

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
TRILATERAL COOPERATION



Trilateral Cooperation

The framework of the Trilateral Cooperation was set up in 1983 between the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

The Trilateral Offices process the greater part of all patent applications filed worldwide, including PCT applications⁽ⁱ⁾. In the early 1980s, as the Trilateral Offices, the world's major IP offices, faced a rapid increase in the number of applications, we established a unique international cooperation framework in the patent field. This is the "Trilateral Cooperation."

Filing activities of users of the patent systems have become more global in line with the recent pattern of economic globalization. The number of patent applications in the world has continuously increased, as patent applications for the same inventions are filed with multiple patent offices.

The Trilateral Offices are committed to eliminating unnecessary duplication of work among the Offices, enhancing patent examination efficiency and quality, and aiming to grant stable patent rights smoothly. The Trilateral Offices continue to lead various projects in the patent field through the unique Trilateral Cooperation.



28th Trilateral Conference in 2010 (Left to right)
David J. Kappos: USPTO, Yoshiyuki Iwai: JPO, Benoît Battistelli: EPO

Celebratory Messages from the Heads

Dear colleagues,



Our sincere thanks are due to the JPO for organising such a fitting tribute to 30 years of Trilateral Cooperation. That cooperation, initiated at a time when the world was a quite different place, has been consistently fruitful, generating an impressive list of concrete and useful achievements.

Over the years, we have worked together on a wide range of projects to address common practical issues, arising from our ever-growing workloads. We have devised new electronic tools for applications including the exchange of data and the enhancement of access to patent information. We have sought to facilitate worksharing by streamlining our patent procedures and harmonising our administrative practice. Latterly, our cooperation on technical matters has been extended to include industry. Our first User Day meeting with industry representatives took place in 2003, and these gatherings are now a regular fixture. In 2011, we celebrated the public deployment of the Common Citation Document, which was born directly from the close collaboration with our users in industry. Significant as they are, however, these tangible successes are not the full story. The Trilateral has always been about people as well as projects. It has created a space for easy, informal communication, leading to a deeper form of mutual understanding and trust whose value is immeasurable. At this human level, too, our cooperation remains crucially important. *Vive la Trilatérale!*

Benoît Battistelli
President,
European Patent Office



The USPTO is proud to be one of the three Trilateral Offices and a strong proponent of the many groundbreaking initiatives, discussions, and strides in patent quality and efficiency fostered in the Trilateral. From the early days including the BACKfile CONversion project, or “BACON,”—a cornerstone for IT efforts in 1988—to the Patent Prosecution Highway to the futuristic “Global Dossier” concept, the Trilateral Offices have led the way on international patent cooperation and laid the groundwork for worksharing efforts globally.

These work sharing efforts have brought the resources of the world’s leading patent authorities to bear on improving the quality of examination processes and reducing the processing time for patent applications. Trilateral cooperation has also expanded our direct outreach and interaction with inventor and practitioner communities by promoting the criticality of intellectual property protection in the 21st century and working closely with industry in the United States, Japan, and Europe to directly assess the needs of IP stakeholders worldwide. The Trilateral continues to advance and has seen many of its efforts supported and expanded into the realm of the IP5 – the Trilateral Offices plus the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and the State Intellectual Property Office of the People’s Republic of China (SIPO). At this year’s 2012 conference, we applaud the efforts of the Trilateral Offices celebrating thirty years of international cooperation, dedication to its purpose, continued hard work, and commitment to building an innovation-friendly intellectual property system for the 21st century.

**Under Secretary of
Commerce for Intellectual
Property and
Director of the United
States Patent and
Trademark Office
David J. Kappos**



It is my great honor and pleasure to host this Trilateral Conference during such a significant and memorable moment in the history of the Trilateral Cooperation. Having this excellent opportunity, I looked back upon its history. And I remembered a proverb said in the West. It goes, “Three, helping one another, bear the burden of six.”

In the beginning of the 1980’s, the three patent offices struggled to cope with a huge amount of paper patent documents. Concerning this common problem, we cooperated together, working to finally develop databases that use digitized patent documents. Furthermore, we have successfully accomplished other considerable achievements. Some examples include enabling patent applications to be filed electronically, and establishing networks that enable data to be exchanged electronically between IP offices. These accomplishments have been welcomed not only at the Trilateral Offices but also at other IP offices in the world. All of these lead to improving global patent systems today. This probably means that we have been bearing the burden of “sixty”, not just “six”.

Now, we still face another common but significant issue. Having an increasing number of patent applications worldwide, it is our current task to realize an environment where those applications should be able to get granted patents smoothly in every corner of the world. In order to achieve building truly “global patent systems in a global era”, we would like to take the lead in developing such global patent systems. As we do, we look forward to further strengthening our Trilateral Cooperation while hoping for continued cooperation from users as well.

