing orders
- Conditions and procedure for ordering the communication of information

## **6. Provisional and permanent injunctions**

- Granting provisional and protective measures (application, procedure)
- Granting permanent injunctions (application, procedure)
- Ordering corrective measures (request, procedure)

## **7. Settlement**

- Examination for possibilities to settle, proposing solutions by the Court
- Agreement of the parties
- Confirmation by the Court

## **8. Stay of proceedings**

- General conditions and procedure
- Staying of proceedings when validity and infringement questions are split
- Staying of proceedings due to action at the European Patent Office
- Staying of proceedings in connected cases
- Duration and effects

## **9. Expedited proceedings**

- Conditions for expedited proceedings

## **10. Discontinuance of proceedings**

- Discontinuance of proceedings at the request of applicant; no need to adjudicate; action bound to fail; absolute bar to proceedings

## **11. Decisions**

- Deliberations (secrecy)
- Quorum
- Majority of the panel to take a decision
- Role of the presiding judge in case of equal votes
- Content and form of a decision
- Delivery of a decision
- Binding and territorial effect of a decision
- Rectification
- Enforcement (including rules of lodging of security)
- Publication
- Protection of confidential data in published decisions
- Publication of decision as a measure for dissemination of information

## **12. Legal costs**

- Decision as to costs
- Allocation
- Unreasonable costs
- Costs of enforcing a decision
- Recoverable costs
- Dispute as to costs
- Payment

## **13. Legal aid**

- Substantive conditions
- Formal conditions
- Procedure for granting aid

#### **14. Serving of documents**

- Procedure of serving documents
- Serving of documents by electronic means

#### **15. Time limits**

- Calculation of periods of time prescribed in the Agreement
- Extension of time limits
- Unforeseeable circumstances/force majeure in relation to time limits

### **III. Special forms of procedure**

#### **1. Appeals**

- Conditions for appeals against decisions of the Court
- Proceedings in the Court of Appeal
- Decision in appeal
- Conditions and procedure for introduction of new facts and new evidence in the Court of Appeal

#### **2. Referral back to the Court of First Instance**

- Conditions for referral back
- Procedure for examining cases referred back

#### **3. Petition for further appeal**

- Conditions and procedure for petition for further appeal (cassation)

#### **4. Exceptional review procedures**

- Conditions and procedure for rehearing
- Third-party proceedings (when a decision affecting a third party has been taken without its participation)
- Interpretation of decisions of the Court

#### **5. Decisions by default**

- Procedure of taking decision by default (when defendant fails to lodge defence)
- Application to set aside a decision by default

#### **IV. Final provisions**

- Entry into force
- Publication of the Rules of Procedure

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