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Bimonthly Updates on Intellectual Property

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Legislation Updates

1. Newly Revised Anti-Unfair Competition Law of China Passed, to Take Effect on October 15

On June 27, 2025, the 16th Session of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress voted to pass the newly revised Anti-Unfair Competition Law of the People's Republic of China. The law will officially take effect on October 15, 2025. This revision marks the third major amendment since the law's initial implementation in 1993. The number of articles in the newly revised law has increased from the original 33 to 41, covering sections including General Provisions, Unfair Competition Acts, Investigation of Suspected Unfair Competition Acts, Legal Liability, and Supplementary Provisions. Below are the main contents and highlights of the revision as officially interpreted.

Main Contents and Highlights of the Revision to the Anti-Unfair Competition Law

1. Clarifying the Overall Requirements for Combating Unfair Competition:

- Explicitly adding "prevention" of unfair competition acts as a legislative purpose.
- Positively emphasizing that business operators shall "participate in market competition fairly".
- Clearly stating that anti-unfair competition work must uphold the leadership of the Communist Party of China.
- Making corresponding modifications to the description of the duties of the anti-unfair competition work coordination mechanism.

2. Improving Provisions on Confusion-Type Unfair Competition Acts:

- Explicitly defining the unauthorized use of others' influential "new media account names, application names, or icons" as confusion acts.
- Enhancing coordination with the Trademark Law, clarifying that unauthorized use of others' registered trademarks or unregistered well-known trademarks as trade names in business names, causing misidentification of goods or a specific connection, constitutes a confusion act.

- Regulating the use of search keywords, stipulating that setting others' product names, business names (including abbreviations, trade names, etc.), registered trademarks, or unregistered well-known trademarks as search keywords, causing misidentification of goods or a specific connection, constitutes a confusion act.

- Prohibiting business operators from assisting others in implementing confusion acts.

3. Refining Provisions on Unfair Competition Acts such as Commercial Bribery, False Advertising, Improper Prize Sales, and Commercial Disparagement:

- Adding provisions prohibiting relevant units and individuals from accepting bribes.

- Expanding the targets misled by false advertising from "consumers" to "consumers and other business operators," and strengthening regulation against false transactions and inflated ratings, explicitly prohibiting assisting others in false advertising through "false evaluations."

- Stipulating that once a prize promotion begins, business operators cannot arbitrarily change the prize sales information.

- Prohibiting business operators from "instructing others" to engage in commercial disparagement, and expanding the targets of commercial disparagement from "competitors" to "other business operators."

4. Improving Provisions on Online Unfair Competition Acts:

- Clearly prohibiting business operators from utilizing data and algorithms, technology, platform rules, etc., to implement relevant unfair competition acts.

- Adding provisions on infringing data rights and interests, explicitly prohibiting business operators from obtaining or using data lawfully held by others through fraudulent, coercive means, or by circumventing or destroying technical protection measures, thereby harming the legitimate rights and interests of other operators and disrupting market competition order.

- Explicitly prohibiting business operators from abusing platform rules to

directly or instruct others to conduct false transactions, false reviews, malicious returns, etc., against other operators.

- Adding obligations for platform operators to address unfair competition acts by operators within their platforms. Platform operators shall clearly define fair competition rules within platform service agreements and transaction rules, establish mechanisms for reporting, complaining about, and handling unfair competition disputes, and guide and regulate operators within the platform to compete fairly according to law.

- Upon discovering unfair competition acts by operators within the platform, platform operators shall promptly take necessary measures according to law, preserve relevant records, and report to the supervision and inspection departments of the people's government at or above the county level where the platform operator is domiciled, as stipulated.

5. Adding Provisions on Governing "Involution-Style" Competition:

The newly revised law improves the system for governing "involution-style" competition in two aspects:

- Stipulating that a fair competition review system should be established and improved, strengthens fair competition review work according to law, and ensures all types of business operators use factors of production equally and participate in market competition fairly according to law.

- Strengthening platform responsibility, stipulating that platform operators shall not force or coerce operators within the platform, through disguised means, to sell goods below cost according to their pricing rules, thereby disrupting market competition order.

