



15 February 2019

President António Campinos  
European Patent Office  
Bob-van-Bentham-Platz, 1  
80469 Munich  
Germany

VIA EMAIL ONLY (*strategicplan2019-2023@epo.org*)

## Re: EPO Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Dear President Campinos:

This letter is in response to your letter dated 21 December 2018 inviting Intellectual Property Owners Association (“IPO”) to comment on the most important challenges of the patent system and on how the EPO and IPO can foster cooperation to address those challenges.

IPO sincerely appreciates the opportunity to respond to your request. IPO is an international trade association representing companies and individuals in all industries and fields of technology who own, or are interested in, intellectual property rights. IPO’s membership includes about 200 companies and close to 12,000 individuals who are involved in the association either through their companies or as inventor, author, law firm, or attorney members. IPO membership spans over 30 countries.

One of the most important challenges that the patent system faces is finding ways in which to further procedural and substantive harmonization between patent offices around the world. Indeed, despite the important efforts that have been undertaken to harmonize patent laws and procedures, and the substantial progress that has been made on these issues over the years, there remains room for further cooperation and harmonization.

The goal must be a worldwide system where patent prosecution is uniform, streamlined, predictable, and cost-effective. Ideally, the same laws would apply around the globe, in the same way, consistently. Benefits would include lowering costs for both the offices and those who file with them, more predictability about patent rights across borders, and the ability for applicants to develop much simpler business strategies. This would benefit innovators, the offices, and consumers.

The system described in the previous paragraph is, unfortunately, not immediately attainable, but progress can be made step by step. For instance, it still is the case that, rather often, the USPTO and the EPO use different art in the prosecution of equivalent applications. It is logical and desirable, however, that they use the same art. Another example is that it is difficult to amend claims in a consistent manner at the USPTO and the EPO, despite the application disclosures being the same. The EPO and IPO can foster cooperation to find ways to resolve these, and other, differences between systems.

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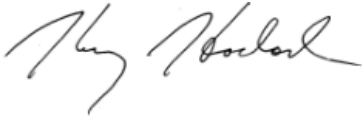
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**Michael D. Nolan**  
Milbank Tweed

Executive Director  
**Mark W. Lauroesch**

We again thank you for permitting IPO to provide comments and would welcome any further dialogue or opportunity to provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry Hadad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "H" and a long, sweeping underline.

Henry Hadad  
President