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EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE (MUNICH)
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5 January 2026

International Patent Application No. PCT/EP2024/085668

In the name of Tenaris Connections B.V.

Our Ref: JAS/P249803WO00

We write in response to the Written Opinion of the IPEA for the above-noted application. We file herewith amended claims 1 to 11 to replace, without prejudice, all claims as currently on file. Copies of the amended pages showing amendments as “*tracked changes*” are also enclosed herewith.

Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to require that the cutting tool comprises three or more cutting teeth. Basis is found in paragraph 6 of page 1 of the description as originally filed.

Claims 3 and 4 as currently on file, now claims 4 and 5, have been amended such that they are dependent on claim 5 as currently on file, now claim 3, to clarify that the negatively inclined cutting edge is for cutting a varying-width thread with a hooked flank. Basis is found in paragraph 11 of page 1 of the description as originally filed.

Claim 8 has been amended to require a cutting tool according to claims 1 or 2.

The remaining claims have been renumbered and their dependencies updated.

Novelty

Amended claim 1 is novel over D7 because D7 does not contain any clear and unambiguous disclosure that each of the stab flank cutting edges and each of the load flank cutting edges having the same height. D7 states, in paragraph [0039] “The sizes of the three protruding portions 11 a to 11 c of the first region portion 7 a are different from one another.” ‘Different sizes’ can refer to the heights of the protruding portions being different and there is nothing in D7 to indicate otherwise. D7 suggests in paragraph [0039] that there may be a difference in width and that there may be a difference in height of the crest portions 5a, 5d, and 5e such that the crests are a roughing edge, an intermediate finishing edge, and a finishing edge respectively.

Additionally, claim 1 is novel over D7 because D7 does not disclose that the spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from the spacing between the load flank cutting edges because there is no

disclosure in D7 of the relative sizes of 11c, 11b, and 11a. Therefore, claim 1 is novel over D7 due to the inclusion of the features of original claims 3 and 6.

D8 only shows two cutting teeth, while amended claim 1 now requires three or more cutting teeth. Additionally, D8 states that *"The cutting edge height of the fine cutting teeth and rough cutting teeth is $3 \pm 0.15\text{mm}$."* However, Figure 3 of D8 shows the cutting edge height as a single measurement of the tooth height, as opposed to a stab flank cutting edge measurement and a load flank cutting edge measurement. Given that the top of the cutting teeth and the cutting tool body of D8 are tapered, it is not possible to determine based on the disclosure of D8 alone that both flank cutting edges of both teeth of D8 are the same height. Furthermore, there is no disclosure in D8 of the spacings of the flank cutting edges meeting the requirements of original claim 6 which has been incorporated into amended claim 1. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is novel over D8.

D9 also only refers to a first and second outer diameter cutting edge, while amended claim 1 requires three or more cutting teeth. D9 also contains no disclosure of the heights of the flank cutting edges of the different cutting teeth being the same, and there is nothing in D9 which would lead the skilled person to the cutting teeth according to claim 1. D9 merely states that, for each tooth, H1 is greater than H2, and similarly H3 is greater than H4. No relationship is suggested between H1 and H3 or H2 and H4. Therefore, amended claim 1 is novel over D9.

Inventive Step

None of D7 to D9 discloses the cutting tool having three or more cutting teeth along with the stab flank cutting edges being equally spaced from each other and the load flank cutting edges being equally spaced from each other. The technical effect of this feature is that the cutting of the thread is improved because, due to the spacings of the corresponding flank cutting edges being equal, the alignment of the cutting tool as each cutting tooth cuts the helical thread on the pipe is improved, and the resulting thread has the appropriate spacing and improved quality.

In the cutting tools of D8 and D9, where there are only two cutting teeth, there is only one spacing between each pair of load or stab flank cutting edges. Even if the skilled person were to amend these cutting tools to add an additional cutting tooth, they would have no motivation to arrange the third cutting tooth such that all three requirements are met – that the stab flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other; that the load flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other; and that the spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from, and preferably smaller than, the spacing between the load flank cutting edges.

