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Trilateral Offices Collaborate to Advance SDG 4 on Quality Education in Annual Meeting

The Trilateral Offices - the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) - convened for their 41st annual Trilateral Conference today at the EPO Headquarters in Munich, Germany. The meeting, hosted by EPO President, António Campinos, focused on collaborative strategies to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, "Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality of Education." This year's discussions centred on knowledge sharing, voluntary technology transfer to regions in need, and youth-focused intellectual property (IP) education and outreach.

The President was joined by JPO Commissioner, Koichi Hamano, and Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and USPTO Director, Kathi Vidal. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) also participated in the meeting as an observer, with Deputy Director General Lisa Jorgenson in attendance. Representatives from the user associations of the Trilateral regions, namely BusinessEurope (EU), Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA) (JP) and American Intellectual Property Law Association and Intellectual Property Owners Association (AIP/LA/IPO) (US) also attended part of the Conference. They will continue to engage with the Trilateral Offices on SDG 4 and other matters of mutual interest.

Key discussions revolved around sharing success initiatives of the respective offices and identifying potential areas of cooperation that contribute to SDG 4, especially concerning youth-oriented initiatives and voluntary technology transfer with a view to building strong IP ecosystems that drive global solutions, economic prosperity and opportunity. The Trilateral Offices remain resolute in their commitment to foster inclusive education, innovation, and collaboration to drive positive change on a global scale. Their collective efforts stand as a testament to the power of unified action in shaping a better future for all.

Looking ahead, the Offices envisaged a Trilateral strategic work plan including collaborative initiatives with global impact, such as launching a network of the Trilateral Offices to link

programmes and exchange on best practices regarding outreach to younger generations; organising a dedicated Trilateral Conference on topics related to the SDGs on a rotating basis; increasing knowledge sharing by building synergies around public smart search platforms and compiling available resources targeting regions and communities in need and youth.

“The challenges we face demand a wealth of technologies to forge a resilient and sustainable future. That’s why it’s so crucial that we deliver a world of innovation to the next generation. Access to education is a human right but it’s also how we ensure the best ideas aren’t lost as a result of inequality. The SDGs help us focus and centralise our efforts, which is very much reflected in the spirit of the Trilateral Co-operation.” – the EPO President António Campinos.

“The new ideas that come from young creative talents can produce innovations that have the potential to change the world. Growing their ideas into successful businesses does not only mean their personal success but also contributes to the resolution of the global issues raised in the SDGs. I believe that IP empowers everyone who wants to challenge those issues and design a better world. The Trilateral IP offices will work together to provide initiatives relating to IP education that will help the young generation achieve their success.” – the JPO Commissioner Koichi Hamano.

“We must work together to foster a robust and reliable IP ecosystem that cultivates an innovation mindset for the next generation, drives economic prosperity and encourages creative world problem-solving. I look forward to using the strong Trilateral co-operation to drive broad and deep education to unleash the innovative and creative power of society.” - The Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Kathi Vidal

“The centrality of innovation to the achievement of all SDGs is indisputable and was clearly echoed in many statements by world leaders at the recent UN SDG Summit. At WIPO, we have a particular interest in nurturing tomorrow’s innovators and creators with the tools they need to realize their dreams and contribute to a sustainable future. WIPO will continue to work with its Member States and other stakeholders to help young people acquire knowledge and skills on IP to achieve their success.” – WIPO Deputy Director General Lisa Jorgenson

The Trilateral Conference, centred on sustainable development, takes place following the United Nations' SDG Summit held just a few weeks ago in New York. The Trilateral Offices' commitment to advancing SDG 4 and their innovative strategies signals a critical step towards securing an inclusive IP system for a sustainable future.

The conference was also held the day before the 50th anniversary of the signing of the European Patent Convention in Munich on 5 October 1973. Close collaboration between

the three offices has existed for much of the history of the EPO, the Trilateral cooperation having been set up in 1983.