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US National Body proposed Technical Direction
"Internationalization Technology"

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The participants in the recent ISO/IEC/ITU conference on Global Electronic Commerce made it clear that responsiveness to a multilingual, multicultural society was one of the most important areas. The U.S. thus supports further work on internationalization issues and considers the expression "cultural adaptability" too limiting for the required work. The communication of data throughout the world in unambiguous form is a cornerstone of the emerging electronic commerce without physical boundaries. This document outlines possible work areas and modes of operation for a new Technical Direction **"Internationalization Technology"**.

Work Areas

Character set technology: Additions to the repertoire of ISO/IEC 10646; specification of character properties and behavior of characters; development of a comprehensive method to tag data with relevant information needed for correct processing such as language, cultural environment, character set, etc; transliteration methods; mapping tables between various character sets.

Cultural conventions: Forms and formats of culturally sensitive data for all countries and cultural environments; a (managed) repository of such data for general use by systems, applications, and people. Subjects would include postal addresses; telephone numbers; paper sizes; date and time formats; calendars; numeric formats and decimal points; currencies: symbols, formats; measurement systems and their conversions.

User interfaces: interfaces adapted to the language and cultural environment chosen by the user, including layout of local keyboards and use of color and icons; rendering of complex text on screens and in print; input methods for multilingual text.

Organization

The U.S. recommends the formation of a new Technical Direction called "Internationalization Technology". This direction should embrace all organizations whose primary role is internationalization issues. The Technical Direction should therefore include :

⟨   SC 2 with its working groups for character set technology
⟨   SC 22/WG 20 or its successor
⟨   JTC 1 WG 5 on keyboards and user interfaces

The new Technical Direction should strengthen its liaison relationships, form and maintain relationships with consortia and other external agencies, and utilize **Technical Reports** to address cutting edge technologies.

NOTE: The US takes note of the differing opinions held by different national bodies over the final location of JTC 1 WG 5. We therefore would be amenable to further discussions about alternatives to the above proposal, either with other JTC 1 Technical Directions or with other ISO Technical Committees. We do not believe, however, that it is feasible to construct a clear and bounded scope for this work as a separate Technical Direction.