

Advancing Global IP Cooperation



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Gyeongbokgung Palace at night in Seoul, Korea

Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the WIPO Korea Funds-in-Trust

International Cooperation Division

On July 11, 2024, KIPO hosted a commemoration event for the 20th Anniversary of the WIPO Korea Funds-in-Trust (Korea FIT) at the headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva. Established in 2004, the Korea FIT is a collaborative initiative between KIPO and WIPO aimed at bridging the global IP gap between developed and developing countries by strengthening IP capacity and providing technical assistance. The ceremony served as an opportunity to reflect on two decades of achievements under the FIT cooperation between Korea and WIPO and to discuss its future direction.

Over the past 20 years, Korea has contributed approximately KRW 18 billion (CHF 15.4 million) to the Korea FIT and has jointly implemented more than 180 projects, serving a broad range of beneficiaries. In particular, these projects have had meaningful impact in three core areas: 1) engaging youth through IP education, 2) supporting women leadership in science and innovation, and 3) enhancing IP utilization by SMEs. In recent years, the Korea FIT has expanded further to support modernization of IP offices through the use of AI technologies.

Engaging Youth through IP Education

The Korea FIT has helped raise global awareness of IP among children by fostering early engagement in creativity and invention. As part of this effort, the animated series “Getting Creative with Pororo” was produced as a way to reach young audiences through a popular

children’s character. There are six episodes to introduce the concept of IP rights and the invention process in an accessible and engaging format. The miniseries is uploaded to be freely available to all on WIPO’s official YouTube channel and has been translated into nine languages—Korean, English, French, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Portuguese, and Thai. It has reached millions of children worldwide, promoting an early appreciation for innovation and IP.

Empowering Women Scientists and Innovators

The “WIPO-UNESCO-KIPO Leadership Course on Intellectual Property, Science and Innovation for Women Scientists and Innovators” was organized through the FIT Korea to support gender-inclusive innovation. The curriculum covered topics such as IP commercialization strategies, IP valuation and management, and recent trends in IP rights, offering practical guidance on leveraging IP throughout the R&D and commercialization process. The first session was held in Geneva in April 2023, followed by a second session in Seoul in September 2024 with participation by 23 women scientists from around the world. This initiative reflects the strong commitment to empower women scientists and innovators by equipping them with practical IP knowledge essential for research commercialization and leadership in innovation.

Enhancing SME IP Utilization Capacity

To enhance IP capacity in the business sector, the Korea FIT supported the

development of IP Panorama, a global e-learning platform that enables SME leaders and employees to understand and apply IP strategies in real-world business contexts. Originally, IP Panorama 1.0 was launched in 2007, translated into 24 languages, and used by more than 30,000 individuals across 175 countries. Building on this success, the modernized IP Panorama 2.0 was launched in 2022 to reflect current IP trends and continues to serve as a vital resource for global SME capacity building. By delivering high-quality IP education to SMEs worldwide, the Korea FIT enables them to better acquire, manage, and leverage IP assets as a strategic business tool.

AI-based Support for Developing Countries

Furthermore, in response to evolving global IP administration needs, the Korea FIT has recently expanded its support to include the digital transformation of IP offices in developing countries. One key area is the use of AI technologies to address human and technical resource shortages at IP offices. In April 2024, KIPO and WIPO AI experts conducted

training at the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines on AI-powered prior art search systems and supported the development of a pilot system. The project provided practical guidance on integrating AI into examination processes, helping to improve efficiency and accuracy. Future cooperation will extend to other ASEAN countries, including Thailand, Indonesia, and Viet Nam. Through the introduction of AI-based patent examination support, KIPO aims to help bridge resource gaps and improve the examination capacity of partner offices.

Throughout the two decades, the WIPO Korea FIT has made significant contributions to narrowing the global IP gap and promoting inclusive, innovation-driven development. These achievements exemplify KIPO's long-standing commitment to strengthening global IP capacity through partnership and collaboration. KIPO will continue developing impactful programs that align with WIPO's priorities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), ensuring that the benefits of IP are shared equitably across the global community.



The 17th IP5 Heads Meeting Hosted in Seoul

International Cooperation Division

From June 19 to 20, 2024, KIPO hosted the annual meeting of the heads of the world's five leading intellectual property offices (IP5) in Seoul, along with a joint session involving industry representatives. It had been five years since the last time the IP5 meeting was held in Korea in 2019 in Songdo, Incheon. The event brought together more than 100 participants, including the heads of the IP5 and industry stakeholders.

