

GROUP B+ PLENARY VIRTUAL MEETING
18 May 2021

MEETING STATEMENT

For publication on the Group B+ website

On 18 May 2021, the Group B+ held its plenary meeting, which was chaired by the Chair of the Group B+, Mr Peter Strömbäck (SE), and hosted by the Secretariat (JPO). Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it was conducted by videoconference.

In September 2020, the Industry Trilateral (IT3) submitted to the Group B+ the paper titled “Policy and Elements for a Possible Substantive Patent Harmonization Package”. In response, the Group B+ members provided feedback on this package. A detailed written response to this feedback was provided by the IT3 to the delegations prior to the plenary meeting, and the IT3 further explained their positions at the meeting itself. The Group B+ members thanked the IT3 for its presentation. The IT3 will submit a revised version of the IT3 package before the next Group B+ Plenary meeting in October.

With regard to next steps, the Chair proposed the creation of two working groups made up of Group B+ members, taking into account respective countries’ resources and matters of concern. One was for intensive discussions on SPLH, and the other was for discussions on other work. The Chair concluded that the time was not right to make a decision regarding a new working group on SPLH as there was no agreement within the Group B+. This issue will be further discussed at the next Group B+ Plenary meeting in October. It was decided that a working group on other work would not be created due to low participation.

The delegation of Japan stated that it will conduct a study on the actual utilization of a grace period for universities, SMEs, and start-ups. The purpose of this study is to incorporate opinions from these entities within the patent-system harmonization, insofar as they inherently require a system for safeguards such as the grace period. The delegation also indicated that it would share the results of their study with the Group B+ delegations upon its completion.