Starting from the cutting tool of D7, there is no mention in D7 that the spacings of the cutting teeth meet the requirements of claim 1, nor does D7 provide any motivation for the skilled person to arrange the cutting teeth to meet the requirements of claim 1. It would not be obvious, without the application of hindsight, to modify the tool of D7 to have equal spacings between the stab flank cutting edges and equal spacings between the load flank cutting edges.

A further distinguishing feature of the claim over D7, D8, and D9 is that each of the stab flank cutting edges has the same height, and each of the load flank cutting edges has the same height.

In paragraph [0039] of D7, it is stated that, *“By making the respective sizes of these protruding portions 11 a to 11 c different from one another, cutting edge portions, that is, the crest portions which are formed by the respective protruding portions are made as a finishing edge, an intermediate finishing edge which leaves a cutting allowance relative to the finishing edge, and a roughing edge which further leaves a cutting allowance relative to the intermediate finishing edge”*. D7 therefore teaches away from having cutting teeth of equal height.

Neither D8 nor D9 state that the height of the cutting teeth are the same at both flank cutting edges. The skilled person would therefore have no motivation to modify these documents to meet the requirements of claim 1.

Claim 8 has been amended to be directed toward a method of cutting a varying-width helical thread on a pipe. Neither D1 nor D4, cited by the Examiner against claim 8, describe cutting a varying-width helical thread on a pipe. The skilled person looking to cut a varying-width helical thread on a pipe would not consider D1 because this document makes no mention of the width of the thread which is cut. The skilled person would not consider D4 because this document is directed toward manufacturing a screw rolling die and makes no mention of the width of the thread. Similarly, D9 does not mention cutting a varying-width thread. The skilled person would have no reason to apply the methods in these documents to cutting a varying-width thread. This is in addition to the fact that the cutting tools used in the methods in D1 and D4 are not mentioned as being appropriate for cutting a varying-width thread. Therefore, claim 8 involves an inventive step over the prior art.

Therefore, claim 8 involves an inventive step over the prior art.

Clarity

Claims 4 and 5 have been amended to clarify the meaning of negatively inclined. They are now dependent on claim 3, which is directed toward the system including the cutting tool and require that the cutting edges are negatively inclined for cutting a hooked flank. Basis for this amendment is found on page 1 of the description as originally filed, which states, “Optionally, each stab flank cutting edge is negatively inclined. Optionally, each load flank cutting edge is negatively inclined. Such a cutting tool can be used to cut a varying-width thread with one or two hooked flanks.” Since these claims are dependent on the system claim (claim 3) which includes the cutting tool and the computer controlled machine, and a controller programmed to cut a helical thread on a pipe. Such an amendment brings further clarity to the meaning of negatively inclined cutting edges. Therefore, claims 4 and 5 are clear.

Conclusion

We request the issuance of a positive International Preliminary Report on Patentability. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a favourable IPRP cannot be issued on the basis of the above-noted amendments and remarks contained herein, we hereby request a telephone discussion under Rule 66.6 PCT, or, less preferably, the issuance of an additional Written Opinion under Rule 66.4 PCT.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. James SHORT
For and on behalf of
BOULT WADE TENNANT LLP
Association Number 505



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EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE (MUNICH)
80298 MUNICH
Germany

30th March, 2026

International Patent Application No. PCT/EP2024/085668
In the name of Tenaris Connections B.V.
Our Ref: JAS/P249803WO00

The Examiner is thanked for making time for a phone call on 30th March, 2026.

As noted by the Examiner, claim 8 had not been amended as planned to require a cutting tool according to claims 1 or 2. The Examiner also raised a couple of minor clarity points.

Accordingly, we file herewith an updated version of the claims.

We look forward to receiving a positive International Preliminary Report on Patentability.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. James SHORT
For and on behalf of
BOULT WADE TENNANT LLP
Association Number 505

CLAIMS:

1. A cutting tool for cutting a helical thread on a pipe, comprising three or more cutting teeth, wherein each of the three or more cutting teeth:

- has a stab flank cutting edge for cutting a stab flank;
- has a load flank cutting edge for cutting a load flank;
- each of the stab flank cutting edges has the same height;
- each of the load flank cutting edges has the same height;
- the stab flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other;
- the load flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other; and
- the spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from, and preferably smaller than, the spacing between the load flank cutting edges.

