

Press Release

Focus on increased user-friendliness, trust, and future thinking as IP5 Heads of Office meet in Tokyo

Tokyo, Japan, 2 June 2016

The heads of the world's five largest intellectual property offices met in Tokyo on 2 June to take stock of achievements and agree on directions for future co-operation. The meeting brought together the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China (SIPO) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), collectively known as the "IP5", which together account for around 80% of all patent applications being filed worldwide.

At their 9th annual meeting, the heads of the five offices welcomed recent progress on their joint projects and committed themselves to further strengthen and develop IP5 co-operation, in order to make intellectual property system more attractive to users worldwide, who are expanding their global business activities.

The meeting was chaired by Hitoshi ITO, Commissioner of the JPO, with the participation of Benoît BATTISTELLI, President of the EPO; CHOI Donggyou, Commissioner of KIPO; HE Zhimin, Deputy Commissioner of SIPO; and Michelle K. LEE, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO. Francis GURRY, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), attended the meeting as an observer.

Since the launch of IP5 co-operation in 2007, the IP5 offices have been advancing their cooperative initiatives. With a view to enhancing their co-operation further to provide a better service for users and the public, the heads of the IP5 offices agreed on the IP5 Joint Statement in Tokyo 2016, establishing three major initiatives as future directions for IP5 co-operation: i) enhancing relations with users; ii) continuing to provide high-quality and reliable examination results; and iii) exploring the IP offices' readiness to respond to

emerging technologies.

The IP5 Heads also highlighted major achievements resulting from their joint projects:

- a) Improved public access to information on how patent applications are progressing at different patent offices around the world by offering online access to all IP5 patent file wrappers;
- b) **Extension of the IP5 Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) pilot program*** establishment of guidelines concerning the common PPH request form, clarification of the IP5 Offices' PPH implementation practice, and publication of these achievements to users; and
 - * (Notice) After the Heads of Office Meeting, the IP5 Working Group 3 has agreed to begin the extended program on 6 January 2017 lasting three years until 5 January 2019
- c) Launch of a 5-year pilot programme in which the IP5 Offices, at the request of patent applicants, perform a limited number of search reports and opinions for international applications filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) in a collaborative manner.

Prior to the meeting, the IP5 Heads met representatives of industry groups from the five regions to solicit input and better understand their needs, so as to further their mutual co-operation. These industry groups are: 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).

The next IP5 Heads of Office meeting will be hosted by the EPO in 2017.