



The ninth China Patent Annual Conference, held in Beijing last week, aims to build a platform for international cooperation on patents in the new era of economic globalization.

JIANG WENJIE / FOR CHINA DAILY

China planning to enhance international patent cooperation

Conference reviews country’s successes in IP protection since opening-up launched in 1978

By **CHEN MEILING**
chenmeiling@chinadaily.com.cn

China will enhance its international cooperation in patents as part of its effort to promote further opening-up, senior officials said at a key industry forum.

The cooperation will include technical communications, data exchange and improved efficiency of patent examination, said Shen Changyu, commissioner of the China National Intellectual Property Administration at the ninth China Patent Annual Conference held in Beijing last Thursday and Friday.

This year’s conference recalled the achievements of patent developments since the reform and opening-up began in 1978, and aimed to build a platform to boost international cooperation on patents amid the wave of economic globalization.

Since the Patent Law was put into effect in 1984, the number of patent applications from overseas applicants has surpassed 1.77 million, with an annual growth rate of 11 percent, Shen said.

Import and export amount of intellectual property royalties reached \$22 billion from January to June, up 53.6 percent year-on-year.

“It shows the initial goal for the Patent Law to promote technological communications at home and abroad got well realized,” he said. “The patent system benefits from the reform and opening-

up and will support the policy in return,” he said, adding the authority will implement a strict intellectual property protection system to build an ideal business environment, and encourage technical exchanges among companies to boost the commercialization of IP.

It will also promote the admittance to other countries of more Chinese patents, helping domestic companies safeguard their rights in overseas markets and better participate in global competition, he added.

More than 10,000 officials, companies, service providers, experts and audience members participated in the event.

The World Intellectual Property Organization, European Patent Office, Eurasian Patent Organization and intellectual property authorities from countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Singapore and Pakistan attended the event.

Topics discussed at the 11 forums included the establishment of IP strategy, entrepreneurial spirit and IP, the opportunities and challenges in patent transaction arising from the Internet of Things.

There were also patent-related products and service exhibitions, a patents’ cultivation competition and an IP operation competition.

According to CNIPA, the number of annual patent applications and valid patent owners have both surpassed 1 million in recent years. The number of

“
The patent system benefits from the reform and opening-up and will support the policy in return.”

Shen Changyu, commissioner of the China National Intellectual Property Administration

PCT filings also grew 12.5 percent year-on-year to reach 51,000 last year, ranked second in the world, which means China has become a big market for patents, it said.

“The story of China and intellectual property is an extraordinary one,” said Francis Gurry, director-general of the World Intellectual Property Organization at a group interview during the conference.

“It has been 40 years since the reform and opening-up, 1984 is the year (during) which the patent law was enacted in China.

“During that relatively short period of time, China has built the largest patent office, largest trademark office, largest design office in the world,” he said. China joined the organization in June 1980 and is ranked 17th in the

Global Innovation Index 2018, moving up five positions from last year.

“With an extraordinary level of support from the State leadership, President Xi Jinping has emphasized the importance of IP in the future direction of China’s development.

“Premier Li Keqiang made an extraordinary commitment and high-level focus of IP in China and I think the achievement has been outstanding in that period of time,” he said.

He added that the Belt and Road Initiative can make the protection of IP easier, with numerous opportunities offered for the movement of intangible assets such as creative works and technology, as well as promotion of cooperation in IP.

“BRI countries can participate in the global system that has been established over the years. It’s an opportunity to use a multilateral framework to facilitate the cooperation in IP.”

Chinese patent applications in countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative also grew 27 percent from January to June, data from CNIPA showed.

Shen from CNIPA said China adopted the same rules for domestic and foreign companies, and protects the rights of both equally.

Over the last five years, foreign applicants filed 650,000 patents and 840,000 trademarks in China.

In January, *The Diplomat* magazine reported that the winning rate of patent infringement cases from foreign enterprises reached 80 percent in recent years, while the enforcement rate reached 98 percent.

It shows China has become an ideal location for IP-related lawsuits, and demonstrates that China has won recognition from foreign companies, Shen said.

Udo Meyer, senior vice-president and patent attorney of BASF SE, the German chemical giant, said he has seen the strong development of patent rights in China over years.

“When we started to invest in China, we had zero patents in China. Today, we have 6,500 patents and applications. So this is a strong development, very much in line with the opening-up policy in China,” he said.

The company started its own R&D activities in Shanghai in 2012, so all the results they received from the R&D work and all the inventions were filed at CNIPA, he said.

“So we really trust in the system, that we get good protection and we continue foreign filings based on those priority filings we have here in China,” he said. He said he hopes for stronger protection of trade secrets —including more enforcement in this area — and added that he would also like to see higher compensation in patent infringement cases.

What they say

China is on a good way to implement a fully fledged IP protection system, not only patents, but also trademarks, designs, copyright, etc. I learned here this week that the Chinese patent system is supported from the highest State authority; the full administration is supporting patent protection. This is the best basis for a good system and for a wealthy economy. The challenge is that everything is so huge and (happening) so fast. And the patent offices have to speed up also. They have to deliver their services and procedures and so on, to meet the expectations from the public, from the inventors and innovators.

