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USPTO champions global assignment initiative and PCT modernization

Agency establishes cross-functional 'tiger team' directed to modernize global patent assignments and the Patent Cooperation Treaty

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ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Fresh off its delegation to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Assemblies in Geneva, and following the appointment of Laura Peter as Deputy Director General for Patents and Technology, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) today announced the launch of an International Patent Assignment Initiative to simplify and modernize the administration of cross-border patent ownership and assignments.

This initiative reflects the United States' continuing commitment to modernization of the world's intellectual property (IP) infrastructure for innovators, businesses, universities, investors, and IP offices. The USPTO's cross functional "tiger team" will be tasked with working collaboratively to drive concrete solutions and implementation pathways to foster global adoption.

On the margins of the WIPO Assemblies, the USPTO delegation held several dozen meetings with counterpart IP offices, industry stakeholders, and users of the international patent system. Consistent themes emerged: reduce costs, complexities, and administrative burdens associated with international patent assignments for users of the global patent system and do so expeditiously.

"Last week, we heard a remarkably consistent message from our international partners and from industry," said John A. Squires, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and the 60th Director of the USPTO. "The global innovation economy has evolved dramatically. The administrative infrastructure supporting international patent ownership and recordation should evolve with it. Action is what speaks. We have heard our stakeholders, and we are getting to work immediately."

During the 2026 WIPO Assemblies, USPTO Director Squires called upon all member states to support modernization of the WIPO's filing and registration systems "with the urgency of now," emphasizing that applicants should not have to wait years for improvements to the administrative infrastructure supporting the global IP system. The United States also reaffirmed that modernization efforts should strengthen —

not reopen — the highly successful Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) while improving the experience of applicants managing increasingly complex international patent portfolios. Today's tiger team announcement redoubles that commitment.

"The tiger team's efforts will not be about changing national patent laws or asking countries to sign on to new Treaty requirements," said Director Squires. "That is not necessary to succeed here. What will bring us success — now — is working together, leveraging existing tools, and reducing unnecessary friction for innovators while respecting the legal frameworks of every participating jurisdiction. Our objective is straightforward and within reach: to make the global patent system work better for current users and newcomers alike — especially small- and medium-sized enterprises — and advance the reliability and predictability of the global patent system."

The tiger team, comprising of legal experts, information technology specialists, and international advisors, will find areas for improving efficiencies, interoperability, security, and user experience while engaging with industry, academia, technology companies, and partner IP offices.

As Director Squires noted in Geneva, "Innovation only knows now." Today, the USPTO begins to match that pace by moving nimbly, collaboratively, and pragmatically to strengthen the administrative infrastructure that supports the world's innovators.

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