

BUREAUX INTERNATIONAUX  
RÉUNIS POUR LA PROTECTION  
DE LA PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE  
GENÈVE, SUISSE

# BIRPI

UNITED INTERNATIONAL  
BUREAUX FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE  
OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
IN THE FIELD OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

**COMITÉ D'EXPERTS CONCERNANT LA STRUCTURE ADMINISTRATIVE  
DE LA COOPÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DANS LE DOMAINE DE LA  
PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE**

Geneva, March 22 - April 2, 1965

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OPENING ADDRESS

BY PROFESSOR G.H.C. BODENHAUSEN, DIRECTOR OF BIRPI

Gentlemen,

It is indeed for me a great honour to welcome here experts appointed by their Governments from 34 Member States of our Unions to discuss the administrative structure of our joint Organization. In welcoming you here I hope that your stay in Geneva will be as pleasant as it will be useful. I would particularly like to welcome the representatives of an important country which has just adhered to the Paris Convention: the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. This adhesion no doubt represents an historical event in the life of our Organization. Finally, I would like to welcome the Intergovernmental Organizations: the United Nations, the Organization of American States, UNESCO and the International Patent Institute--and the Non-governmental Organizations: IAPIP, ICC, FICPI, ALAI, BIEM, CISAC which have delegated observers to attend our meeting.

One might ask why are there so many delegates here today?

You have been invited to consider the problem of the administrative structure of our Unions which have already reached a considerable age. This great age has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of age are mainly those of experience. It allows us, in this particular case, to appreciate our system of protection of intellectual rights, whose merits we can defend with the utmost energy. As to the disadvantages of age, these lie mainly in the fact that, in the world of today, our structure is somewhat outdated and no longer responds to the needs of this defence.

An essential point in this respect is that, following the decolonization, we have lost the official and necessary contact with large parts of the world, particularly in Asia and Africa, while, in other regions, for example in Latin America, this contact has always been inadequate. These countries have an increasing importance, and normally we have not the means of assisting and advising them with regard to their legislation and their administration of intellectual property. In fact, during the past few years, it has been surprising to observe how little our Organization was known to non-member countries and insufficiently recognised by certain Intergovernmental Organizations.

In such circumstances, how can we avoid a repetition or an aggravation of what, for example, took place some ten years ago in the field of copyright, that is to say, the necessity of resorting to other organizations than our own in order to deal with the international problems of intellectual rights? And how can we design a valid policy without the States being able regularly to express their opinions and without a more flexible budget than under the present Conventions?

The Working Group, which examined these problems last May, worked out certain proposals and a draft has been established on the basis of these proposals which is now submitted for your consideration.

I believe that we all bear a heavy responsibility.

How will posterity judge our work, and what will the interested circles say of us: the authors, the inventors, the businessmen; and what will the governments responsible for the development of their countries say if subsequent events show in 20 or 50 years time, that we have not been able to find adequate answers to the problems of today?

I sincerely hope that the work which we are about to undertake together will lead to the solution of these problems and that History will endorse your foresight and wisdom.

I now declare the meeting open.