6. Adding Provisions on Resolving the Problem of Arrears to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):

- Stipulating that large enterprises and other operators shall not abuse their advantageous position to demand that SMEs accept transaction conditions with obviously unreasonable payment terms, methods, conditions, and liability for breach of contract, resulting in arrears for goods, projects, services, etc., owed

to SMEs.

- Stipulating that supervision and inspection departments of people's governments at or above the provincial level shall investigate and handle cases where large enterprises and other operators abuse their advantageous position to default on payments owed to SMEs, according to law.

7. Improving Supervision Measures and Legal Liability:

- Adding a notification and interview system. If a business operator is suspected of violating this law, the supervision and inspection department may interview its responsible person, requiring them to explain the situation and propose improvement measures.

- Strengthening the confidentiality obligations of relevant departments and personnel, stipulating that supervision and inspection departments and their staff have a legal obligation to keep confidential trade secrets, personal privacy, and personal information learned during investigations.

- Clarifying the calculation method for civil compensation damages caused by unfair competition acts as "determined based on the actual losses suffered by the infringed party or the benefits gained by the infringer due to the infringement".

- Stipulating legal liability for selling relevant illegal goods. Simultaneously, if the seller did not know the goods sold were illegal and can prove the goods were legally obtained and identify the supplier, the supervision and inspection department shall order the cessation of sales and not impose administrative penalties.

- Adding provisions on the legal liability of bribe recipients, and the legal liability to be borne by the legal representative, principal responsible person, and directly responsible personnel of a business operator when they bear personal responsibility for bribery.

- Reasonably adjusting penalty severity, for example, appropriately raising the maximum fines for acts such as trade secret infringement, commercial disparagement, and online unfair competition; removing the minimum fine for

false advertising acts.

8. Adding Provisions on the Extraterritorial Application of the Anti-Unfair Competition Law:

Where unfair competition acts stipulated by this law are committed outside the territory of the People's Republic of China, disrupting competition order within the domestic market and harming the legitimate rights and interests of domestic business operators or consumers, they shall be handled in accordance with this law and relevant laws.

Note: This text is mainly translated from China Court Website. Only for reference.

2.USPTO Sanctions Foreign Firm for Signature Fraud in Landmark Trademark Case

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has taken decisive action to uphold the integrity of the U.S. intellectual property system, issuing a precedential Final Order for Sanctions against Stelcore Management Services, LLC, a foreign filing firm. The sanctions, ordered on June 13, 2025, stem from the firm's systematic submission of improper signatures and false information in trademark applications.

The USPTO investigation revealed that Stelcore Management Services improperly entered applicant and attorney signatures on trademark submissions and provided demonstrably false information regarding both signatories and attorney credentials. As a direct consequence of these violations, the USPTO's Final Order imposes sanctions on the respondents and terminates all trademark application proceedings tainted by this misconduct.

Uncorrectable Violations with Serious Consequences:

The Order underscores a critical principle: signatures entered with the intent to circumvent USPTO rules are not mere procedural errors subject to correction. Such deliberate falsification constitutes a fundamental breach that can invalidate the affected trademark application or registration outright. The USPTO emphasized the gravity of the harm caused, stating within the Order: "*[f]alse signature information substantially prejudices the USPTO's ability to carry out its mandate to register only those marks for which the appropriate factual foundation supports registration.*"

3.UK Launches Consultation to Reform Standard Essential Patent Framework

The UK Intellectual Property Office (IPO) has initiated a public consultation on reforming the Standard Essential Patent (SEP) framework, aiming to eliminate innovation barriers in critical technologies including 5G communications, electric vehicles, and artificial intelligence. The reforms focus on enhancing licensing transparency, reducing dispute resolution costs, and bridging information gaps between patent holders and technology implementers – with particular attention to systemic challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises.

As foundational patents enabling international technical standards, SEPs ensure global interoperability across products from smartphones to medical devices. Their strategic value manifests in two dimensions: economically, the UK telecommunications sector reliant on SEPs contributes over £40 billion annually; technologically, globally declared SEPs surged more than threefold between 2010 and 2021, jumping from 82,000 to 305,000. With standards development organizations like ETSI accelerating new standards for 6G and artificial intelligence, SEP volumes continue to rise.