**Commissioner,
Japan Patent Office
Hiroyuki Fukano**

Major recent achievements (1)

TriNet (Trilateral Network)

The **TriNet** was made available in 1998. The network is utilized for exchanging various information

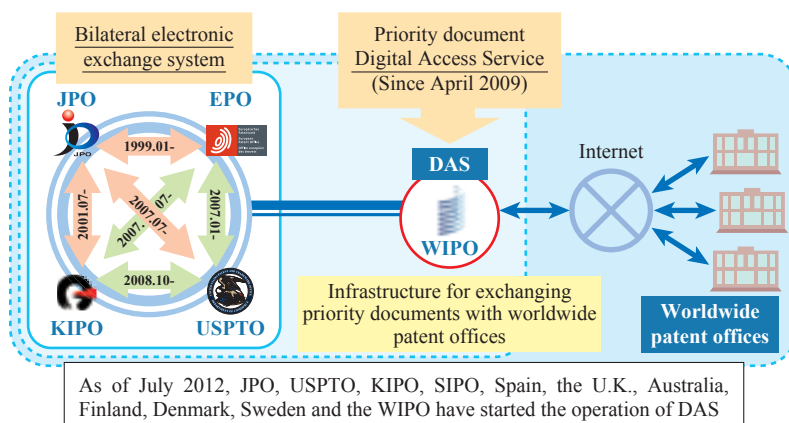
such as priority documents and file wrapper information references, and accessing the retrieval system.

PDX (Priority Document EXchange)

In 1997, the Trilateral Offices started deliberations on a system for electronic exchange of priority documents. In this system, the Office of First Filing directly sends **priority documents**⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ to other Offices on behalf of applicants, which significantly reduces the burden and costs incurred in the procedures for submission and for issuance of priority certificates to applicants. The system has been implemented between the JPO - EPO

since January 1999, between the JPO - KIPO since July 2001, and between the JPO - USPTO since July 2007.

Following these achievements, in 2006 the **WIPO**⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ General Assembly approved the establishment of a framework for a Digital Access Service (**WIPO-DAS**) so that priority documents can be exchanged electronically (**PDX**) between multiple offices. The WIPO-DAS PDX has been operational since 2009



STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GERALD J. MOSSINGHOFF IN CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRILATERAL AGREEMENT

When President Reagan appointed me as the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks in 1981, I had a keen appreciation of the inherent international character of science and technology generally, and of the systems of law designed to encourage innovation. The European Patent Office, the Japan Patent Office and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office were then, and are now, the three most important offices in the world. The Trilateral Agreement had two key goals:

- First, to ensure that automation efforts by the three offices would be technically compatible; and
- Secondly, to coordinate efforts toward more effective work sharing.

The Trilateral Agreement has achieved the first of the two goals, and is working effectively toward the second. Our job now is to build upon our successes and move toward a truly universal form of patent protection for important in-

ventions. This will necessarily build upon the landmark TRIPS Agreement and upon the efforts of our IP5 partners, China and Korea.

In his prophetic work, *The Wealth of Nations*, the 18th

Century economist and philosopher Adam Smith taught us that the wealth of nations consisted of Capital, Labor and Natural Resources. Our generation has added a fourth constituent, namely Intellectual Property. The Trilateral Agreement has been an important part of that development. I am personally honored to have been able to play a role in the creation of the Trilateral Agreement 30 years ago.



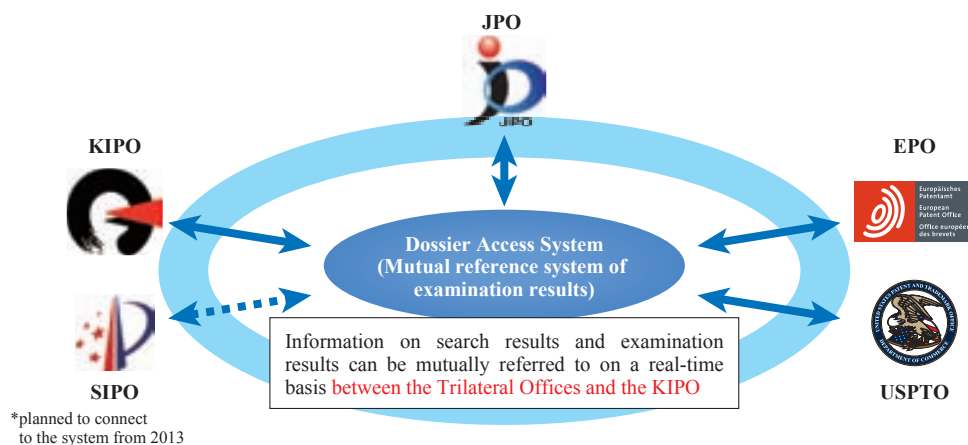
2nd Trilateral Conference in 1984
(Mr. Mossinghoff in the center)

FWA (File Wrapper Access)

In 2006, the Trilateral Offices established a system (**Dossier^(iv) Access System**) to provide examiners of each Office with examination-related information through the Trilateral network. In 2007, the Trilateral Offices (and the KIPO) started to access each others' examination-related information using this system. Such examination-related information in Japanese or other languages is translated into English using machine translation and provided to each Office. It is expected that the improvement of the infrastructure for

examination cooperation enhances the quality of examinations without losing efficiency and improves the predictability and stability of patent rights in each country.

