

International cooperation

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International cooperation

KIPO-WIPO cooperation



The 2007 KIPO-WIPO Joint Conference on Innovating IP Administration

A WIPO delegation, headed by Director General Kamil Idris, visited Korea on March 15, 2006, to acknowledge the country's contribution over the past 20 years to IPR education in developing and underdeveloped countries. During the visit, the International Intellectual Property Training Institute (IIPTI) was designated as the first WIPO partner international IP training institute.

The Korea Funds-in-Trust at WIPO was established after the signing of an agreement in June 2004 to strengthen multilateral cooperation with developing countries, particularly in areas such as IP education and the transfer of technology.

Since July 2004 the fund has had a budget of 2.5 billion KRW (2.5 million USD) for the purpose of modernizing patent offices in developing and least developed countries. Part of the budget has been used to develop the PCT-ROAD software, provide consultations on patent management, and run IPR workshops.

Starting in June 2008, we plan to focus our support on telecommunication technologies in order to enhance the efficiency of IP management in developing countries.

In conjunction with WIPO, the IIPTI hosts joint seminars funded by the Korea Funds-in-Trust and runs programs based on the educational programs of the WIPO Worldwide Academy to strengthen international IP capabilities.

Since 2004, the IIPTI has run a joint distance-learning program in association with the WIPO Worldwide Academy. In 2007, the program was run twice, once in the spring and once in the fall, for 84 domestic experts. To date, a total of 339 experts have completed the program.

The IIPTI has also run WIPO seminars for the least developed countries since 2006. These seminars are not just for Asia-Pacific countries but for all the least developed countries.

In 2007, the IIPTI held its highest ever number of international seminars and began

consultations on the establishment of an IP training institution at the request of WIPO and the Azerbaijani government.

Bilateral and trilateral cooperation

The bilateral and trilateral heads meetings of 2007 were highly productive. The eighth heads meeting with IP Australia (Seoul Shilla Hotel, May 8, 2007) produced an agreement to begin conducting joint prior art searches in the second half of 2007. As a preliminary step, both offices exchanged two patent examiners in September and November 2007.

The inaugural meeting of the heads of five major offices (from Korea, the USA, the EU, Japan, and China), called the Meeting of the Heads of Patent Offices, was held in Hawaii, USA, from May 11 to 12, 2007. The heads exchanged opinions on ways of simplifying the patent system, particularly by sharing the results of searches and examinations. The five offices agreed to provide information in accordance with general guidelines written by the United States Patent and Trademark Office; they also agreed to promote various cooperative projects.

At the second heads meeting with the Danish Patent and Trademark Office (Geneva, September 25, 2007), we agreed to review the introduction of the Patent Prosecution Highway between the two countries and we shared opinions on issues such the inclusion of Korean as a PCT language of publication and approval of Korea's membership in Group B+ of the Substantive Patent Law Treaty.

On July 27, 2007, at Geneva, Switzerland, we held a bilateral heads meeting with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. Both offices agreed to launch the Patent Prosecution Highway in January 2008.

The Korea-Japan Patent Prosecution Highway was inaugurated on April 1, 2007. With regard to the Japan Patent Office, the 19th Commissioners Meeting was held at Daejeon on November 27, 2007. The commissioners agreed to continue



WIPO regional workshop at the IIPTI

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The 19th commissioners meeting with the Japan Patent Office

exchanging statistical information on applications by using the Patent Prosecution Highway and to more actively promote joint prior art searches. They also discussed the possibility of having a joint conference of field experts, as well as IPR protection measures and international cooperation.

Cooperation with our neighbors has always been a top priority. Hence, on December 10, 2007, we held the seventh Trilateral Policy Dialogue Meeting in Tokyo with the Japan Patent Office and the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China. Agreements were reached on an action plan for the road map of trilateral patent cooperation, the holding of a joint seminar on support for SMEs, and the Meeting of the Heads of Patent Offices for the five major IP offices.

We also held the 13th Commissioners Meeting with the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China (Muju, Korea, December 13, 2007). At that meeting, the commissioners signed a memorandum of understanding on the dispatch of IP liaison officers and more substantial cooperation between both countries; they also agreed to routinely hold conferences of patent experts, to hold a conference for IT specialists, and to open design gazettes to the general public.

Finally, to ensure that patent examinations are conducted with swiftness and accuracy, and to promote the unification of patent systems, we engaged in various projects pertaining to joint prior art searches. We began the eighth such project with Japan, the fifth with China (following assessment of previous projects), the second with Germany, and the first with Australia.

International IPR discussions

At the 43rd series of meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO (Geneva, September 2007), the Korean language was included as an official language of publication in the Regulations under the PCT. Accordingly, starting January 1, 2009, Korean may be used in all PCT procedures.

We have continued to actively participate in discussions on the formation of IPR norms governed by WIPO and state the Korean government's position. In particular, we contributed to the reform meetings of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents; the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications; and the Intergovernmental Committee on Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources, and Folklore. We are also endeavoring to settle IPR agreements on matters such as the substantive law for patents.

Regarding the World Trade Organization's Doha Development Agenda, we actively participated in the IPR-related negotiations to establish international norms for public health, biotechnology, and the multilateral registration system of geographical indications.

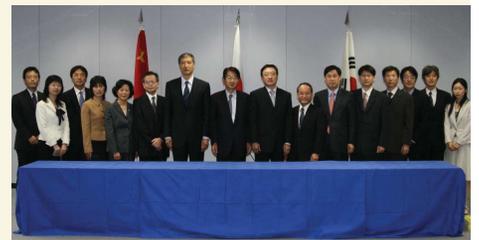
— IPR issues and free trade agreements

In IPR negotiations of free trade agreements (FTAs), which are aimed at the free movement of products between countries, we discussed measures to protect IPRs in line with international treaties such as the World Trade Organization's TRIPS Agreement.

The negotiations of the Korea-USA FTA, which began in February 2006, have given both sides an opportunity to understand each other's IPR laws and systems.

Since July 2005, Korea has also been negotiating an FTA with Canada. One of the major issues is the selection of guidelines for IPR cooperation and enforcement.

In March 2006, we commenced negotiations with India in relation to a comprehensive economic partnership agreement. The on-going discussions are aimed at improving the level of IPR protection and facilitating the acquisition of patents.



The seventh Trilateral Policy Dialogue Meeting