

Establishing Global IP Cooperation

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Seokchon lake park and Lotte world tower
Twilight sunset at Seokchon lake park and Lotte world tower in Jamsil, Seoul

Hosting the Heads of the World’s Five Largest IP Offices

There are five major IP offices which collectively handle over 80% of the world's patent applications. In 2007, the EPO, JPO, KIPO, CNIPA, and USPTO first gathered together to constitute a consultative body known as the IP5.³⁾ The inaugural IP5 Heads of Office Meeting was held in October 2008 in Korea where the IP5 agreed to work together on 10 foundation tasks for work-sharing and formed four working groups to carry out the tasks. Since then, the meeting has been hosted on a yearly rotation among the IP5 offices.

On June 12, 2019, the 12th IP5 Heads of Office Meeting convened in Songdo, Incheon, with Korea being the host for the third time since 2008 in Jeju Island and 2014 in Busan, under the chairmanship of KIPO Commissioner Won-joo Park and the presence of Director-General Francis

Gurry of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

After two days of intensive and enthusiastic discussion on various ongoing collaborative activities and issues, the meeting concluded with the adoption of a Joint Statement on improving the global patent system in response to changes brought on by technologies. The heads of the IP5 Offices also agreed to launch a task force to explore collaborative approaches to innovative technologies such as AI. Assembled with experts of IP systems and IT from the IP5, the task force will operate for the subsequent two years towards the establishment of an “IP Cooperation Roadmap,” which will include a project to utilize new technologies in patent administration and the harmonization of patent examination standards for AI inventions among the IP5.



3) IP5: European Patent Office (EPO), Japan Patent Office (JPO), Korea Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), and United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

Advancing Korea-ASEAN IP Cooperation

KOREA-ASEAN Heads of IP Office Meeting

On November 25, 2019, the second Korea-ASEAN⁴⁾ Heads of IP Office Meeting was held in Seoul, Korea. The very first meeting was launched in 2018 after five years of consultation with the ASEAN Secretariat and member states.

Under the chairmanship of KIPO Commissioner Won-joo Park, the future direction of Korea-ASEAN IP cooperation was presented to the attending delegations of the IP offices from all 10 ASEAN member states. The “Joint Statement on Korea-ASEAN Intellectual Property” was also adopted to lay a foundation for deeper cooperation toward the achievement of IP-driven mutual prosperity.

Specifically, the two sides agreed to cooperate in creating strong and competitive patents to promote a healthy

IP ecosystem, building respect for the value of IP, and utilizing IP to implement IP-oriented business management. Furthermore, discussions were made on utilizing KIPO's experiences in providing need-based IP education programs and eventually establishing a customized IP education institution for ASEAN.

Additionally, the two sides agreed to pursue a Knowledge Sharing Program (KSP) follow-up project to enhance IPR infrastructure in ASEAN and explored the possibility of implementing patent examination cooperation. These efforts are expected to contribute to the enhancement of IP capacity and cultivation of an IP-friendly environment, across ASEAN. The next Korea-ASEAN Heads of IP Office Meeting is planned to be held in one of the 10 ASEAN member states in November 2020.

Patent Recognition Program Implemented in Cambodia

KIPO and the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft (MIH) of the Kingdom of Cambodia met with each other in August 2019 to sign an MOU on an implementation of a Patent Recognition Program (PRP). This program allows a patent granted by KIPO to be expeditiously recognized in Cambodia at the request of the applicant as long as certain requirements are met.

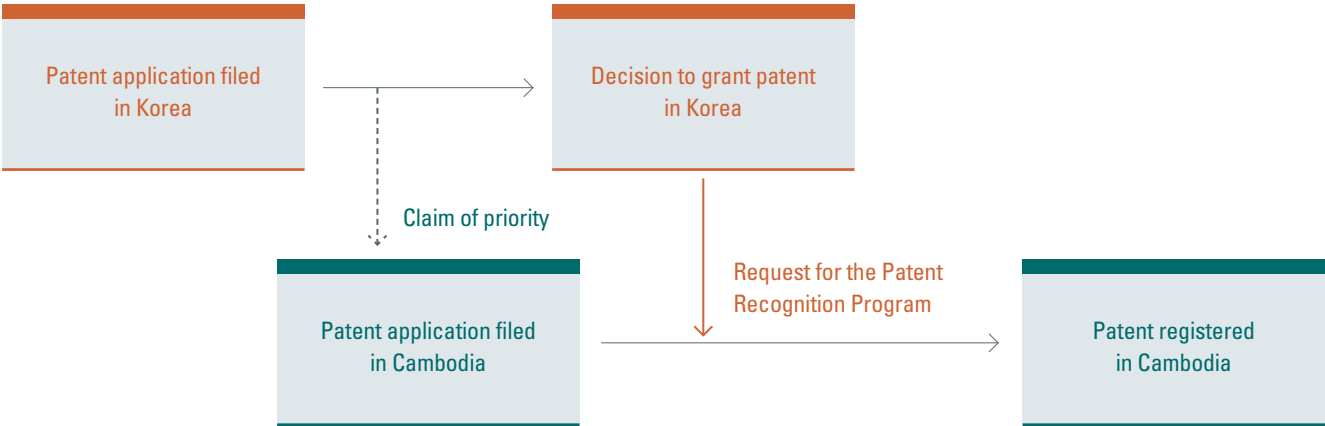
After the implementation of the PRP on November 1, 2019, the first patent under the PRP system was registered in Cambodia by November 18, 2019, which was celebrated by the two organizations. Although this particular patent was yet to be examined since being first filed in Cambodia in 2015, patent registration was granted within a month after the PRP was put in place.

4) ASEAN (10 countries): Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Expanding Korean IP Administration Services Overseas

KIPO and MIH expect this cooperation program to be a useful instrument to help applicants gain prompt IP protection in Cambodia, and eventually improve the business environment for Korean companies, which may lead to increased investment. As with Cambodia, KIPO plans to expand this kind of examination cooperation into other ASEAN countries as well.

Process of a Patent Recognition Program Request



Based on its high-quality examination capabilities and experience in IP system operation, KIPO is making efforts to spread Korea’s IP administration services to Middle Eastern countries. From 2014 to the present, KIPO experts have been dispatched three times to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to carry out substantive patent examination and support the local government in establishing an automated IP administration system that is modeled on Korean administrative practices.

KIPO went on to sign a contract with the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) in March and June 2019. Experts were sent to carry out four cooperation projects with SAIP which includes:

establishing a national IP strategy; developing an automated IP administration system; organizing a training program in Korea for Saudi Arabia patent examiners; and providing IPR consultations for local users, applicants and small businesses. Out of the total 15 IP experts agreed to be dispatched, 11 experts from KIPO are currently on-site carrying out the projects.

Based on the experience with the UAE and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, KIPO will continue to identify and pursue cooperation where the demand for Korean IP administration services is greatest among the other Middle Eastern countries as well as other nations.