At the meeting of the **Five IP Offices (IP5)^(v)** held in October 2008, the Five Offices agreed to develop "One Portal Dossier" which collectively displays the examination information on related applications at each office by further developing the Dossier Access System. The preparations for its implementation by 2013 are currently under way.

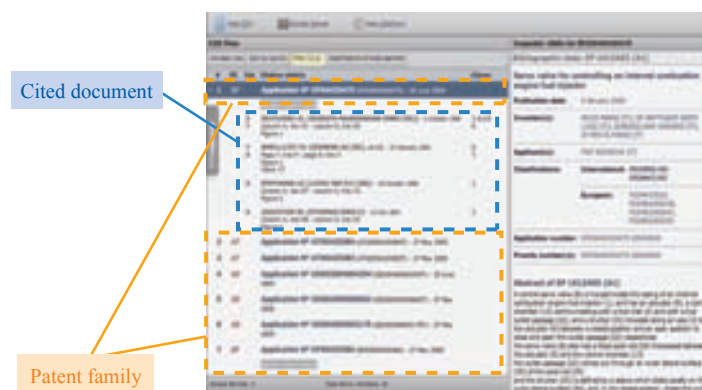


CCD (Common Citation Document)

The Common Citation Document (CCD) application is a patent information tool developed by the Trilateral Offices in 2011 for the purpose of collectively providing citation information to be used by applicants and the public. As prior art cited by the Trilateral Offices is consolidated for the entire patent family, the search results from each Office for the same invention

can be displayed on the same page.

The Common Citation Document website was launched in November 2011 and is available to the general public. The expansion of the Trilateral CCD project to cooperation among the IP5 has been discussed, and all Five Offices have agreed to participate in this project.



Trilateral CCD website <http://www.trilateral.net/ccd>

Major recent achievements (2)

PPH (Patent Prosecution Highway)

The Trilateral Offices have implemented the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) with a view to improving efficiency and effectiveness of searches and examinations conducted by each office and maximizing the reuse of work results.

The PPH is a framework that allows applicants to request accelerated examination of corresponding applications filed with the Office of Second Filing in cases where there is any claim^(vi) determined to be patentable by the Office of First Filing. The history of the PPH started when the JPO and the USPTO agreed to implement a pilot program in March 2006.

In November 2009, the Trilateral Offices agreed to implement a pilot program of the PCT-PPH, a framework which allows applicants to request the PPH when

there is any claim determined to be patentable in a written opinion and an international preliminary examination report of PCT and this pilot program began in January 2010.

Beginning in 2011, several patent offices including the Trilateral Offices began a pilot of the PPH MOT-TAINAI. Under this program, a PPH request is eligible whether or not the office which provides the work results in the examination is the Office of First Filing.

The applicants benefit from the PPH in terms of accelerated examination, reduced number of office actions, and improved patent allowance rate. Patent offices benefit from a reduced examination burden through the effects of worksharing.^(vii)

Office-Initiated Worksharing

The Trilateral Offices are investigating worksharing methods for maximizing the reuse of work results of each Office with the aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness of searches and examinations conducted by each office.

As one example, we piloted a framework called “SHARE” (Strategic Handling of Applications for Rapid Examination) in which the Office of First Filing preferentially started to examine such “first filed” applications in order that the Office of Second Filing

could utilize the search and examination results of the Office of First Filing.

While the EPO normally operates the system by preferentially examining applications filed with it as the Office of First Filing, the JPO has realized a concept of SHARE through “JP-FIRST (JP-Fast Information Release Strategy)” from April 2008. In addition, the USPTO has implemented a pilot program called “FLASH (First Look Application Sharing)” which began in November 2010.

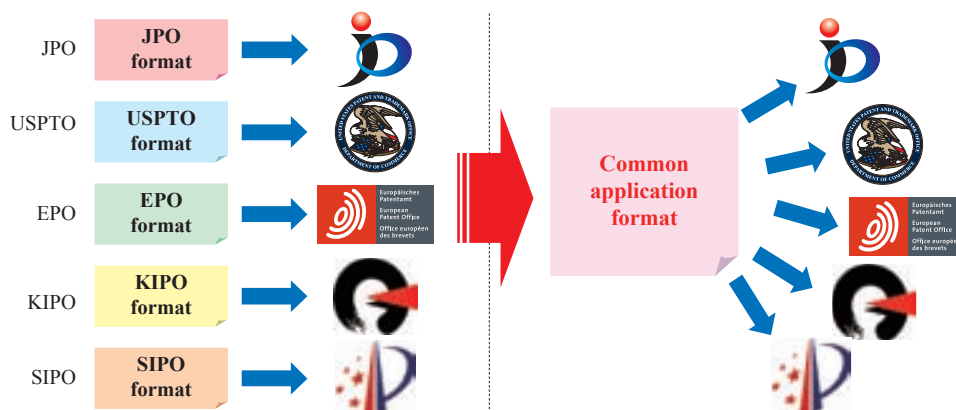
CAF (Common Application Format)

At their Working Group Meeting in 2006 and 2007, the Trilateral Offices discussed how to meet the needs of users and realized a **Common Application Format (CAF)**. In November 2007, the Trilateral Offices reached a final agreement on the format (i.e.: items to be included in the descriptions and their order), and started to accept applications under CAF in January 2009.

