CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL AND MARKING OF ARTICLES OF PRECIOUS METALS

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2 Annexes
2 Appendices
10 August 2004

ANNEXES I AND II TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL AND MARKING OF ARTICLES OF PRECIOUS METALS

1) Amended by the Contracting States to the Convention* on the basis of a proposal agreed to by the Standing Committee at its forty-fifth meeting in Helsinki on 25 and 26 May 1998 (entered into force on 10 March 2000)

2) Amended by the Contracting States to the Convention* on the basis of a proposal agreed to by the Standing Committee at its fifty-third meeting in Vienna on 15 October 2002

Entered into force on 10 August 2004

English version

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* Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

ANNEX I

Definitions and Technical Requirements

1. Definitions

For the purpose of this Convention the following definitions apply:

1.1 Precious metals

Precious metals are platinum, gold, [palladium]* and silver.
Platinum is the most precious metal followed by gold, [palladium]* and silver.

1.2 Precious metal alloy

A precious metal alloy is a solid solution containing at least one precious metal.

1.3 Precious metal article

A precious metal article is any item of jewellery, goldsmith's, silversmith's or watchmaker's ware or any other object made entirely or in part from precious metals or their alloys.

1.4 Fineness

The fineness is the content of the named precious metals measured in terms of parts per thousand by weight of alloy.

1.5 Standard of fineness

The standard of fineness is the minimum content of the named precious metals measured in terms of parts per thousand by weight of alloy.

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* Shall apply only after the entry into force of the amendment to Article 2 of the Convention

1.6 Precious metal coating/plating

A precious metal coating or plating is a layer of precious metal or of precious metal alloy applied to all, or part of a precious metal article e.g. by chemical, electrochemical, mechanical or physical process.

1.7 Base metals

Base metals are all metals except platinum, gold, [palladium][**], and silver.

2. Technical requirements

2.1 The Convention does not apply to:

a) Articles made of alloys of a fineness less than 850 for platinum, 375 for gold, [500 for palladium][*] and 800 for silver;

b) Any article which is intended to be used for medical, dental, veterinary, scientific or technical purpose;

c) Legal tender;

d) Parts or incomplete semi-manufactures (e.g. metal parts or surface layer);

e) Raw materials such as bars, plates, wire and tubes;

f) Base metal articles coated with precious metal;

g) Any other object decided by the Standing Committee.

The articles referred to in a) to g) above cannot therefore be marked with the Common Control Mark

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2.2 Standards of fineness applied under the Convention[**]

for platinum:	999, 950, 900, 850
for gold:	999, 916, 750, 585, 375
[for palladium:	999, 950, 500][*]
for silver:	999, 925, 830, 800

2.2.1 Other standards of fineness may be recognised by the Standing Committee, depending on international developments.

2.3 Tolerance

2.3.1 No negative tolerance is permitted in relation to the standard of fineness indicated on the article.

2.3.2 Separate rules for special manufacturing techniques are established by the Standing Committee.

2.4 Use of solder

2.4.1 Solder may be used only for joining purposes. In principle, the standard of fineness of the solder shall be the same as the standard of fineness of the article.

2.4.2 Practical exceptions from this principle and other methods of joining are defined by the Standing Committee.

2.5 Use of base metal parts

2.5.1 Base metal parts in precious metal articles shall be prohibited except as follows:

a) Movements of propelling pencils, clocks and watches, the internal mechanism of lighters and similar mechanisms where precious metals are unsuitable for technical reasons;

[**] See Article 1, Paragraph 2 of the Convention

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b) Blades of knives and such parts of bottle openers and corkscrews and similar articles for which precious metals are unsuitable for technical reasons;

c) springs;

d) wire for joints of silver hinges;

e) pins for silver brooches.

Other exceptions can be decided on by the Standing Committee.

2.5.2 Rules for joining base metal parts permitted under paragraph 2.5.1 to precious metal parts are established by the Standing Committee.

2.5.3 Base metal parts where practicable shall be stamped or engraved "METAL" or with a specific designation of the metal; where this is impracticable these shall be readily distinguishable by colour from the precious metal. These requirements shall not apply to clock or watch movements. Base metal shall not be used for the purpose of strengthening, weighting or filling.

2.6 Use of non-metallic substances

The use of non-metallic parts shall be permitted provided these are clearly distinguishable from the precious metal, they are not plated or coloured to resemble precious metals and their extent is visible. The Standing Committee can decide on further details.

2.7 Coating of precious metal articles

Precious metal coating must be of at least the same fineness as the article or of a more precious metal.

2.7.1 The Standing Committee decides on permitted coatings.

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ANNEX II

Control by the authorised assay office(s)

1. General

The authorised assay office(s) (thereafter referred to as "the assay office") shall examine whether articles of precious metals which are presented to it in order to be marked with the Common Control Mark fulfil the conditions of Annex I to the Convention.

1.1 If an article is found by the assay office to be complete as to all its metallic parts and if it complies with the provisions of Annex I to this Convention, the assay office shall, on request, mark the article with its assay office mark and the Common Control Mark. In cases where the Common Control Mark is applied the assay office shall, before the article leaves its custody, ensure that the article is fully marked in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs below.