2. A cutting tool according to claim 1, wherein:

- each of the stab flank cutting edges has the same geometry; and
- each of the load flank cutting edges has the same geometry.

3. A system comprising a cutting tool according to any preceding claim, a computer-controlled machine, and a controller programmed to control the machine to cut a helical thread on a pipe by engaging the pipe with the cutting tool during relative motion of the pipe and cutting tool, the relative motion including a rotation about the longitudinal axis and an axial displacement with respect to the longitudinal axis, wherein:

the relative motion is controlled by the controller such that a tooth of the cutting tool cuts a helical thread on the pipe by cutting a stab flank with a stab flank cutting edge of a cutting tooth and cutting a load flank with a load flank cutting edge of the same cutting tooth.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the/each stab flank cutting edge of the cutting tool is negatively inclined.

5. The system of any of claim 3 or 4, wherein the/each load flank cutting edge of the cutting tool is negatively inclined.

6. The system of any of claims 3 to 5, wherein the relative motion is controlled by the controller such that a tooth of the cutting tool cuts a varying-width helical thread on the pipe.

7. The system of any claims 3 to claim 6, wherein:

the relative motion is controlled by the controller such that the cutting tool carries out two passes;

- in one of the two passes, the cutting tool cuts the stab flank; and
- in the other of the two passes, the cutting tool cuts the load flank.

8. A method of cutting a varying-width helical thread on a pipe using the cutting tool of claim 1 or claim 2, comprising the steps of:

- providing a pipe having a longitudinal axis;
- installing a cutting tool in a computer-controlled machine;
- cutting a helical thread on the pipe by cutting at least a portion of a stab flank with a stab flank cutting edge of a cutting tooth of the cutting tool and cutting at least a portion of a load flank with a load flank cutting edge of the same cutting tooth.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the cutting tool is not removed from the computer-controlled machine until both of the load flank and stab flank have been cut.

10. The method of claim 8 or claim 9, wherein:

the at least a portion of the stab flank is first cut and then the at least a portion of the load flank is cut; or

the at least a portion of the load flank is first cut and then the at least a portion of the stab flank is cut.

11. The method of any one of claims 8 to 10, wherein the helical thread is cut by:

engaging the pipe with the cutting tool during relative motion of the pipe and cutting tool to cut a continuous stab flank in a single stab flank pass; and

engaging the pipe with the cutting tool during relative motion of the pipe and cutting tool to cut a continuous load flank in a single load flank pass.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference JAS/P249803WO00	FOR FURTHER ACTION		See Form PCT/IPEA/416
International application No. PCT/EP2024/085668	International filing date (day/month/year) 11.12.2024	Priority date (day/month/year) 11.12.2023	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC INV. B23B27/06			
Applicant Tenaris Connections B.V.			
1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36. 2. This REPORT consists of a total of <u>7</u> sheets, including this cover sheet. 3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising: a. ☒ a total of <u>7</u> sheets, as follows: ☒ sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority, unless those sheets were superseded or cancelled, and any accompanying letters (see Rules 46.5, 66.8, 70.16, 91.2, and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions). ☐ sheets containing rectifications, where the decision was made by this Authority not to take them into account because they were not authorized by or notified to this Authority at the time when this Authority began to draw up this report, and any accompanying letters (Rules 66.4bis, 70.2(e), 70.16 and 91.2). ☐ superseded sheets and any accompanying letters, where this Authority either considers that the superseding sheets contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, or the superseding sheets were not accompanied by a letter indicating the basis for the amendments in the application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box (see Rule 70.16(b)). b. ☐ a separate electronic file containing a sequence listing (<i>sent to the International Bureau only</i>)			
4. This report contains indications relating to the following items: ☒ Box No. I Basis of the report ☐ Box No. II Priority ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited ☒ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application ☒ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application			
Date of submission of the demand 13.10.2025		Date of completion of this report 16.04.2026	
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0		Authorized officer Schäfer, Lisa Telephone No. +31 70 340-3830 	