It is expected that the standardization of the descrip-

tion format will improve convenience for applicants when they file applications with each Office and reduce costs.

In addition, the adoption of this common application format has been promoted in a framework of the IP5. As a result, the KIPO and the SIPO have started to accept applications under the CAF since January 2010 and August 2012 respectively.



Harmony Project

In November 2000, the Trilateral Offices agreed to start a Trilateral classification **Harmony Project**. To this end, the Trilateral Working Group on Classification was established and efforts for classification harmonization have been made with a view to adopting classification schemes obtained by the Trilateral Offices into the **IPC**.^(viii)

However, at the Trilateral Working Group on Classification meeting in October 2009, the Trilateral Of-

fices agreed not to establish any new project in order to concentrate on the **Common Hybrid Classification (CHC)** project started by the IP5 offices and agreed to terminate all projects in discussion by the end of 2011.

Up to the end of 2011, the Harmony Project had been implemented in about 80 fields and the classification schemes agreed by the Trilateral Offices have been adopted in the IPC.

Patent Harmonization

The Trilateral Offices have made various efforts to harmonize patent systems and their operation.

One of these is a comparative study of the examination practices in each of the Trilateral Offices. Comparative studies and case studies on laws and examination standards have been made for description requirements, inventive step, and novelty. The results of these studies are expected to enhance the predictability of patent examination results for applicants and support the acquisition of stable rights, i.e.: having no grounds for invalidation. They are also expected to reduce the size of the back logs at each office and the relevant examination burden, the latter

through facilitation of worksharing based on enhanced mutual understanding regarding laws and practices.

Moreover, a catalogue (Catalogue of Differing Practices) summarizing differences of examination practices in the Trilateral Offices and their grounds (laws, court decisions, etc.) was created for helping examiners to better understand and, if appropriate, use the examination results of other Offices. This catalogue was expanded to the IP5 Cooperation in 2011.

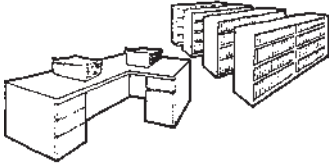
Such information is available to applicants and patent attorneys through the Trilateral website and the IP5's website.

1983-1990

Launch of Trilateral Cooperation on creation of patent data base

Mission Needs:

To Reverse Current Trends



- Search documents are stored and retrieved in an *all-paper hand-file system*—24 million documents on file now will double by the year 2000.
- 7% of the 24 million documents are *missing or misfiled*.
- Error-plagued *manual handling* of 360,000 active cases and 20,000 papers received each day is *reducing productivity*.
- Decisions to grant patents and register trademarks are increasingly based on *incomplete data*.

[Needs for automated and digitized application documents]
(Extract from the report on the 1st Conference)

In the early 1980s, a dramatic rise in the number of patent applications started straining the financial and human resources of patent offices, and threatened the maintenance of their patent procedures. Each Office had been engaging respectively in the establishment of systems to economically store and efficiently process large amounts of patent data and to rapidly disseminate such data. However, the Heads of the Trilateral Offices (EPO, JPO and USPTO) came together for a meeting held in Washington D.C. in October 1983 under the recognition that cooperation between patent offices is essential in order to solve the common challenge of handling rapidly-increasing patent applications. This was the start of the Trilateral Cooperation.

At the first Trilateral Conference in 1983, the Trilateral Offices agreed to continue to meet annually and to bring forward a number of specific cooperation

projects in areas such as automation, classification, sharing of patent search results, exchange of documents and micro films and dissemination of patent information.

In 1984, a project called BACON (Backfile Conversion) was initiated. The project aimed at converting patent documents issued after 1920 into digital format and creating a common database. This meant a huge amount of work for the Trilateral Offices such as the scanning of 41.6 million patent documents. However, this BACON project steadily progressed and proved to be a success, and became a foundation for the Trilateral Cooperation.

In addition to this project, there were various other technical developments. In 1985, the Trilateral Offices agreed on character code and image code standards required for digitizing patent information. In the same year, the first Trilateral Statistical Report was issued.



1st Trilateral Conference in 1983 (First row left to right)
Johannes Bob van Benthem, EPO
Gerald J. Mossinghoff, USPTO
Kazuo Wakasugi, JPO

First Trilateral Conference held in Washington D.C.