The IP5 is a cooperative forum among the world's five largest IP offices—KIPO, the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)—which together handle approximately 85% of the world's patent applications. Established in 2007, the IP5 aims to build a user-friendly global IP ecosystem and KIPO has continued to play an integral role in shaping the IP5's core agenda and has been leading several key discussions.

Adoption of a Joint Declaration for Advancing the UN SDGs

At the 2024 Heads Meeting, the five offices adopted a Joint Declaration outlining a mid- to long-term cooperative framework aimed at achieving the UN SDGs. This initiative builds on the outcomes of the 2023 IP5 meeting in Hawaii, where the SDGs were officially adopted as a central vision for IP5 collaboration. At the Seoul meeting, Korea and Japan jointly proposed the "Guideline for Building a Sustainable Future," which

will serve as a foundational document guiding future IP5 efforts to promote sustainability.

In addition, under the theme of building an inclusive IP system for sustainable innovation, the IP5 discussed policy measures to support innovative SMEs. Recognizing the importance of SME growth, KIPO presented its comprehensive support framework—spanning from the filing to commercialization—including application fee subsidies and IP valuation assistance, and future plans.

Discussions on User-Friendly Global IP Systems

The IP5 also continued its efforts to improve user convenience by exploring ways to streamline international patent assignment procedures. A patent assignment refers to the legal transfer of ownership of a patent or a pending patent application from one party to another. As the lead office on this agenda item, KIPO shared the progress of the "Global Assignment" project, which aims to establish a mechanism to recognize the effects of a patent assignment across all IP5 jurisdictions through a single application.

Furthermore, in relation to the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) cooperation, the IP5 welcomed CNIPA's decision to join a joint PPH project led by Korea, the U.S., and Japan. The PPH is an international framework that enables faster patent examination by allowing offices to rely on each other's prior examination results. This specific project seeks to deliver results

within three months of filing. China's participation is expected to significantly improve predictability and examination efficiency.

Cooperation on Emerging Technologies

Another major topic at the 17th IP5 meeting was how to adapt IP systems in response to rapidly developing technologies, such as AI. The offices shared progress on the implementation of the "New Emerging Technologies and AI Roadmap," first adopted at the 14th IP5 Heads Meeting in 2021, and discussed its next steps. Among the key outcomes, the IP5 heads approved the results of a joint study on the "Inventorship of AI-

Generated Inventions" which examined legal and policy developments across the five jurisdictions regarding the recognition of AI as an inventor.

Through its leadership in hosting the 2024 IP5 Heads Meeting, KIPO demonstrated its growing influence in shaping global IP policy. By contributing to the adoption of a joint SDG declaration, promoting inclusive support for SMEs, and leading key initiatives on patent assignment and AI, KIPO reaffirmed its commitment to advancing a more collaborative, sustainable, and future-ready global IP system.

International IP Engagement through Bilateral Partnerships

International Cooperation Division

As part of its broader efforts to strengthen global IP cooperation, KIPO has been working to deepen engagement with partner countries through tailored administrative and training initiatives. In particular, these efforts include cooperation with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a major economic and technological hub in the Middle East, and Cambodia, an ASEAN partner with high market potential. As a step toward strengthening bilateral engagement, KIPO signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs) on IP Cooperation with each country during the respective Korea-UAE and Korea-Cambodia Summit meetings held in 2024.

MOU on IP Cooperation during the Korea-UAE Summit

Korea and the UAE have been carrying out a Special Strategic Partnership which implements cooperation across a broad range of fields, including advanced technology, nuclear energy, and defense industries as well as in the area of IP. In particular, KIPO's cooperation with the UAE is developing as a multi-faceted partnership grounded in administrative support and capacity building.

During the Korea-UAE Summit in May 2024, KIPO and the UAE Ministry of Economy signed an "MOU on Capacity Enhancement in the IP Field." Under this MOU, KIPO will directly design and deliver customized training programs for newly appointed UAE patent examiners, covering foundational knowledge of IP systems, patent application procedures, and examination practices. This initiative

marks Korea's first-ever export of a formal training program specifically tailored to new examiners of foreign IP offices.

This cooperation builds on a foundation established in 2014 when the two countries signed an MOU on patent examination outsourcing. Since its signing, a total of 19 Korean examiners have been dispatched to the UAE to conduct substantive examinations of local patent applications. The two offices further strengthened institutional cooperation through the successful completion of a joint project to establish the UAE's national patent information system in 2018.

