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**iSupport**

cross-border recovery  
of maintenance obligations  
*pour le recouvrement  
transfrontière des  
obligations alimentaires*

**iSupport Tender, Maintenance and Governance Working Group (5) – 19 February 2015**  
**Meeting**

**Draft Report of Meeting n°3**

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**List of Participants**

<b>Experts</b>	<b>iSupport Team</b>
John AXIAK (Malta) excused Leo de BAKKER (The Netherlands) excused Sylvain GORAWSKY (France) Alisha GRIFFIN (United States of America) Arnaldo JOSÉ ALVES SILVEIRA (Brazil) Hannah ROOTS (NCSEA) Thomas STEIMER (Switzerland)	Philippe LORTIE (Chair) Brigitte VOERMAN Marie VAUTRAVERS Patrick GINGRAS

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**Opening of the meeting**

1. Philippe Lortie, First Secretary, welcomed experts to the Meeting of the Tender, Maintenance and Governance Working Group.

**Finalisation of a draft Information Document on Governance Issues for the 2015 Meeting of the Council on General Affairs and Policy**

2. Philippe Lortie referred to the Information Document that has been amended following the comments of the Working Group experts:

- Paragraph 7 *"It is understood that any State implementing iSupport would have to abide to these processes and procedures."*

- Paragraph 9 *"(see Art. 8(2) of the [Statute](#) of the Hague Conference)"*

He observed that this latter addition has not been formalized in a footnote to draw the reader's attention to this specificity of the Governing Body. He noted that decision making policies of most existing Governing Bodies in the private sector relied on a procedure by vote rather than on a consensus basis.

3. Philippe Lortie reiterated his reluctance to enter into further details concerning the organization of the Governing Body in the event of a significant growth in membership in iSupport. He stated that other

important International Organisations had found different solutions to alleviate the consequences of increased membership, based on their own specific needs. He underlined the need for flexibility in that respect, and recalled that this would be the responsibility of the Governing Body to adapt its rules in the light of the evolution, growth and new developments of the project. He stated that a footnote had been added in that respect.

4. Philippe Lortie asked whether experts agreed with the following provision related to the sharing of costs between members: *“This amount plus the costs (i.e., salary, travel expenses, etc.) for the iSupport Lawyer and IT Co-ordinator, would be divided by the number of units (UPU) of all States operating iSupport”*.

5. Experts from Switzerland, United States of America and Canada supported that proposal. An expert from Brazil expressed a favourable opinion, but added that any final decision related to expenditure would be subject to the prior approval of the Brazilian Ministry of Justice.

6. An expert from France observed she had joined the Working Group at a later stage and had not had the opportunity to study the Document of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) yet. She therefore requested an additional extension of time to give her final approval which is subject to the authorisation of her supervisor.

7. An expert from the United States of America recommended not leaving this issue unresolved.

8. Philippe Lortie stated that the Information Document had to be ready for circulation to the Members of the Organisation by 20 February 2015. He reminded the experts that the UPU was currently used to establish the contribution of Member States to the Regular Budget of the Hague Conference. He added that the Governing Body would have the ability to review this system at any time if it was considered as unfair or inadequate. He suggested not waiting before circulating the document and replacing “would” by “could”, to take into account the provisional reservations of a French expert with respect to the UPU. He proposed eventually amending the document to align with the French final decision before the meeting of the Council on General Affairs and Policy.

9. The expert from France agreed to give her final decision before 13 March 2015 which would allow distributing a revised version of the Information Document before the meeting of the Council.

10. An expert from Switzerland remarked that the term “user” was used interchangeably in the Information documents and the Services document to refer to States as well as to caseworkers, which might cause confusion.

12. Brigitte Voerman suggested adding a glossary at the beginning of the Services document to clarify the meaning of the term “user”.

#### **Finalisation of the General Description of iSupport Services (including procedures for changes)**

11. All experts expressed their satisfaction with the revised document.

#### **Outline of transition plan**

12. Philippe Lortie gave a general overview of the “Transition from project to maintenance” document.

13. In response to the question of an expert from France, Philippe Lortie explained that the term “developer” refers to the vendor that will be responsible for developing, and testing the Software from July 2015 up to the time of the transition tasks, while the term “service provider” refers to the company that will be in charge of the services including maintenance, updates, upgrades and helpdesk as of spring 2016. He specified that the transition plan was intended to precisely stipulate the conditions of transfer of knowledge between the Service Provider and the Developer during this overlap period. Brigitte Voerman added that this document would provide a clear distribution of responsibilities. She noted for instance that the Developer would be in charge of the deployment during the piloting phase, but as of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 deployment would be the responsibility of the Service Provider.

14. In response to a question from an expert from France, Philippe Lortie mentioned that the Project Planning would be published on the Hague Conference website in the coming days. He clarified that the service provider would start working on the maintenance of the software in the spring of 2016 and would be solely responsible for the services as of 31 August 2016.

15. An expert from France expressed concern regarding the Table of activity and the related allocation of responsibility between the Service Provider, the Developer and the Hague Conference. She suggested that a fourth column should be added to describe the role of the national IT Department.

16. Philippe Lortie acknowledged that some of the tasks related to maintenance could possibly be shared between the national IT Department and the Service Provider. He however specified that due to the wide diversity amongst States in terms of organisation and IT resources, it was not possible to provide for detailed rules in that respect. It would therefore be the responsibility of States to set out the tasks of their IT department and to decide on their interactions with the Service Provider and/or the Developer. Brigitte Voerman repeated that the discussed document was exclusively related to the transition between the Service Provider and the Developer.

17. An expert from France expressed concerns about the Hague Conference not being responsible for Risk Management.

18. Brigitte Voerman explained that the Table of Activity only referred to the risks specifically borne by the Service Provider, not to those borne by the Hague Conference or by States. Philippe Lortie specified that the “daily” risk management was commonly subcontracted to the Service Provider who would bear the responsibility for incidents. He however noted that the Service Provider would report to the Governing Body in that respect.

## **Open source**

19. Philippe Lortie discussed possible governmental requirements with respect to open source software. He explained that the intention was to encourage tenderers to develop iSupport in open source. He however suggested giving them the possibility of offering a proprietary solution without license fees. He noted that should iSupport be developed as a proprietary software, this would result in the Developer retaining the proprietary rights while the Hague Conference would be deprived of the ownership of the system. He observed that many States had adopted policies to move towards open source software (Australia, France, and United States of America).

20. An expert from Brazil stated that governmental policy currently favoured open source solutions. An expert from Switzerland concurred with this comment.

#### **Other items for discussion**

21. Philippe Lortie expressed his regrets for the technical difficulties encountered during the meeting, since experts from America, Brazil and France had not been able to attend the entire meeting. He specified that any pending questions would be addressed at the next meeting. He stated that documents pertaining to the next meeting, including a detailed call for tender, will not be distributed one week in advance as usual, but most probably three days in advance.

22. Philippe Lortie invited all experts to share any documents or comments by Friday 5 March and welcomed any further contributions before the next meeting with regard to non-addressed issues.