BACON document scanning project commences

Agreed on formats for data exchange of coded information of patent documents

Agreement to create a Trilateral DNA Sequence Database

Launch of First Page Project

JPO starts to accept electronic applications

1983

1984

1985

1986

1987

1988

1989

1990

Release of first-generation Macintosh

Release of Windows 1.0

Occurrence of world market shock after the New York Stock Market meltdown (Black Monday)

Reunification of East and West Germany

1991-1995

Achievement of steady results with deepening Trilateral Cooperation

The Trilateral Offices agreed to commence the “First Page^(ix)” project in 1990 and this project has produced favourable results since 1991. It aimed at constructing a database which enables users to search English abstracts included in the Patent Abstracts of Japan (PAJ) and first pages of European and US patent documents.

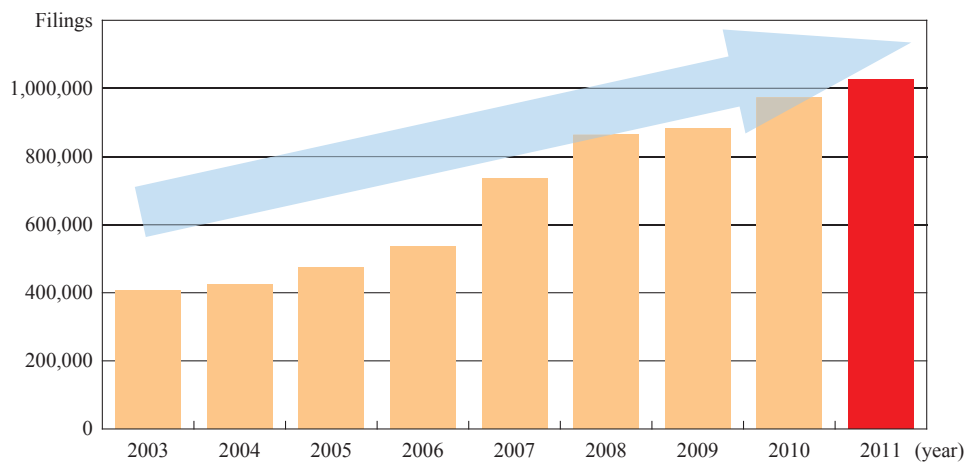
In accordance with progress in digitization of information handled by Offices and electronic processing of patent applications, the Trilateral Offices had been advancing discussions on standardization of mixed mode data to handle both, text and image when capturing patent information.

The Trilateral Offices agreed on the mixed-mode for magnetic tape (MT) standard in 1992, and this standard became a WIPO standard in 1995. The standardization of mixed-mode for CD-ROM developed into a project called MIMOSA (Mixed Mode Software Application). This project aimed at joint development and joint procurement of a software to produce CD-ROMs

with patent data using mixed-mode. The MIMOSA software was completed in 1994 and was made available to the private sector at marginal cost.

Inspired by the JPO’s start in receiving electronic applications, in 1992, the EPO and the USPTO commenced an EASY (Electronic Application System) Project to develop software for electronic filings. In 1995, the EPO registered 150 patents using its prototype software.

In 1993, an Anniversary Symposium was held to commemorate 10 years of Trilateral Cooperation. In this symposium, Mr. Mossinghoff, one of the founding fathers of this framework, commented that “more has been achieved during the first ten years of Trilateral Cooperation than was thought possible when the idea was first broached.” In addition, it was affirmed that the Trilateral Cooperation had offered great advantages not only to the Trilateral Offices but also to their users.



Produced by JPO based on annual reports of EPO, JPO, USPTO
*These electronic filing figures include national applications as well as PCT national entries

Change in number of Electronic Applications [Total of Trilateral Offices]

Agreement on standard of mixed-mode for magnetic tape
USPTO, EPO and WIPO proceed with EASY project

10th Anniversary of the Trilateral Cooperation

Completion of development of MIMOSA software for CD-ROM

EPO registered 150 patent applications using the prototype EASY software

1991

1992

1993

1994

1995

Gulf War

Signing of the Maastricht Treaty

the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

1996-2000

Advancing computerization of patents and information sharing

In 1996, the Trilateral Offices agreed to provide the first page database as a CD-ROM product using the MIMOSA software which we had jointly developed. This enabled users to search a majority of patent documents worldwide through ordinary personal computers. In addition, while a project for exchange of priority documents in electronic form started in 1992, in 1999, the electronic exchange of priority documents using CD-ROM started, first between the EPO and the JPO.

In 1999, the Trilateral Offices also formulated a common form for electronic filing. Based on this experience, the Trilateral Offices developed a joint proposal on electronic application format of PCT applications in the same year and presented the joint proposal to the WIPO. In response, the WIPO developed an electronic application software known as PCT-SAFE (Secure Applications Filed Electronically) and started receiving online PCT applications.

An even greater development was made with regard to the digitization of patent applications and patent information with the so-called Trilateral Network (TriNet). This network enables exchange of patent-related information, including patent examination information, in real time by networking online the Trilateral Offices.