Raimund Lutz, vice-president of the European Patent Office

The conference was widely followed. Many people have come here. There is progress, but none of the speakers have discussed problems that still exist. There are still problems in enforcement, mainly in online enforcement which the European businesses are very concerned about. In the future, some more efforts have to be made, for example, with regard to anti-counterfeiting. The EU is very helpful and could do more things and establish more cooperation with Chinese authorities.

Gunter Marten, IP attaché of the European Union Intellectual Property Office

The Ministry of Industry and Handicraft of Cambodia is responsible for the country’s patent-related affairs. On behalf of the Cambodian government, the ministry has taken part in the construction of an intellectual property cooperation platform for countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, and is willing to carry out various forms of cooperation with other countries and regions in the IP sector. Last year, it signed an agreement with the China National Intellectual Property Administration, so that patents granted by China can be protected in Cambodia as well without examinations. Over the 40 years of reform and opening-up, China has made remarkable progress in IP and we will further enhance cooperation with China in the sector.

Cham Prasidh, minister of industry and handicraft of Cambodia

The intellectual property rights system, which takes patent as its core part, is an important guarantee for encouraging innovation, protecting inventions, promoting utilizations of scientific and technological achievements and realizing market-oriented allocation of innovation resources. Further enhancing IP protection with more effective measures is one of China’s major responsibilities and also meets the requirements of the country’s own internal development. China has upgraded IP protection into a national strategy, strengthening it from the aspects of policy, strategy, legislation and law enforcement. It has made laws governing patents, trademarks, copyrights and anti-unfair competition, and carried out a number of modifications to meet the needs of innovation-driven development.

Li Meng, vice-minister of science and technology

Over the last two and three years, I have seen the spring of intellectual property protection in China has come. IP-related cases courts received have increased, along with a strengthened protection system from the authority. The China Patent Annual Conference, as an event with the largest scale in the segment of IP, attracted a massive audience. Almost all the forums were crowded with people. It shows Chinese people have begun to care more about IP protection. We’ve got a chance to share insights about how to generate, use and protect IP, so there is definitely much to learn.

Liu Huajun, researcher at Fudan University

Intellectual property rights nowadays no longer serve just as a support department in companies and also are no longer a small concept for countries that merely need protection and fees. They play an increasingly important role in promoting corporate innovative development and in the process of entire social changes. When I first learned IP rights at college, they were introduced as intangible assets by our teacher. IP rights are not like bullet trains that people can see and touch, but they indeed serve as a continuous driving force for China’s economy and development, and to promote progress of all Chinese companies.

Liang Zhixiang, vice-president of internet giant Baidu

Contest puts spotlight on technology with commercial prospects

By **CHEN MEILING**

China’s first contest to select and cultivate patents with high value was held in Beijing in August, with the aim of promoting the commercialization of patents and raising the awareness of intellectual property among the public.

“High value means higher efficiency and precise, lower-cost and more user-friendly products, to make people’s life better and the country stronger,” said Wu Lingwei, CEO of Angelplus Accelerator, one of the competition judges.

“The value of new technology that aims to change old habits should be at least 30 percent higher than traditional ways, only in that way will it be widely accepted by the market,” she said.

Beijing Dream Ink Technologies Co Ltd, a three-year-old startup focusing on liquid metal electronic printing technology, won the contest.

Unlike the traditional chemical process technology, the liquid metal electronic print-

ing technology is an efficient, green, energy saving and low-cost approach, said Yu Yang, co-founder and deputy general manager of the company.

The technology is already being applied in the production of parts for medical equipment and home appliances, Yu said.

As the winner, Beijing Dream Ink Technologies received a cash prize of 200,000 yuan (\$29,200) and IP services valued at 100,000 yuan, as well as patent pledge financing of up to 5 million yuan.

Zero Tech won second prize for its unmanned aerial vehicle that can be folded and put into a pocket.

The company has put on UAV flight formation performances at two Spring Festival galas.

Liang Xiumin, IP director of Zero Tech, said the company has developed the world’s first intelligent aerial photography UAV using cellphone chips, which has 139 patents.

Yang Fan, from the Institute of Microelectronics at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, introduced their new-type of tran-



Above: Technicians from Zero Tech check unmanned aerial vehicles at an industrial park in Tianjin. YIN GANG / XINHUA



Left: A researcher at Beijing Dream Ink Technologies operates a liquid metal electronic circuit printer in Zhongguancun, Beijing. LUO XIAOQUANG / XINHUA

“
High value means higher efficiency and precise, lower cost and more user-friendly products, to make people’s life better and the country stronger.”

Wu Lingwei, CEO of Angelplus Accelerator

sistor that is expected to help China to develop core technology for manufacturing its own semiconductors.

The transistor, with 14 patents in China and the United States, can restrain short-channel effects and reduce electrical resistance, which solves a world-level challenge in the segment, she said.

The event was held during the ninth China Patent Annual Conference on Aug 30 and 31, which attracted over 10,000 attendees.

Since April when the contest was launched, participants from over 10 provinces and regions submitted applications. Eight projects, which have applied for 352 patents in total, made the final.

Li Cheng, deputy Party chief of Intellectual Property Publishing House Co Ltd, one of the organizers, said the contest expects to find innovative projects with advanced technology and great market potential, and to share experiences and ideas to incubate high-value patents.