

## **2020 IP5 Joint Statement**

**21 July 2020**

The heads of the IP5 offices, namely the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), held their 13th annual meeting for the first time via videoconference on 21 July 2020. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in June in Chengdu, China, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The videoconference was chaired by Dr. Shen Changyu, Commissioner of the CNIPA and was also attended by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in an observer capacity.

The five heads of office expressed serious concern over the COVID-19 pandemic, which has posed a major threat to public life and health, and presents an enormous challenge for economic development and growth across the globe. Recognizing that the intellectual property (IP) system has been contributing significantly to human health and socio-economic development all over the world, they reaffirmed the importance of the protection of IP rights to support the research, innovation and creation now urgently needed across a broad range of industries to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic. They emphasized that, especially in times of crisis, IP plays a key role in boosting economic recovery and creating employment.

The IP5 heads also took stock of the measures put in place by each of the five offices to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on applicants and to promote innovation that is instrumental in winning the battle against this virus. These include providing assistance and relief to those affected by the outbreak, and continuing to facilitate access to patent information, which presents a wealth of technological knowledge related to the detection, prevention and treatment of COVID-19. They stressed that, through all of these measures, the five offices continue to support inventors and researchers everywhere with high-quality IP rights that help them to attract investment, enter new markets, and foster technology transfer.

The five offices will continue the co-operation with the WIPO and support its activities to uphold and strengthen balanced intellectual property systems around the world.

The heads of office also reaffirmed the importance of stakeholder engagement in IP5 cooperation. The five offices have maintained close communication with IP5 industry associations to keep them informed about both the offices' measures in response to COVID-19 and progress on IP5 projects. The heads welcomed efforts of IP5 Industry to work actively with the five offices and to provide input for current and future IP5 initiatives.

Acknowledging the importance of further strengthening the IP5 cooperation and the needs of patent system users for predictability, quality and timeliness, they reiterated their joint commitment to “provide better services to users and the public, so as to enhance the role of intellectual property in stimulating innovation and promoting socio-economic development”. To this aim, they confirmed that the five offices, during this crucial period, will continue to:

- Develop initiatives and share best practices to spur and incentivize innovation, so as to support innovators and the international IP community in their contributions to the recovery of our economies and societies.
- Pursue IP5 initiatives to advance cooperation in new emerging technologies and artificial intelligence; enhance harmonization of practices and procedures; strengthen work-sharing efforts; improve the quality and efficiency of examination; and further enhance access to patent information.

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