The Trilateral Cooperation is not limited to automation and digitization of patent systems. The Trilateral Offices have been making efforts to harmonize patent

laws and their practices since the very beginning of the Trilateral Cooperation.

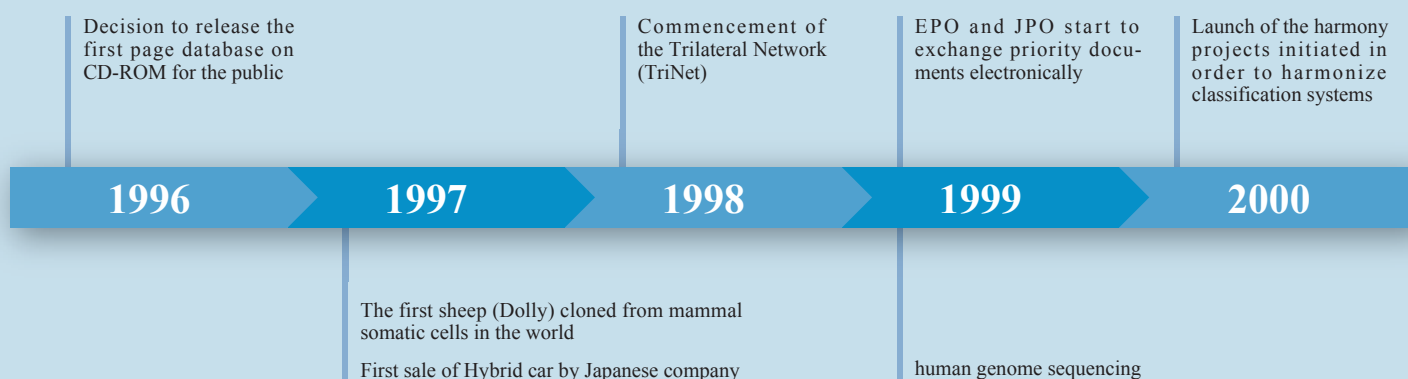
For example, the Trilateral Offices carried forward establishment of the Common Ground Rules which summarize principles for interpretation of claims, setting of search field and

document evaluation. The Trilateral Offices submitted a Trilateral joint proposal to reflect the rules in the WIPO PCT Guidelines in 1997.

Moreover, in response to the development of new technologies, the Trilateral Offices conducted comparative analysis on methods for judging patentability among Offices. A report on a comparative study of biotechnology patent practices focusing on patentability of DNA fragments and a report on a comparative study of business method related inventions were produced in 1999 and 2001, respectively.



MIMOSA Poster



2001-2005

Increase in the number of applications and challenge for reduction of workload

The TriNet has progressed further since its launch in 1998. In 2001, the Trilateral Offices agreed to extend the TriNet to the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) and the KIPO. TriNet is part of a more global network comprising WIPONET, and PatNet (network among member countries of the European patent convention) that aim at supporting secure data exchanges between offices.

In 2001, a serious common problem of workload due to a global increase of patent filings was discussed for the first time at the Trilateral Conference. The Trilateral Cooperation celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2002 and an anniversary symposium was held to commemorate it under the theme, “Mastering the Workload.” The participants including users actively discussed how to deal with the problem of patent examination workload. Through these discussions on the workload problem, the Trilateral Offices developed a concept of mutual utilization of search/examination results produced by other offices. These discussions bore fruit in the form of various activities in the subsequent Trilateral Cooperation.

When utilizing search/examination results of other offices, it is important to understand the search and examination methods in these offices. Although examiner exchange programs had been in place on a bilateral basis, the Trilateral Examiner Exchange was held for the first time in 2004 with the participation of examiners from all Trilateral Offices for discussions.

During this period, the WIPO had carried forward discussions on the Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT),^(x) under the guise of Patent Law Harmonization. The Trilateral Offices also worked together for Patent Law Harmonization with the common recognition that an environment where search/examination results can be used is important. In 2005, the Trilateral Offices agreed on a “Reduced Package” which focused on items related to patent examination with a view to accelerating discussions at the WIPO level. Unfortunately, due to conflicting views between the WIPO member countries, there has been no outstanding progress in discussions on the SPLT at WIPO since then.



20th Trilateral Conference in 2002



Icon for 20 years anniversary

Commencement of online PCT applications
20th Commemoration of the Trilateral Cooperation

Agreement on connecting TriNet-WIPONET-PatNet mutually
Establishment of Industry Trilateral and start of meetings on regular basis between Trilateral Offices and Industry Trilateral

Launch of Trilateral Document Access pilot for exchanging published dossiers

Agreement on priority document exchange between EPO and USPTO

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

Occurrence of Synchronized terrorist attacks in the US
Bankruptcy of Enron Corp.

Release of the European official currency “Euro”

Hurricane Katrina hit USA

2006-2010

Progress of worksharing

The problem of workload, which had been discussed since the early 2000s, produced an idea of mutual utilization of search/examination results produced by other offices, and this has brought results in many tangible forms since 2006.