Deficiencies in the current framework impede innovation: opaque licensing processes inflate transaction costs, exemplified by a recent litigation case costing £31.5 million, while information asymmetry places startups at a significant disadvantage during patent negotiations. Proposed solutions include establishing specialized royalty determination pathways, mandating patent holders to disclose standard-related information to the IPO, evaluating pre-litigation disclosure protocols and government-led essentiality determination services, and improving alternative dispute resolution mechanisms tailored for SMEs.

This consultation builds upon three years of systematic research and follows the July 2024 launch of the world's first dedicated SEP resource hub. Stakeholders across the innovation ecosystem – including developers (patent holders, research institutions), implementers (technology firms, consumer groups), and service providers (standards bodies, legal entities) – may submit input via GOV.UK until October 7, 2025. The resulting regulatory framework will balance patent protection with technology accessibility, strengthening the UK's competitiveness in emerging fields such as 6G and AI.

4.USPTO to Resume In-Person PTAB Hearings

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) today announced that all Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB) hearings will return to in-person format effective September 1, 2025. Under the new policy, all parties are required to attend hearings physically unless demonstrating good cause for virtual participation.

Good cause will generally be limited to circumstances such as financial hardship, medical emergencies, or other significant obstacles to in-person attendance. Approval of virtual appearance for one party does not constitute good cause for other parties in the same proceeding. Hearings will be conducted at USPTO offices nationwide, with parties permitted to request specific locations. The PTAB will endeavor to accommodate such requests.

Remote access remains available to the public for observing hearings. Requests for virtual or in-person public attendance must be submitted via email to PTABHearings@uspto.gov at least three business days prior to the hearing.

This policy concludes the temporary virtual hearing model implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For additional information, contact:

- USPTO PTAB Hearings Page: <https://www.uspto.gov/ptab-hearings>
- Email: PTABHearings@uspto.gov
- Phone: 571-272-9797

5.Guidelines for Handling Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration

Applications in China

I. Applicable Circumstances

Article 2 of the Measures for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Applications stipulates that trademark registration applications falling under any of the following circumstances may request rapid examination:

1. Those involving strategic emerging industries critical to national development (such as commercial aerospace, low-altitude economy, deep-sea technology) and future industries (such as biomanufacturing, quantum technology, embodied AI, 6G), where there is an urgent need to obtain trademark exclusive rights.
2. Those involving marks related to national or provincial-level major projects, major programs, major scientific and technological infrastructure, major sporting events, major exhibitions, or important cultural heritage, where trademark protection is urgent.
3. Those involving industrial chains within the modern industrial system promoted by provincial-level people's governments or aligned with the development of new quality productive forces, where the trademark is already in use.
4. Those directly related to the response during major public emergencies, such as particularly severe natural disasters, major accident disasters, major public health incidents, or major social safety incidents.
5. Those deemed necessary for serving high-quality economic and social development, promoting the implementation of the Outline for Building a Country Strong on Intellectual Property Rights, or those of significant practical importance for safeguarding national interests, public interests, or major regional development strategies.

II. Handling Conditions

Article 3 of the Measures for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Applications stipulates that requests for rapid examination must simultaneously meet the following conditions:

1. Consent from all applicants; If the trademark application requesting rapid examination is for a jointly owned trademark, the names of all applicants must be listed in the Request Form for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Application, and it must be signed or sealed by all applicants. A jointly owned trademark refers to an identical trademark applied for registration jointly by two or more natural persons, legal persons, or other organizations with the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), where the exclusive right to the trademark is jointly held and exercised.
2. Filed electronically.
3. The applied trademark consists of words, graphics, letters, numerals, or a combination thereof.
4. The designated goods or services are closely related to the circumstances listed in Article II and fall within the acceptable names of goods and services publicly announced by CNIPA.
5. No claim of priority has been made.
6. The application is not for the registration of a collective mark or certification mark.

III. Application Materials

Article 4 of the Measures for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Applications stipulates that requests for rapid examination must be submitted to CNIPA in hard copy, including the following materials:

1. **Request Form for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Application:** The form must be typed or printed. Applicants must complete it using standardized simplified Chinese characters as specified in the "Filling and Mailing Instructions," without modifying the format. After completion, print it double-sided on A4 paper. Supplementary materials may be attached separately if necessary.
2. **Supporting documents proving compliance with Article 2 of these Measures:** Primarily materials necessary to demonstrate that the trademark application qualifies under the rapid examination circumstances listed in the Measures.
3. **Recommendation letter from relevant central or state authorities,**

provincial-level people's governments or their general offices; OR Review opinion from provincial-level intellectual property administration departments confirming the validity of the rapid examination request reason and the authenticity of related materials. Only one of the above documents is required.

