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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING CONFIGURABLE LAYERS AND PROTOCOLS IN A COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

(57) Abstract: The layers and protocols of an air interface layering architecture are designed to be modular and can be modified and upgraded to support new features, perform complex tasks, and implement additional functionality. Prior to commencement of data communication between a first entity (e.g., an access terminal) and a second entity (e.g., a radio network), a set of layers and/or protocols is selected for negotiation. For each selected layer and protocol (i.e., each attribute), a list of attribute values considered acceptable to the first entity is determined. The selected attributes and their associated attribute values are sent from the first entity and, in response, a list of processed attributes and their associated lists of processed attribute values are received. Each list of processed attribute values includes attribute values considered acceptable to the second entity. The layers and protocols in the first entity are then configured in accordance with the received list of processed attributes and their associated processed attribute values. Other features related to configurable layers and protocols are also provided.

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