MOU on Reinforced IP Cooperation during the Korea-Cambodia Summit

As a member of ASEAN, Cambodia is emerging as an important partner for Korea, especially as Korean companies are actively expanding their presence in Cambodia's consumer goods sector, such as cosmetics and food. Reflecting this trend, trademark applications filed by Korean entities in Cambodia have grown at an average annual rate of approximately 8.4% from 2013 to 2023, highlighting the need for closer cooperation in trademark protection.

On the occasion of the Korea-Cambodia Summit in May 2024, KIPO and the Ministry of Commerce of the Kingdom of Cambodia signed an "MOU on Reinforced IP Cooperation." The MOU includes provisions on implementing trademark-related clauses under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), sharing experience and know-

how in the field of digitalization, and exchanging trademark data. In particular, legal foundation has now been established for trademark data exchange which will allow more efficient prior searches through the access of approximately 130,000 registered trademarks in the country. Furthermore, the two offices discussed various avenues of collaboration, including training programs for public officials on AI policy, capacity building for women and SMEs, and the sharing of content.

KIPO's recent bilateral engagements with the UAE and Cambodia illustrate its growing commitment to meaningful international cooperation in the IP field. By supporting examiner training, digital system development, and data sharing, KIPO is contributing to the advancement of global IP ecosystems in ways that mutually benefit both Korea and its partner countries. Building on these experiences, KIPO will continue to expand bilateral cooperation with other countries, fostering inclusive and sustainable growth through IP.

Global Expansion of Korea’s IP Administration “KIPOnet”

Industrial Property Information Policy Division

KIPO’s comprehensive electronic system, “KIPOnet,” digitizes the entire patent administration process—from online application receipt and examination to registration, publication, and trials. With over 35 interconnected subsystems, it enables paperless operations and real-time processing, contributing to greater administrative efficiency and improved service quality. The system operates 24/7 and offers accessible, user-centered IP services for both applicants and examiners. KIPOnet has drawn international attention as a model of digital IP governance, leading to its adoption by multiple partner countries aiming to modernize their IP infrastructure.

Based on its experience with KIPOnet, KIPO has been working with international partners for the modernization of IP administration through system sharing and technical cooperation. To date, KIPOnet, Korea’s model of IP administration automation, has been implemented in Mongolia, Azerbaijan, ARIPO, the UAE, Paraguay, and Egypt. In 2024, KIPO held high-level meetings and training programs with Tunisia and the Philippines to strengthen bilateral cooperation in IP automation and support the ongoing digital transformation of their IP systems.

Tunisia High-Level Meeting and Training Program

As part of the “Improvement on Industrial Property Public Administration System in Tunisia (2023–2027)” project, KIPO hosted high-level officials from the Tunisian National Institute for Standardization

and Industrial Property (INNORPI)—including its Director General—for bilateral meetings and a training program at KIPO’s headquarters in Daejeon. This initiative, implemented in cooperation with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), aims to support the establishment and long-term operation of the KIPOnet system in Tunisia. Key components of the project include system development, capacity-building for public officials, and the procurement of essential infrastructure.

The two offices were able to exchange views on digital transformation strategies in IP administration and discussed technical approaches to IP automation. The training also provided an opportunity for Tunisia to gain insight into Korea’s experience with e-government and digital innovation in the IP sector. In addition, participants visited major industrial research institutions, offering a first-hand look at Korea’s broader innovation ecosystem and its integration with advanced IP infrastructure.

Philippines High-Level Meeting and Training Program

As part of its ongoing “Overseas IP Automation Consulting Project,” KIPO hosted high-level officials from the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOP) for bilateral meetings and training sessions. This initiative seeks to lay the groundwork for potential deployment of the KIPOnet system and to support the Philippines in its broader digital transformation efforts.

Discussions covered a range of topics, including Korea's application of AI in patent examination, recent developments in AI-related R&D, and strategies for modernizing national IP administration. The offices also explored possible funding mechanisms for future system development. Site visits to private research complexes, including LG Sciencepark Innovation Gallery and Hyundai Motorstudio, provided insights into Korea's innovation ecosystem and integration with digital IP systems.

KIPO's recent digital cooperation initiatives reflect a broader strategy to promote global innovation through technology-enabled IP systems. KIPO will continue to work with international partners to share its experience in digital IP administration and support the modernization of global patent office infrastructure. These efforts reflect KIPO's ongoing commitment to fostering inclusive and sustainable digital transformation in the international IP landscape.