IV. Submission Method

Applicants must submit the Request for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Application in hard copy to the Trademark Office of CNIPA. The envelope must be prominently marked with the words "商标注册申请快速审查请求" (Request for Rapid Examination of Trademark Registration Application) on the front.

- **Submission Address:** No. 1 Chama South Street, Xicheng District, Beijing
- **Recipient:** Trademark Office, China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA)
- **Postal Code:** 100055

V. Examination Timeline

The Trademark Office of CNIPA is responsible for accepting and reviewing rapid examination requests. For applications approved for rapid examination, an examination decision will be made according to law within 20 working days from the date of approval. Applications not approved for rapid examination will be examined according to the standard statutory procedures.

VI. Result Delivery

The Trademark Office of CNIPA is responsible for accepting and reviewing rapid examination requests. Applicants whose applications are approved for rapid examination will promptly receive the examination conclusion via electronic notification. Applicants whose applications are not approved for rapid examination will be promptly notified by the Trademark Office.

VII. Rights and Obligations of Relevant Parties

After an examination decision is made according to law for a trademark application undergoing rapid examination, relevant parties may, in accordance with relevant legal provisions, file an opposition against a preliminarily approved and published application, or file a review against a refused or partially refused application. During the rapid examination process, if any of the following circumstances are discovered, the Trademark Office may terminate the rapid

examination procedure, revert to the standard statutory examination procedure, and promptly notify the requester:

1. The trademark application requires correction, explanation, amendment, or falls under the same-day application review procedure as stipulated by law.
2. The applicant files a request for deferred examination after requesting rapid examination.
3. Other circumstances exist that prevent rapid examination.

VIII. Inquiry Channels

Inquiry Tel: (010) 63218500

IX. Public Inquiry

Applicants may inquire about the examination progress of rapid examination trademark applications at any time via the China Trademark Website: <https://sbj.cnipa.gov.cn/sbj/sbcx/>

The above English text is translated from the official CNIPA website. The original Chinese text can be found at:

https://www.cnipa.gov.cn/art/2025/7/18/art_569_200677.html

6.EPO Opens Representative Associations to Legal Practitioners from October

As of 1 October 2025, legal practitioners will be permitted to join associations of representatives within the European Patent Office (EPO), ensuring equal treatment with professional representatives. Professional representatives are attorneys who have passed the European Qualifying Examination, while legal practitioners refer to lawyers in EPC contracting states authorized to handle patent matters domestically.

Currently, representation in EPO proceedings may be provided by three entities: professional representatives registered with the EPO, associations of representatives, or legal practitioners. Members of duly registered associations automatically gain representation rights without individual case-by-case authorization. Such associations currently represent applicants in over 600,000 proceedings. Legal practitioners may now enjoy equivalent convenience by joining existing associations or establishing new ones registered with the EPO.

This reform removes previous legal barriers that prohibited legal practitioners from forming or joining associations. Historically, their requirement to file individual authorizations for each case conflicted with association membership rules. With the recent abolition of this requirement as a simplification measure, legal practitioners may freely create or join EPO-registered associations alongside professional representatives or peers from 1 October.

As a milestone in the EPO's simplification and digitalization efforts under its Strategic Plan 2028, the online service *MyEPO* now offers a self-service function for creating and managing associations.

7.USPTO Eliminates Email Verification for Agency System Access, Mandates Multifactor Authentication

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will discontinue email-based account verification effective November 1, 2025, requiring all customers—including patent and trademark practitioners and agencies—to adopt multifactor authentication (MFA) for USPTO.gov accounts. This change is part of the agency's efforts to safeguard customer information and IT systems.