One of these results is the Dossier Access System (File Wrapper Access), a system which allows patent offices to mutually refer to a set of documents on patent applications including search/examination results. The Dossier Access System was set up in 2006 and the mutual reference of examination-related information with the KIPO became possible in 2007 through this system.

The idea of mutual utilization of search/examination results produced some unique worksharing programs. One such program is the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH). The PPH between the JPO - USPTO started in 2006. The PPH between the EPO - JPO and the EPO - USPTO started in 2010.

In 2008, a trial program called SHARE started. This framework allows the exploitation of the examination

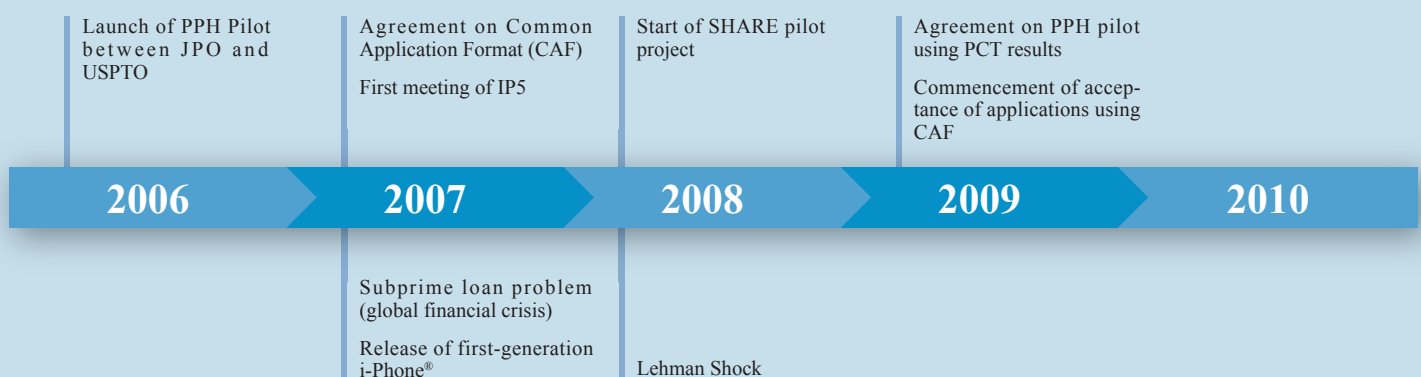
results of the office with which the patent application was first filed. The Office of First filing (OFF) preferentially examines the application and the office with which the patent application was filed later (OSF or Office of Second Filing) utilizes the examination results of the OFF.

Also, comparative studies and case studies on examination operation have been beneficial for utilizing search/examination results produced by other offices. From 2007 to 2009, comparative studies and case studies on description requirements, novelty and inventive step were conducted and their results were published.

In addition, based on requests from users, the Trilateral Offices developed a Common Application Format (CAF) of common descriptions, etc. (descriptions, claims, abstracts and drawings) and finally agreed to the CAF in 2007. The CAF enables the applicant to file a patent application with any of the Trilateral Offices using a single format. Applications in the CAF format were first received in 2009. The CAF format was adopted as a WIPO standard in 2008.



Examiner Exchange Program



2011-2012

New Development for Trilateral Cooperation

Concerning worksharing, the JPO and the USPTO started the PPH-MOTTAINAI program in July 2011 with other offices, and the EPO has participated in this program since January 2012. In addition, the PCT remains one of the most important frameworks for worksharing. A PCT working group, which was established in 2000 within the Trilateral Cooperation to discuss PCT reforms, revitalized its discussion reflecting the reconfirmation of the importance of improving the PCT at the Trilateral Conference in 2011.

In 2011, the Common Citation Document or CCD website was launched. The CCD application enables users to refer to all citation documents at a glance, which are cited by examiners of various offices with

regard to patent applications filed with multiple offices for the same invention. The launch of this website was greatly welcomed as it enhances access to patent information.

Recently, some results of the Trilateral Cooperation have been introduced into the framework of the IP5. For example, the KIPO and the SIPO have started to receive patent applications in the CAF format developed by the Trilateral Offices in 2010 and 2012, respectively. The Dossier Access System established by the Trilateral Offices has evolved into the One Portal Dossier project in the framework of the IP5. In 2012, the Trilateral Cooperation commemorates its 30th anniversary.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE KAZUO WAKASUGI Reflecting on the creation of the Trilateral Cooperation

The first time I heard about the idea of the Trilateral Cooperation was 30 years ago when I was in Geneva participating in an international meeting. First of all, I recall that Mr. Mossinghoff, then commissioner of USPTO, explained to me about the idea in a meeting room at the U.S. Mission in Geneva. Hearing his idea, I immediately felt that Trilateral Cooperation would lead not only to automation and computerization of patent procedures but also to their harmonization as well. During these 30 years, the Trilateral Cooperation has been steadily making progress and achieving many successful results such as the creation of databases, standardization of data formats and harmonization of patent systems. In the early 80's, the pendency for patent examination in Japan was around four years, and some people were forecasting that it would reach five or six years.

