

Press Release

Heads of the World's Five Largest Intellectual Property Offices to Focus Co-operation on Initiatives that Benefit Users

Videoconference hosted by JPO, 23 June 2021

The heads of the world's five largest intellectual property offices met virtually on 23 June. The 14th annual meeting of the IP5, as the offices are collectively known, was hosted by the Japan Patent Office (JPO), and attended by the European Patent Office (EPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). Together, the IP5 account for around 80% of all patent applications filed worldwide. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) attended the meeting as an observer.

The meeting was chaired by Kasutani Toshihide, Commissioner of the JPO, with the participation of António Campinos, President of the EPO; Kim Yongrae, Commissioner of KIPO; Shen Changyu, Commissioner of the CNIPA; and Drew Hirshfeld, Performing the functions and duties of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO. On behalf of Daren Tang, Director General of the WIPO, Lisa Jorgenson, Deputy Director General of WIPO, attended the meeting as an observer.

Since the launch of IP5 co-operation in 2007, the IP5 offices have been advancing joint projects and initiatives to promote an efficient, cost-effective and user-friendly international patent system.

At this year's annual meeting, the IP5 noted the significance of identifying user needs in a timely and accurate manner, and of providing tangible outcomes that are meaningful to users. They acknowledged two major outcomes, and agreed to promote these steadily in the future, with a view to delivering benefits to offices and users:

1. A new emerging technologies and artificial intelligence (NET/AI) roadmap, which outlines potential collaborative opportunities for the IP5 offices to enhance operational efficiency and services through the use of new

emerging technologies and AI, as well as to address new challenges concerning the acquisition of rights to these technologies. The roadmap will serve as a blueprint for future IP5 joint endeavors.

2. The launch of two new projects to further improve the alignment of patent practices and procedures among the IP5 offices with the aim of making patent prosecution more user-friendly: i) A global assignment to harmonize streamlined procedures for the transfer of rights; and ii) The harmonization of allowable features in drawings in order to standardize requirements regarding size, color/monochrome, etc.

A separate meeting took place between the heads of office and industry associations from the IP5 regions, namely: the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA), BusinessEurope (BE), the Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO), the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), the Korea Intellectual Property Association (KINPA), and the Patent Protection Association of China (PPAC).

In this meeting, participants discussed co-operation between the IP5 offices and users in the post-COVID-19 era, and IP5 endeavors concerning NET/AI and the harmonization of patent practices and procedures. The IP5 industry associations expressed their support for the IP5 offices' initiatives and confirmed that they will continue to engage in dialogue and co-operation with the IP5 offices and industries.

The IP5 offices reaffirmed that IP plays an essential role in protecting and promoting innovations to overcome COVID-19 and boosting economic recovery. The IP5 offices then had an exchange on their respective initiatives to help address social challenges through the use of intellectual property rights (IPRs), and acknowledged the necessity of taking a long-term perspective on IPRs and their integral role in addressing social challenges.

The next IP5 Heads of Office meeting will be hosted by the EPO in 2022.

More information on IP5 co-operation can be found at www.fiveipoffices.org.