



Committed to common solutions to global challenges

A joint message from the JPO and the EPO

16 July 2020

The Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO) express their deepest sympathy for the loss of life resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and declare their solidarity with all those suffering personal and economic hardships.

Global solidarity and co-operation are needed more than ever before to defeat the virus and ensure a swift recovery from the economic and social effects of the pandemic. Innovation will play a central role in these efforts, supported by effective intellectual property protection.

The JPO and the EPO have responded to the crisis by adapting our services and procedures in support of inventors. Both of our Offices have offered assistance to patent applicants by providing flexibility with regard to procedural deadlines, along with a wide range of other measures to ensure business continuity¹.

We stand by inventors and researchers, and will continue to support their efforts in developing technological solutions to this global challenge by offering access to patent information on technologies, through our free public patent databases so that they can build on previous advances. We will provide solid IP rights that enable scientists, inventors, and researchers to innovate further, helping them to attract investment, bring their technologies to market, and create jobs.

¹ To find out more about measures implemented by the JPO and the EPO in response to the coronavirus pandemic, please visit our websites, www.jpo.go.jp/e/news/koho/saigai/covid19_procedures.html and www.epo.org/news-issues/covid-19.html.

The EPO has launched a tool to provide insight on patent landscapes related to coronavirus, which supports scientists and researchers with ready-made search strategies. The JPO also offers a tool in the form of an open licensing database, where businesses can connect, and find information on available technologies.

Over the years we have established various joint initiatives to support inventors worldwide, such as fast-tracking examination of patent applications through the Patent Prosecution Highway programme, and promoting the alignment of our examination practices and procedures, for example in the area of computer-implemented inventions.

We reaffirm our commitment to addressing the challenges together and building further on the longstanding and productive co-operation between the JPO and the EPO. Companies and inventors from Japan and Europe have always figured prominently among the applicants at both Offices: last year Japanese and European firms filed more than 20 000 patent applications with the EPO and the JPO respectively.

Due to the global nature of innovation today, with scientists, companies and researchers co-operating across borders, we are determined to seek global solutions for the benefit of the international IP community, and to advance bilateral co-operation initiatives. We will intensify our joint work towards an efficient and harmonised international patent system, in particular within the framework of the Trilateral co-operation together with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, and the IP5², which also includes the China National Intellectual Property Administration and the Korean Intellectual Property Office.

Together the JPO and the EPO will contribute to the economic and social recovery from the pandemic by collaborating on intellectual property issues in support of innovators worldwide to promote an efficient, cost-effective and user-friendly international patent landscape.

MATSUNAGA Akira
JPO Commissioner

António Campinos
EPO President

² To read more about the 'Offices' initiatives for effective multilateral co-operation on global IP issues, visit the IP5 website: www.fiveipoffices.org