Re Item V

Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1 Reference is made to the following documents:

- D1 JP H09 239619 A (SUMITOMO METAL IND) 16 September 1997 (1997-09-16)
- D2 US 4 233 867 A (ZIMMERMAN WILLIAM R) 18 November 1980 (1980-11-18)
- D3 DE 156 320 C (EMANUEL BAIER [DE]) 15 November 1904 (1904-11-15)
- D4 JP 2004 345076 A (SANGAKU RENKEI KIKO KYUSHU KK) 9 December 2004 (2004-12-09)
- D5 CN 113 333 875 A (UNIV XIANGTAN) 3 September 2021 (2021-09-03)
- D6 EP 0 103 071 B1 (PMC IND INC [US]) 10 September 1986 (1986-09-10)

The following documents were not cited in the international search report.

- D7 US 2016/114399 A1 (YOSHIBA DAISUKE [JP] ET AL) 28 April 2016 (2016-04-28)
- D8 CN 103 252 540 A (KUNSHAN HIECISE TOOLS CO LTD) 21 August 2013 (2013-08-21)
- D9 WO 2019/132349 A1 (POSCO [KR]; RES INST IND SCIENCE & TECH [KR]) 4 July 2019 (2019-07-04)

2 Claims 1-7

2.1 D1 is regarded as being the prior art closest to the subject-matter of claim 1, and discloses (references in parentheses refer to this document, see figure 1 and paras. [0012], [0016]):

A cutting tool (4) for cutting a helical thread on a pipe (1),
comprising three or more cutting teeth (see figure 1b, "blades" 4a),

wherein each of the three or more cutting teeth:

has a stab flank cutting edge for cutting a stab flank;

has a load flank cutting edge for cutting a load flank (the respective flanks of teeth 4a in figure 1);

each of the stab flank cutting edges has the same height (see par. [0016], "three blades 4a having substantially the same shape...");

each of the load flank cutting edges has the same height (see par. [0016], "three blades 4a having substantially the same shape...");

the stab flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other (see figure 1a);

the load flank cutting edges are equally spaced from each other (see figure 1a);
and

~~the spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from, and preferably smaller than, the spacing between the load flank cutting edges.~~

2.2 The subject-matter of claim 1 therefore differs from this known cutting tool in that

the spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from, and preferably smaller than, the spacing between the load flank cutting edges
and is therefore new (Article 33(2) PCT).

2.3 The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as how to adapt the cutting tool of D1 to allow for conveniently cutting a high quality varying-width thread.

2.4 The solution to this problem proposed in claim 1 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:

The distinguishing feature makes the tool of D1 suitable for cutting a varying-width thread in a convenient way, wherein the tool can be used to cut both flanks of the thread without removal from the cutting apparatus, thereby also providing a better quality of a varying-width thread.

D1-D4, D6-D9 do (at least) not disclose "three or more cutting teeth" in conjunction with "the (equal) spacing between the stab flank cutting edges is different from[, and preferably smaller than,] the (equal) spacing between the load flank cutting edges".

D5 suggests a cutting tool comprising said features, but only in conjunction with

stab and load flank cutting edges having different heights and not in the context of cutting a varying-width thread. Hence, it wouldn't be obvious to the skilled person to extract a respective teaching from D5 and to combine it with any of D1-D4 or D6-9 in order to solve the problem posed.

D5 does not disclose "each of the stab flank cutting edges has the same height, each of the load flank cutting edges has the same height" and also teaches away therefrom as the essence of its disclosure is the provision of a variation in height of the cutting teeth so that subsequent teeth can remove more material. Therefore, when starting from D5, it would not be obvious to the skilled person to equalise the height of the cutting teeth.

Consequently, the subject-matter of claim 1 is considered as involving an inventive step.