Users currently relying on email verification must configure an alternative MFA method by October 31, 2025, to avoid service disruptions. While an email address remains required for initial account setup, it will no longer function as a verification tool. The agency directs users to three MFA options:

1. **Okta Verify:** The USPTO-recommended free application requiring download and device configuration.
2. **Authenticator Applications:** Third-party apps generating time-based one-time passwords (TOTP).
3. **Security Keys:** FIDO2-compliant hardware devices requiring physical authentication (must be purchased by users).

The transition impacts all agency system users, particularly those accessing patent/trademark filing platforms. Detailed specifications for each MFA method are available on the USPTO's "New Options for More Secure Authentication" webpage. Failure to adopt new verification by the deadline may restrict access to USPTO services.

8.IPOS Announces Fee Schedule Updates Effective September 2025 and April 2026

The Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) has announced updates to its fee schedule, the first since May 2022. While the majority of fees remain unchanged, selective adjustments will take effect in two phases: September 1, 2025, and April 1, 2026. These changes aim to ensure operational sustainability, encourage quality submissions, and promote a healthier IP ecosystem.

Key adjustments include:

- Increase in trademarks application fee, Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) search and preliminary examination fees in light of prevailing operational conditions;
- Increase in trademarks and patents renewal fees to encourage the release of non-performing IP;
- Increase in patents excess claim fee and lower threshold to encourage submission of concise claim sets;
- Shift in patents excess claim fee payment from grant stage to response to written opinion stage;
- Increase in certain amendment fees to encourage quality filings;
- Increase in certain extension of time fees to discourage unnecessary prolonging of IP prosecution process; and
- Decrease in application fee for grant of plant varieties protection

Following is a summary of IPOS fee changes with old vs. new fee comparisons for Patents, Trademarks, and Designs:

1. Patent Fee Changes

Fee Type	Old Fee (S\$)	New Fee (S\$)	Effective Date
Excess Claim Fee (Form PF11,PF12)	40 (per claim beyond 20)	80 (per claim beyond 15)	1 Sep 2025
Request for an examination	1420	2150	
		3200	1 Apr 2026

review report			
Renewal fees	With a proximate increasing rate of 7%		1 Sep 2025
PCT Supplementary Search Fee	2240	2350	
PCT Preliminary Exam Fee	830	900	

2. Trademark Fee Changes

Fee Type	Old Fee (S\$)	New Fee (S\$)	Effective Date
Application (per class)	380	410	1 Sep 2025
Renewal (per class)	440	480	
Amendment	40	50	
		60	1 Apr 2026
Madrid international application (per class)	380	410	1 Sep 2025
Request to transform an international registration/ subsequent designation into national mark (per class)			
Madrid international renewal (per class)			
	440	480	

3. Design Fee Changes

Fee Type	Old Fee (S\$)	New Fee (S\$)	Effective Date
Application to amend an application for registration of a	45	60	1 Sep 2025

design			
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The full breakdown of updated fees can be found here: [Annex A](#)

9.Trial Launch of Accelerated Patent Examination for Female Inventors in China's Taiwan Region

To encourage innovation and invention by women, relevant patent administrative authorities in the Taiwan region of China have announced the trial implementation of the "Accelerated Examination Program for Female Applicants of Invention Patents". This program will run for a one-year trial period starting July 1, 2025, aiming to provide eligible female inventors with a faster patent examination pathway.

The program stipulates that only **invention patent** applications where **all applicants are natural persons** qualify for accelerated examination. At least one applicant must be female, and this female applicant must also be one of the inventors. Eligible female applicants must meet the following requirements to apply for acceleration:

- The application **must be submitted personally** by the eligible female natural person applicant.
- Applicants with **household registration in the Taiwan region of China** must provide their ID number on the electronic application form; **applicants of other statuses** must submit additional documents proving their female identity.
- The request **must be submitted** via the relevant authorities' electronic application system.
- The application window is **limited to the period after receiving notification from the authorities that substantive examination is imminent, but before receiving the first examination opinion notice.**

During the one-year trial period, the program has a **total cap of 50 accelerated examination applications**. The monthly quota is structured as follows:

- **Months 1 & 2:** Up to 5 applications per month.
- **From Month 3 onward:** Up to 4 applications per month.
- If the monthly quota is reached, applicants must reapply the following month.

Additionally, **each female applicant is limited to a maximum of 5 accelerated applications** throughout the trial period.

