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UAE | OFFICIAL FEES WAIVED FOR SOME PATENT AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGN MATTERS

Pursuant to Cabinet Decision no. 51 of 2019, the Patent Office in the United Arab Emirates has started the implementation of the waiver/reduction in the official fees related to the following services:

- Annuities
- Publications
- Patent restoration
- Assignment, merger, and licensing
- Correction of application and amendment of claims
- Change of representative

This news comes in light of the revision in the official fees for all services offered by the Ministry of Economy, including those related to intellectual property matters, which we reported on in our August Bulletin. The new fees entered into force on July 7, 2019.

While the aforementioned Decision was published in July of this year, the Patent Office has recently finalized the necessary amendments on their online portal to adopt the newly announced reduced fees.

UAE



SAUDI ARABIA | PATENT GRIEVANCES COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED



SAUDI
ARABIA

As part of the country's efforts in advancing its IP procurement, Saudi Arabia established the Patent Grievances Committee.

Pursuant to Article 35 of the Law of Patents, Layout Designs of Integrated Circuits, Plant Varieties, and Industrial Models, the Committee has the jurisdiction to hear infringement cases, invalidation cases, and allows applicants and interested parties to have a clear mechanism for appealing or opposing official decisions.

We expect the Committee will streamline patent related procedures and motivate innovation and economic systems in Saudi Arabia.

SAUDI ARABIA | YOU CAN TRADEMARK YOUR SURNAME NOW



The Trademark Office in Saudi Arabia recently announced that the definition of a trademark has been broadened and now allows the registration of surnames as marks.

The TMO will assess several aspects when examining the trademark application, including but not limited to:

- If the surname complies with the conditions and formal registration requirements related to trademarks;
- If the mark is the surname of the applicant;
- If the surname has been in commercial use for a time period that is not less than 10 years;
- If the surname has achieved fame through wide use in advertisements;
- If the surname is considered a component of the mark and not the mark itself.

Trademark Protection Framework in Saudi Arabia:

- **Classification:** 10th edition – single class application. Class 33, alcoholic goods in class 32, pork meat in class 29, and Christmas trees and related products in class 28 cannot be registered
- **Examination:** On formal, absolute, and relative grounds
- **Opposition:** 60 days from publication date
- **Protection Term:** 10 Hijri years (approximately 9 years and 8 months) from filing date and renewable for like periods
- **Use:** Vulnerable to cancellation if mark has not been used for 5 years from filing
- **Filing Requirements:** POA, legalized and copy of priority document, if priority is claimed, certified. A scanned colored copy of both the POA and priority document must be submitted at the time of filing. The original copies may be submitted within 3 months from filing date

KUWAIT | IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS OF THE COPYRIGHT LAW PUBLISHED



KUWAIT

In an effort to encourage the creation of art and culture, the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters recently issued the Implementing Regulations of the Copyright Law. The Implementing Regulations entered into force on July 28, 2019 and are expected to pave the way to a clearer copyright procurement process.

COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FRAMEWORK IN KUWAIT	
Member of Berne Convention	Yes
Registration	Possible for nationals as well as foreigners
Filing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Power of attorney, legalized• Copy of the commercial license or commercial register
Duration	The life of the author plus an additional 50 years

ETHIOPIA | IP IS AN IMPORTANT AVENUE FOR SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY



ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia, the second most populous country in Africa, is one of the fastest growing states among the 188 International Monetary Fund member countries. This growth, which has been driven by the government's investment in infrastructure, as well as sustained progress in the agricultural and service sectors, is expected to keep rising in the years to come.

Ethiopia's annual GDP growth averaged 10.9 percent over the past year. The country's GDP is US\$200.6 billion, while the GDP per capita is US\$2,200. The GDP composition is 34.8 percent for agriculture, 21.6 percent for industry, and 43.6 percent for services.

Foreign exchange earnings are led by the services sector and by the export of several commodities. While coffee remains the largest foreign exchange earner, Ethiopia is diversifying exports, and commodities such as gold, sesame, livestock, and horticulture products are becoming increasingly important for the growing economy. Manufacturing represented less than eight percent of total exports in 2016, but manufacturing exports are expected to increase in future years due to an international presence that is significantly growing in Ethiopia.

The East African nation recently attracted US\$8.5 billion in foreign direct investment. Investment in the country has been primarily in infrastructure, construction, and agriculture.

ETHIOPIA | IP IS AN IMPORTANT AVENUE FOR SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY

ETHIOPIA

In the fall of 2015, the Ethiopian government finalized and published the 2016-20 five-year plan, known as the Growth and Transformation Plan II, which emphasizes developing manufacturing in sectors where Ethiopia has a comparative advantage, such as textiles and garments, leather goods, and processed agricultural products.

Ethiopia maintains a relatively comprehensive regulatory and legislative system for the protection of trademarks, patents, designs, and copyrights, and is a party to the World Intellectual Property Organization. The country also maintains an observer status at the World Trade Organization. Accordingly, IP is an important avenue for nourishing the economy in Ethiopia.

On the trademarks front, Ethiopia follows the Trademark Registration and Protection Proclamation of 2006, which is implemented by Ministerial Resolution no. 273 of 2012. The 10th edition of the Nice Classification is in force and multiclass applications are acceptable.

Trademark examination is performed on formal, absolute, and relative grounds and oppositions may be filed after 60 days from publication date. The protection term for a trademark is seven years from filing date and is renewable for like periods. As for use, trademarks are vulnerable to a cancellation action by any interested party if there has been no effective use of the mark for a period of three consecutive years preceding date of filing for cancellation.



ETHIOPIA | IP IS AN IMPORTANT AVENUE FOR SUPPORTING THE ECONOMY



Trademark registration requirements are: (1) Power of Attorney, legalized, and (2) copy of home (or foreign) registration certificate of the mark with English translation, notarized. All documents must be submitted at the time of filing. Priority claim is not possible in Ethiopia.

As for patents, two types of patents are available in Ethiopia: Patents of Invention and Patents of Importation. The protection term for a patent is 15 years from filing date and is extendable for five years. It is worth noting that although Ethiopia is not a member of the Paris Union, priority may still be claimed from a foreign patent application filed not more than twelve months previously.

Absolute novelty is required for patentability in Ethiopia. However, novelty will not be destroyed if the disclosure of the invention to the public occurred not earlier than twelve months preceding the filing date or where applicable the priority date. Filing requirements for Patents of Invention are a legalized Power of Attorney, specification, claims and abstract in English, International Patent Classification, and formal drawings if applicable, along with a legalized Assignment of Invention, and a legalized Certificate of Incorporation. The priority document with a verified English translation may be submitted within three months from the date of filing.

As for Patents of Importation, the filing requirements are the same as for the Patents of Invention, with the exception of having to submit a certified copy of basic foreign granted patent. The Assignment of Invention is not required for Patents of Importation.

Ethiopia, as aforementioned, remains a country with high aspirations that welcomes foreign investments. A healthy balance between the latter and local development is bound to be beneficial for the country's own growth.

The proper application and enforcement of IP laws should help Ethiopia become more of an innovative hub in East Africa and lead to this required healthy financial balance.

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