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FOUNDATION FOR INTELLIGENT PHYSICAL AGENTS	Osaka
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Osaka Press Release

AGENTS ON THE MOVE IN OSAKA

FIPA 98

In response to a focused call issued after the Palo Alto meeting, FIPA received several excellent suggestions that it began to examine in detail at a tranquil setting in Osaka. This work has made critical breakthroughs in many areas of concern so that the stage is now set for preparing the specifications, which will be issued near the end of year. The advances have been made in the following areas:

- ◆ The nature of the agent mobility platform has been clarified such that a FIPA type of approach can be extended and mapped onto the specifications coming from OMG's MASIF proposals.
- ◆ It will be possible to specify a range of security mechanisms concerning agents operating in an open environment.
- ◆ A reference architecture that specifies how communication between humans and agents can be handled which focuses on issues concerning: (a) the human/agent computational interface (screens, language and /or speech understanding capabilities etc.); (b) the human individual's profile; and, (c) the information needing to be conveyed to the human.
- ◆ Issues of sharing the terminology and ontology between agents. The actual ontologies are seen as web-based external services that are mediated by specific ontology agents to provide meaningful content to the rest of communicating agent community.

Thus the Osaka meeting has constructed the foundations on which FIPA 98 edifice will be built by its members who have two further meetings planned to discuss its shape. These meetings will take place in Dublin, Ireland in July and in North America in October.

FIPA 97

FIPA is beginning to receive comments on its FIPA 97 specifications and has established the requisite procedures for dealing with them. FIPA expects the volume of such comments to grow as trials of the specifications get under way in coming months. In response to such comments FIPA will not only clarify its 97 specifications but also expects to provide a "cook book" to aid developers to exploit the specifications effectively.

It is worth noting that FIPA plans to hold a seminar on the social impact of software agents at its Dublin meeting in July.