Applications meeting all eligibility criteria and requirements will undergo accelerated

examination. The target is to issue the first examination opinion notice or a decision **within 6 months** from the date the acceleration request is filed. Applications deemed ineligible will be placed in the standard annual application queue for sequential examination, and the applicant will be notified accordingly.

Potential applicants should note that the relevant authorities in the region **reserve the right to modify or terminate the program during the trial period** based on actual review capacity. Applicants can refer to the "Q&A for the Accelerated Examination Program for Female Applicants of Invention Patents (Trial)" available on the authorities' official website for answers to common questions.

This initiative represents an effort by the region to **promote female participation in innovation and invention** and to shorten the patent grant cycle for eligible inventors. Interested parties are advised to pay close attention to the specific quota limitations and application timing requirements.

10.South Korea Intensifies Crackdown on Counterfeit Goods to Protect Public Safety and K-Brands

On Wednesday, July 30, the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), under Commissioner Kim Wan-ki, announced the "Comprehensive Measures to Combat Counterfeit Goods Distribution" during the 2nd Ministerial Meeting on Current State Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Kim Min-seok at the Sejong Government Complex.

The new strategy aims to strengthen sanctions against counterfeit goods, which threaten public health and safety, undermine corporate growth and innovation, and damage the global reputation of K-brands. A key component involves actively deploying advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) to block increasingly sophisticated and covert distribution channels, including online platforms, social media, and live commerce broadcasts. KIPO estimates that AI-based monitoring has already helped prevent an estimated KRW 10 trillion in potential damages as of 2024.

The comprehensive measures are built around three major policy shifts:

- Expanding the focus from protecting well-known fashion brands to safeguarding public health and K-brands overall;
- Moving from post-incident crackdowns to AI-driven preemptive prevention;
- Transitioning from government-led actions to a collaborative system involving online platforms, trademark holders, and consumers.

By 2027, the current AI monitoring system, which covers 160 brands, will be expanded to 500 brands. The enhanced system will use AI to analyze both images and text simultaneously, improving its ability to detect altered trademarks and image composites. KIPO will also work with the Korea Customs Service to intercept counterfeits identified through AI in cross-border e-commerce during customs clearance. In cooperation with the Korea Communications Commission, access to infringing websites will be blocked, and overseas-hosted infringing posts will be removed. Industry collaboration will be strengthened to implement advanced anti-counterfeit technologies in high-risk sectors like cosmetics.

For covert distribution channels such as social media and live commerce, evidence collection techniques will be enhanced and linked with planned investigations. Accounts of

habitual infringers will be suspended, and information on counterfeit sellers will be shared among authorities. Punitive damages for trademark infringement will be increased up to five times, effective July 22, 2025. Large-scale counterfeit sales venues, including unauthorized street stalls in areas like Dongdaemun, will face strengthened penalties, dedicated investigation teams, and the potential revocation of permits by local governments.

Additionally, amendments to the Trademark Act will be pursued to eliminate counterfeit sales on online platforms. Platforms will be required to block reported counterfeit items, and foreign platforms must comply through a mandatory domestic representative system. Non-compliant platforms may face fines and public disclosure. KIPO will conduct on-site surveys to systematically monitor platform responses and make the findings public.

The initiative also includes plans to establish a K-Brand Protection Governance System, involving multiple ministries such as the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, the Ministry of SMEs and Startups, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. KIPO will provide resources including lists of frequently counterfeited brands, case studies, and country-specific response manuals, while related ministries will support export promotion, intellectual property acquisition, and cooperation with overseas diplomatic missions.

11.IP Viet Nam Introduces Priority Processing for Online Industrial Property Applications

In line with Vietnam's national policies on administrative reform and digital transformation, IP Viet Nam has launched a new initiative to prioritize online applications for industrial property procedures. Effective August 10, 2025, applications submitted through the Official Online Public Service Portal will receive expedited processing. These digital submissions will be automatically routed and integrated into the office's workflow, reducing processing times and increasing operational efficiency. Applicants who file online will also benefit from a 50% reduction in applicable fees.

While IP Viet Nam will continue to accept paper applications submitted in person or by mail in accordance with existing regulations, these applications will not receive priority handling. Manual processing steps—including verification, data entry, and digitization—mean that non-digital submissions will likely experience longer processing times. The office also announced that it is developing a plan to eventually transition to online-only application acceptance.