However, we are targeting that it will be 11 months in Japan in 2013. I have no doubt that the Trilateral Cooperation has significantly contributed to the concrete efficiency in patent examination in the three, respective countries/regions. Mr. Bentham, then President of EPO when the Trilateral

Cooperation was started, has already passed away and I feel deeply sorry that we can not celebrate this moment with all three of the founders. However, I, as one of the founders, would like to express my gratitude for the progress and success that have been achieved so far based on the wonderful Trilateral Cooperation. At the same time, I would like to express a word in Japanese to all of you. It is "O-ME-DE-TO", which means "congratulations" to all of you involved in this wonderful cooperation.



1st Trilateral Conference in 1983 (Mr. Wakasugi on the left)

Launch of Common Citation Document (CCD) website

30th Anniversary of the Trilateral Cooperation

2011

2012

2013

Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia.
Great East Japan Earthquake

Current Activity of the Trilateral Offices

The Trilateral Offices hold three working groups meeting (Information Technology Group, Worksharing Working Group and PCT Working Group) twice a year. In addition to these activities, though discussions via e-forums and with dispatching and accepting experts each other, the Trilateral Offices bring forward projects and cooperation in the field of patents.

Moreover, holding the deputy heads level Strategic Working Group twice a year and the Trilateral Conference at heads level once a year, the Trilateral Offices are further developing projects and cooperation under clear guidelines with setting long-term goals and each year's goals and following them up.

Specifically, the Trilateral Offices are now addressing the following challenges.

- Technology and data standards concerning patent information
- Infrastructure concerning patent information, TriNet, Dossier Information Reference System, exchange of priority documents
- Dissemination of patent information
- Worksharing and timeliness of examinations
- PPH
- Harmonization of Patent Laws and their practices
- Quality of patent
- Improvement of PCT

Furthermore, the Trilateral Offices focus on communication with users.

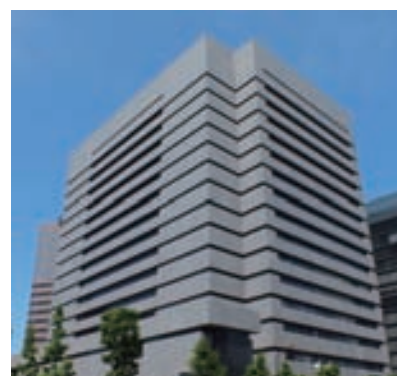
To this end, we hold meetings with representatives of the Industry Trilateral twice a year. The Trilateral Offices are working hard to reflect users' needs in the Trilateral Cooperation through opinions exchanges between offices and users. The Trilateral Offices also actively disseminate information on progress and achievements of the Trilateral Cooperation through the Trilateral website and the information fair.



EPO headquarters building
(Munich *Germany)



USPTO building
(Alexandria, VA *USA)



JPO building
(Tokyo *Japan)

Glossary

i. PCT :

PCT stands for Patent Cooperation Treaty. A PCT application, which is filed in accordance with the PCT, has the same effect as simultaneous applications for all PCT member countries by filing one application.

ii. Priority Document :

“Priority Document” is a document to prove that the filing date of the first application (in the country of first filing) is the relevant date for examination in another country in which the application was filed later.

iii. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) :

WIPO is an international organization established based on the Stockholm Treaty in 1967 for the purpose of protecting and managing intellectual property including patents, trademarks, designs and copyrights. The headquarters is in Geneva.

iv. Dossier :

In the field of patents, “dossier” means a set of all documents related to a patent application, which includes results of search and examination.

v. Five IP Offices (IP5) :

IP5 is the name given to a cooperation framework which consists of the five largest intellectual property offices in the world. The IP5 started in 2007 and its members are the EPO, JPO, USPTO, KIPO (Korean Intellectual Property Office) and SIPO (State Intellectual Property Office of the People’s Republic of Chi-

na). <http://www.fiveipoffices.org/index.html>

vi. Claims :

“Claims” describe the scope of the invention for which patent protection is sought

vii. Worksharing :

In the patent field, “worksharing” generally refers to reduction of search/examination burden by reducing overlapping work such as prior art searches using search/examination results of other offices.

viii. International Patent Classification (IPC) :

The IPC provides for a hierarchical system of language independent symbols for the classification of patents and utility models according to the different areas of technology to which they pertain.

ix. First page :

The “first page” of patent gazettes issued by each Office is also called “front page”. In general, the first page includes bibliographic data such as name(s) of applicant(s), name(s) of inventor(s), numbers relevant to the document, patent classification symbols, as well as the title of the invention, an abstract and representative drawings.

x. Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT) :

SPLT is a treaty to seek international harmonization with regard to substantive aspects of patent (requirements for patentability such as novelty and inventive step) discussed at the WIPO.



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