

Foundation for Intelligent Physical Agents

Source: Board of Directors

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FIPA Press Release: Kawasaki, October 1999

FIPA is an international organization dedicated to promoting the industry of intelligent agents by openly developing specifications supporting interoperability among agents and agent-based applications.

FIPA held its 15th meeting in Kawasaki, Japan from 18th to 22nd October 1999, hosted by Hitachi Systems Development Laboratories and the Intelligent Agent Society of Japan.

At this meeting, FIPA took measures to ensure coherency, completeness, and consistency of its work as well as its relevance to industrial and commercial interests. A three-stage process will govern future releases of the specifications, beginning first with a preliminary release of the technology by the corresponding Technical Committee. The second stage will ensure consistency with other FIPA specifications, whereas the third and final stage will verify the specifications with real-world implementations and demonstrated interoperability. Also, more formal methods of approving the specifications will be introduced. The details of this process will be finalized in January.

The specifications developed and to be released by the Technical Committees of FIPA in 1999 form the first stage. The second stage is to be achieved early 2000.

The FIPA abstract architecture work has continued to evolve, providing an integrated framework for FIPA technology developed over the last three years, as well as laying the foundation for further work. FIPA's other work during 1999 has continued the process of improving and enhancing the original FIPA 97 specifications on Agent Management and Agent Communication. It is expected to take weeks, rather than months, to update existing FIPA agent platforms to the new specifications, thereby allowing for the final release of the specifications within the year 2000.

FIPA issued a Call for Workplans, requesting proposals for technologies and applications to be considered by FIPA, as well as anticipated time schedules and efforts required to bring these through the three-stage process. This call will remain open, allowing for new

proposals to be considered at any FIPA meeting and thereby speeding the introduction of new agent technologies or applications into the standardization process.

Concerning the board of Directors, this month ended the terms of Manuel Aparicio (formerly IBM, now Saffron Technology), Richard Nicol (BT), and not least FIPA's very charismatic President Leonardo Chiariglione (CSELT) as members. During its annual General Assembly, FIPA elected new members to the Board, which now comprises:

Geoff Arnold, Sun Microsystems, USA
Bernard Burg, Motorola, France
Rob Hadingham, Nortel Networks, UK
Kiyoshi Kogure, NTT, JP
Francis McCabe, Fujitsu, USA
Richard Nicol, BT, UK (2nd term)
Donald Steiner, Siemens, DE
Hiroki Suguri, Comtec, JP

The Board accepted the resignation of Alain Briancon from the Board due to pressure from his other commitments.

The Board elected Donald Steiner to be the new President of FIPA, succeeding Leonardo Chiariglione. FIPA is deeply indebted to Leonardo for his success in establishing FIPA as *the* agent standardization body.

The next FIPA meeting will be hosted by BT in London, Jan 24-28, 2000. FIPA is looking forward to the new Millennium and to the challenges and opportunities it will bring.

Further information about FIPA, as well as the current specifications and details on the next meeting, can be found on its home page at www.fipa.org.