

Group B+ Plenary 2016 – Agreed Statement

4 October 2016

Group B+ acknowledged the progress made under its previous Chair, and committed to continue supporting improvements to the global patent system under the leadership of a new Chair.

The Group welcomed the progress made over the last year on multilateral initiatives, including expansion of the PPH network, further development and expansion of worksharing tools including Global Dossier and WIPO CASE, and continued efforts to improve the PCT system.

The Group also welcomed the improvements to the global system generated by continued advancements in national and regional arrangements.

The Group noted the progress made by the Sub-Group on Patent Harmonisation and its associated workstreams, including the Sub-Group's efforts to formulate a set of proposals which could be used as a basis for consultation with users. The Group agreed that the Sub-Group and workstreams should continue their work, and that the Sub-Group should continue developing proposals with a view to producing a finalised consultation document.

Noting the progressive work also done by the Industry Trilateral on patent harmonisation, Group B+ reaffirmed the importance of continued engagement with all interested stakeholders. As a next step towards finalising the consultation document, the Group agreed to hold a user symposium to allow a wider range of users to contribute to the development of proposals.

The Group also addressed the issue of privilege in communications between intellectual property advisors and their clients. It considered the results of questionnaires circulated by a number of delegations, seeking views on the problems caused by differences in privilege regimes, and potential solutions. Noting that users had expressed the need for any solution to be multilateral, the Group agreed that Switzerland should lead a group of delegations to undertake work towards a multilateral solution.

The Group will continue to provide a forum for bringing forward new ideas to address future challenges.