



21 October 2022  
su22052cl – 0.3.1 – 5.3

To the Chairperson  
and to the Heads of Delegation of the  
Administrative Council of the  
European Patent Organisation

SUEPO Central Executive Committee

## OPEN Letter

### **To the members of the Administrative Council of the EPO Call for a Conference of Ministers of the Contracting States under Article 4a EPC**

Dear Mr Chairperson,  
Dear Heads of Delegation,

In total 1016 EPO staff members support the following petition on a call for a Conference of Ministers of the Contracting States under Article 4a EPC and ask you to act accordingly:

“We, staff members of the European Patent Office (EPO) and the signatories of this petition, perceive that the development of the European Patent Organization (EPOrg) has increasingly departed from the structure and its mission as foreseen under the EPC and it appears that no appropriate countermeasures will be taken.

Therefore, we consider an external review of the EPO's situation by a Conference of Ministers of the Contracting States under Article 4a EPC to be expedient; such a Conference is anyway long overdue in view of Article 4a EPC.

We call on you to have anew a close look:


- at the development and administration of the organization's resources, in particular the alarming reduction of staffing levels in the core tasks;
- at the development of EPO employment law, at the (absence of) internal dialogue with social partners; and
- at hidden attempts to de-centralize the EPO towards National Patent Offices and weaken the roles and competencies of the various organs defined under the EPC.

We also call you to reflect on whether the strategic governance of the EPO is compatible with the long-term continuity of the Organization's existence and with the future fulfilment of its mission, also in the context of its role in the Unitary Patent system.

We ask you to transmit this petition to your Ministries in order to convene such Conference without delay."

Additional more detailed information can be found in the annexes to this letter.

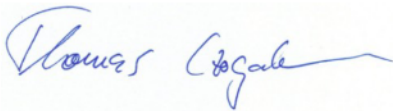
Yours sincerely,



C. Lopes  
Chair of SUEPO The Hague



I. Brumme  
Chair of SUEPO Munich



T. Czogalla  
Chair of SUEPO Berlin



J. Schaaf  
Chair of SUEPO Vienna

Copy: President of the EPO, A. Campinos

Attachment: Detailed information on the petition