Online Application Portal: <https://dichvucong.ipvietnam.gov.vn>

International Cooperation

12. Notice Regarding Hague System Designation of Uzbekistan: Individual Designation Fee Enter into Force on July 30

Uzbekistan officially acceded to the *Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs* (the “Geneva Act”) on October 10, 2024, following the deposit of its instrument of accession with the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). This marks Uzbekistan’s formal membership in the Hague System.

On April 30, 2025, the Government of Uzbekistan communicated to the International Bureau of WIPO the applicable **individual designation fees** for international registrations designating Uzbekistan. These fees will **enter into force on July 30, 2025**, and are structured as follows:

Individual Designation Fee		Amounts (in Swiss francs)
International Application	– for the first design	262
	– for each additional design	43
Renewal	– first renewal	284
	– second renewal	437

13. Notice Regarding Hague System Designation of South Korea: Individual Designation Fee Reduction Effective August 1st

Please be advised that new individual designation fees for international design applications designating South Korea through the Hague System have been announced. The revised fee schedule will take effect starting August 1, 2025. The specific changes are as follows:

Individual Designation Fee		Current Amounts <i>(in Swiss francs)</i>	New Amounts <i>(in Swiss francs)</i>
International Application	for each design	162	143
First Renewal	for each design	260	230
Second Renewal	for each design	615	544
Third Renewal	for each design	710	628

14. Bahamas and Brazil Join Budapest Treaty in Succession, Expanding Global Microbial Patent System

According to the latest notification from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas deposited its instrument of accession to the Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure (hereinafter "Budapest Treaty") with WIPO on 3 June 2025. The Treaty will enter into force for The Bahamas on 3 September 2025, marking the expansion of the global intellectual property protection framework which now covers 91 contracting parties including China, the United States, Japan, and EU member states.

Concurrently, Brazil has achieved critical progress in its domestic ratification process. The *Official Gazette of the Union* published Legislative Decree No. 174/25 on 24 June, confirming congressional approval of the Budapest Treaty signed by the Brazilian government. Having passed both the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate, the decree now awaits presidential ratification to complete the entry-into-force procedure.

Core Value of the Treaty

The Budapest Treaty streamlines patent procedures involving living microorganisms (e.g., strains for vaccine and drug development) through its International Depositary Authority (IDA) system. Under the new decree, Brazilian researchers will soon conduct microbial deposits at domestically certified IDAs, ending the current requirement to use foreign institutions. National entities including the Genetic Resources and Biotechnology Research Center (Cenargen/Embrapa) and Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz) are expected to obtain IDA accreditation.

Deepening Global Innovation Networks

Patent experts highlight that the Treaty enables innovators to claim patent rights across all contracting parties through a single IDA deposit, significantly reducing cross-border protection costs. China joined the Treaty as early as 1995 and has established three internationally certified depositories including the China General Microbiological Culture Collection Center (CGMCC), providing crucial support for domestic biotech firms in global competition.

The Brazilian National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI) emphasized in its official

statement that accession will strengthen the country's IP ecosystem and facilitate integration into international innovation chains, particularly in biotechnology. With emerging economies like Brazil and The Bahamas acceding, this 1977 Treaty continues to demonstrate renewed vitality.

15. Vietnam Updates Design Registration Procedures Under Hague System

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) announces significant updates regarding the designation of Viet Nam in international industrial design applications under the Hague System.

Changes in Declarations

1. **Withdrawn Requirement:** Viet Nam has formally withdrawn its declaration under Article 5(2)(a) of the Geneva Act. This means that an international application designating Viet Nam will **no longer be required** to contain a claim for the protection of the design.

2. **Deferment Flexibility:** Viet Nam has modified its declaration concerning deferment of publication. Consequently, applicants designating Viet Nam **may now request** deferment of publication in their international application, with the maximum deferment period being **seven months** from the filing date.

3. **Practical Impact Clarified:** WIPO highlights that this modification to the deferment declaration has **no practical impact** on the publication timeline. All international registrations, including those designating Viet Nam, remain subject to the standard 12-month publication period under the Hague System.

4. **Effective Date:** These changes to Viet Nam's declarations will take effect on **August 21, 2025**.