2.5 Claims 2-7 are dependent on claim 1 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.

3 Claims 8-11

3.1 The method of independent claim 8 refers to "using a cutting tool according to claim 1". Consequently, the subject-matter of claim 8 also meets the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.

3.2 Claims 9-11 are dependent on claim 8 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.

Re Item VII

Certain defects in the international application

4 The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).

5 Independent claim 1 is not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT, which in the present case seems appropriate, with those features known in combination from the prior art being placed in the preamble (Rule 6.3(b)(i) PCT) and the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT).

- 6 Independent claim 8 is not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT, which in the present case seems appropriate, with those features known in combination from the prior art being placed in the preamble (Rule 6.3(b)(i) PCT) and the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT).

Re Item VIII

Certain observations on the international application

- 7 Figures 2A, 2B, 2C and related passages in the description are not in line with the claims (Art. 6 PCT).
- 8 Claim-like clauses on pages 6-10 are not in line with the claims (Art. 6 PCT).

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/EP2024/085668

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **language**, this report is based on
- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
 - ☐ a translation of the international application into , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
 - ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b))
 - ☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4(a))
 - ☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2(a) and/or 55.3(a) and (b))
2. With regard to the **elements*** of the international application, this report is based on (*replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report*):

Description, Pages

1-8 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-11 filed with the letter of

30-03-2026

Drawings, Sheets

1/6-6/6 as originally filed

- ☐ a sequence listing - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.
3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
- ☐ the description, pages
 - ☐ the claims, Nos.
 - ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
 - ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since either they are considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, or they were not accompanied by a letter indicating the basis for the amendments in the application as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rules 70.2(c) and (c-bis)):
- ☐ the description, pages
 - ☐ the claims, Nos.
 - ☐ the drawings, sheets/figs
 - ☐ the sequence listing (*specify*):
5. ☐ This report has been established:
- ☐ taking into account the **rectification of an obvious mistake** authorized by or notified to this Authority under Rule 91 (Rules 66.1(d-bis) and 70.2(e)).
 - ☐ without taking into account the **rectification of an obvious mistake** authorized by or notified to this Authority under Rule 91(Rules 66.4bis and 70.2(e)).

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.
PCT/EP2024/085668

6. ☒ With regard to top-up searches (Rules 66.1 *ter* and 70.2(f)):
- ☒ A top-up search was carried out by this Authority on 13.02.2026 (all discovered documents are listed in the Supplemental Box Relating to Top-up Search).
 - ☐ Additional relevant documents have been discovered during the top-up search.
 - ☐ No top-up search was carried out by this Authority because it would serve no useful purpose.
7. ☐ Supplementary international search report(s) from Authority(ies) has/have been received and taken into account in establishing this report (Rule 45bis.8(b) and (c)).

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded".

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	<u>1-11</u>
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	<u>1-11</u>
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	<u>1-11</u>
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7):

see separate sheet

Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

see separate sheet

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

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NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(PCT Rule 71.1)

To: Boult Wade Tennant LLP Salisbury Square House 8 Salisbury Square London EC4Y 8AP ROYAUME UNI		Date of mailing (day/month/year) 16.04.2026	
Applicant's or agent's file reference JAS/P249803WO00		IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION	
International application No. PCT/EP2024/085668	International filing date (day/month/year) 11.12.2024	Priority date (day/month/year) 11.12.2023	
Applicant Tenaris Connections B.V.			

1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary report on patentability and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.

4. REMINDER

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices) (Article 39(1)) (see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/IB/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary report on patentability. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

The applicant's attention is drawn to Article 33(5), which provides that the criteria of novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability described in Article 33(2) to (4) merely serve the purposes of international preliminary examination and that "any Contracting State may apply additional or different criteria for the purposes of deciding whether, in that State, the claimed inventions is patentable or not" (see also Article 27(5)). Such additional criteria may relate, for example, to exemptions from patentability, requirements for enabling disclosure, clarity and support for the claims.

Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0	Authorized Officer Galatioto, Maruska Tel. +49 89 2399-7849	
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