

## **Mexico and Japan announce the launch of a pilot program for the Patent Prosecution Highway.**

*The PPH pilot program will allow applicants to obtain corresponding patents faster and more efficiently in each country.*

The Japan Patent Office (JPO) concurred with the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI) that the two offices would launch a pilot program for the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) on July 1, 2011, as a result of the meeting between the JPO Commissioner and the IMPI Director General held in Tokyo on June 2. This arrangement has taken the number of Japan's PPH partners to 15.

This PPH pilot program applies to applications assumed as patentable by the JPO or the IMPI and PCT applications having received a positive written opinion or a positive international preliminary report from the JPO, where the JPO were the International Searching Authority or the International Preliminary Examination Authority. The PPH pilot program will allow applicants to obtain corresponding patents faster and more efficiently in each country.

With a view to allowing applicants to obtain foreign patents faster, the JPO will continue efforts to expand the scope of countries and applications eligible for the PPH programs and to standardize and simplify the PPH request procedures. The JPO also seeks to widen the use of examination results of other offices under the PPH programs in order to reduce the workload of patent examiners and improve the efficiency of the examination process.

### **Background:**

- The Mexican Institute of Industrial Property, as of March 1, 2011, gets involved in the new international trend and launches the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) jointly with the United States Patent and Trademark Office.
- The PPH mechanism is a practice that is starting to spread worldwide. In 2006, it began with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and the Japan Patent Office; nowadays over 12 IP Offices, including the European Patent Office, have joined this program.
- IP Offices can expedite the patent examination process by using to the maximum extent possible the substantive examination results obtained by the signatory offices.
- The Patent Prosecution Highway reduces the substantive examination period. What used to be done in 27 months, now is resolved in a period of approximately 3 months.
- Globalization is the scenario in which Mexico is involved and has unexpected scope. That is why we must stay updated and benefit from programs like the patent prosecution highway.
- IMPI is constantly updating to meet the needs of the user and provide accelerated means of protection for their inventions. That is why we must explore new worksharing programs like the patent prosecution highway and offer our users its many benefits.
- Information Technology Communications allow expeditious exchange of information, experiences and best practices which lead to the performance of better IP services.