New Feature: Indicating Principal Design and Variants

5. **Enhanced Application Form:** Starting **August 21, 2025**, a new feature will be introduced in the Hague System application forms (both eHague and paper form DM/1) specifically for applications designating Viet Nam.

- This feature will allow applicants to clearly indicate **which design in the application is the principal design** and **which designs are to be considered its variants** at the time of filing.

- This change ensures alignment with Vietnamese national legal requirements, which mandate that variants of a principal design must be expressly identified within the design application.

Implications for Users

These updates streamline procedures for applicants seeking industrial design protection in Viet Nam through the international Hague System. The withdrawal of the mandatory protection claim simplifies filing, while the new feature for indicating principal designs and variants ensures compliance with Vietnamese law from the outset. Applicants should note the effective date of August 21, 2025, for these changes.

16.Change of the Individual Fee under Madrid Protocol Concerning Republic of Korea

The Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has established new amounts of the individual fee payable with respect to Republic of Korea under Madrid Protocol.

As from **August 10, 2025**, the amounts of the individual fee payable will be the following:

ITEMS		Amounts (in Swiss francs)	
		until August 9, 2025	as from August 10, 2025
Application or Subsequent Designation	– for each classes of goods or services	191	167
Renewal	– for each classes of goods or services	218	191

These new amounts will be payable where the Republic of Korea

(a) is designated in an international application received by the Office of origin on or after August 10, 2025; or

(b) is the subject of a subsequent designation received by the Office of the Contracting Party of the holder or filed directly with the International Bureau of WIPO on or after that date; or

(c) has been designated in an international registration renewed on or after that date.

July 10, 2025

17.Fee Reductions in Madrid System: Several Countries Cut Costs, Brazil Adjusts Payment Structure

Recently, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) updated the individual designation fees for multiple countries under the Madrid System for the International Registration of Trademarks. These adjustments affect fees for new applications, subsequent designations, and renewals. With the exception of Syria, most countries have reduced their fees, with average reductions mostly ranging between 15% and 20%, thereby lowering the cost of intellectual property maintenance for applicants.

The fee adjustments for each country are as follows:

Country	New Effective Date	Average Change
Republic of Korea	August 10	–12.48%
Türkiye	August 24	–22.66%
Belize	August 31	–16.50%
Caribbean NL		–15.96%
Gambia		–17.82%
Ghana		–16.16%
India		–15.45%
Jamaica		–16.18%
Mauritius		–14.99%
Samoa		–15.61%
Zimbabwe		–17.57%
Syria	September 18	+60.45%

It is particularly noteworthy that Brazil's fee adjustment will be implemented in two phases, as detailed below:

I. Fees Effective from August 9, 2025 (Two-Part Payment)

Item	Description	Previous (CHF)	New (CHF)
Application or	First Part · per class	62	61

Subsequent Designation	Second Part · per class	112	109
Renewal	per class of goods/services	160	146
	Payment within grace period · per class	241	292

II. Fees Effective from September 20, 2025 (Single Payment)

Item	Description	Amount (CHF)
Application or Subsequent Designation	per class of goods/services	251
Renewal	per class of goods/services	146
	Payment within grace period · per class	292

These fee changes reflect a broader trend toward optimization of trademark registration cost structures. Applicants intending to submit international trademark registrations or renewals in the aforementioned countries are advised to closely monitor the effective dates and corresponding requirements, and to plan their application procedures accordingly to reduce intellectual property management costs.

18.ARIPO Patent Filings Take Effect in Mauritius Under Harare Protocol

Marking a significant milestone for intellectual property protection in Africa, the Harare Protocol has officially taken effect in the Republic of Mauritius as of August 27, 2025. This activation follows the country's accession earlier this year and transforms its previous commitment into operational reality.

The implementation now enables both international applicants and local innovators to actively utilize the streamlined IP registration system. Through ARIPO's centralized filing procedures, applicants can officially designate Mauritius for protection of patents, utility models, and industrial designs. Simultaneously, Mauritian businesses and creators gain enhanced access to regional IP protection through direct filings with the ARIPO Office.

With this development, the Harare Protocol now encompasses all ARIPO member states except Somalia, significantly expanding the system's coverage and reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of intellectual property administration in Africa.