

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMISSIONER TIAN LIPU OF CHINA'S STATE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE VISITS AIPLA

ARLINGTON, VA – The American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) hosted a meeting on Wednesday, May 19th between Commissioner Tian Lipu of China's State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) and representatives of AIPLA and industry. The meeting featured a very fruitful discussion of the importance of global patent protection and the efficiencies that can be captured through bilateral worksharing agreements. Commissioner Tian expressed interest in learning more about AIPLA and its activities, and, upon hearing of the upcoming July visit to China of members of AIPLA's IP Practice in the Far East Committee, extended an invitation for the AIPLA delegation to visit him at his offices and participate in a symposium, featuring a substantive information exchange between the AIPLA delegation and SIPO examiners.

Earlier in the day, Commissioner Tian met with United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Director David Kappos and participated in high-level talks, which focused on cooperation between the USPTO and SIPO, including the possibility of SIPO participation in the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH), a system of bilateral agreements among patent offices to accelerate examination based on the prior work of other offices. The meeting resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USPTO and SIPO for greater cooperation, including the intention to pursue a PPH agreement. According to a USPTO press release, "The MOU establishes a general framework for bilateral cooperation between the USPTO and the SIPO with an aim toward improving the administration and effectiveness of the intellectual property systems through the exchange of information as well as the development of best practices and cooperative activities." Further, the release stated that, "A primary focus will be to build worksharing programs, including a bilateral Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) agreement, in order to reduce both Offices' growing backlogs and shorten patent pendency."

Background

The Patent Prosecution Highway is a set of initiatives for providing accelerated patent prosecution procedures by sharing information between some patent offices. It also permits each participating patent office to benefit from the work previously done by the other patent office, with the goal of reducing examination workload and improving patent quality.

The first PPH program began in 2006 and has been followed by several others, all proving to be very useful and promising tools to accelerate the processing of patent claims in one patent office that have been previously allowed in another.

The American Intellectual Property Law Association

The American Intellectual Property Law Association is a national bar association of more than 16,000 members engaged in private and corporate practice, in government service, and in academia. AIPLA represents a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, companies, and institutions involved directly or indirectly in the practice of various fields of law affecting intellectual property. Our members represent both owners and users of intellectual property, and they have a keen interest in a strong and efficient intellectual property system.

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