2. Methods of analysis

The assay office shall use any of the approved methods of analysis in assaying articles of precious metals as listed under Appendix I. The Standing Committee can amend this list according to future developments. Other test methods may be used to evaluate the homogeneity of the batch.

3. Sampling

The number of items taken from a batch and the number of samples taken from these items for testing and analysis shall be sufficient to establish the homogeneity of the batch and ensure that all parts of all articles controlled in the batch are up to the required standard of fineness. Sampling guidelines are established by the Standing Committee.

4. Marking

The following minimum marks shall be applied on articles which satisfy the criteria in Annex I:

a) a registered responsibility mark as described in paragraph 4.2;

b) the mark of the assay office;

c) the Common Control Mark as described in paragraph 4.3.; and

d) the corresponding fineness mark in arabic numerals;

Marks b) and c) shall be punched on the article by the assay office

Marks a) and d) can be applied by punching, casting or engraving on the article.

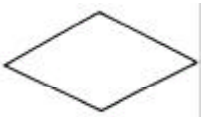
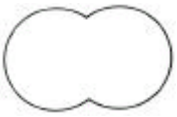
Whenever possible, all marks shall be placed in immediate proximity to each other.

Other marks which are not to be confused with the marks mentioned above are allowed as additional marks.

4.1 The Standing Committee can decide on other methods of marking articles.

4.2 The responsibility mark referred to in paragraph 4 a), shall be registered in an official register of the Contracting State and/or one of its assay offices, in whose territory the article in question is controlled.

4.3 The Common Control Mark shall consist of the representation of a balance together with the number in Arabic numerals showing the standard of fineness of the article in parts per thousand in relief on a lined background surrounded by a shield indicating the nature of the precious metal as follows:

for platinum articles:	
for gold articles:	
[for palladium articles:]*	
for silver articles:	

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4.3.1 All different standards of fineness listed by the Standing Committee can be represented.

4.3.2 The approved sizes of the Common Control Mark are listed in Appendix 2. This list can be amended by the Standing Committee.

4.4 Articles consisting of more than one alloy of the same precious metal

Where an article consists of different alloys of the same precious metal, the fineness mark and the Common Control Mark applied shall be that of the lowest fineness present in the article. Exceptions can be decided on by the Standing Committee.

4.5 Articles consisting of parts

If an article consists of parts which are hinged or readily separable, the above marks shall be applied to the main part. Where practicable the Common Control Mark shall be applied also to the lesser parts.

4.6 Articles consisting of different precious metal alloys

4.6.1 If an article consists of different precious metal alloys, and if the colour and extent of each alloy are clearly visible, the marks referred to in paragraph 4 a), b), c) and d) shall be applied on one precious metal alloy and the appropriate Common Control Mark on the other(s).

4.6.2 If an article consists of different precious metal alloys and if the colour and extent of each alloy is not visible, the marks referred to in paragraph 4 a), b), c) and d) shall be applied on the least precious metal. The Common Control Mark relating to the more precious metals may not be applied.

4.6.3 Exceptions from the rules above justified by technical reasons are decided on by the Standing Committee.

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APPENDIX I

Methods of analysis and other test methods

The testing of articles of precious metals submitted for marking with the Common Control Mark consists of the two following steps:

1. the evaluation of the homogeneity of the batch, and

2. the determination of the fineness of the alloy.

1. The homogeneity of the batch may be evaluated by one of the following test methods:

a) touchstone testing;

b) testing by X-ray spectroscopy; and

c) analysis of scraps assembled from several pieces taken out of the batch.

2. The fineness of the precious metals content is determined by one of the following approved methods of analysis:

Platinum: Gravimetric method after precipitation of diammonium-hexachloroplatinate (Document EN 31210 / ISO 11210: 1995)

Gravimetric method by reduction with mercurous chloride (Document EN 31489 / ISO 11489: 1995)

Spectrometric method / ICP solution (Document pr EN 31494 / ISO/DIS 11494)

Atomic absorption (Document ISO/WD 11492)

Gold: Cupellation method (Document EN 31426 / ISO 11426: 1997)

Spectrometric method / ICP solution (Document ISO/WD 11493)

[**Palladium:** Gravimetric determination with dimethyl glyoxime (Document EN 31490 / ISO 11490: 1995)

Spectrometric method / ICP solution (Document EN 31495 / ISO/DIS 11495)]*

Silver: Volumetric (potentiometric) method using potassium bromide (Document EN 31427 / ISO 11427: 1993**)

Volumetric (potentiometric) method using sodium chloride or potassium chloride (Document ISO 13756: 1997)

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** As amended by technical corrigendum 1:1994: "Clause 4.2: **Potassium bromide, solution,** *c*(KBr) = 0,1 mol/l"

APPENDIX II

Sizes of the Common Control Marks

The sizes (height) of the Common Control Mark are:

for **platinum**:	not smaller than 0.75 mm
for **gold**:	- 1.5 mm - 1.0 mm - 0.75 mm - 0.5 mm
[for **palladium**	not smaller than 0.75 mm][*]
for **silver**:	- 4.0 mm - 2.0 mm - 1.5 mm - 1.0 mm - 0.75 mm

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