



BUSINESS NEWS

NEWS DEVELOPMENT ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW



LIBYA SUSPENDS TRADEMARK APPLICATIONS

On 15 January 2025, the Libyan Ministry of Economy issued Ministerial Decision No. 2 of 2025, revoking all trademark applications filed between 2 April and 2 September 2024 due to the suspension of operations at the Trademark Office during that period.

As a result, all acceptance notices for applications submitted within this timeframe have been withdrawn. Appeals for previously refused applications—where marks were deemed identical or confusingly similar to those filed during the closure—are now being accepted.

Additionally, trademark proprietors must submit a financial statement recognizing their trademark as an intangible asset, including its valuation, upon renewal. Renewal fees have also increased significantly, though further clarification on the exact amount is pending. (Source Bergenthium Inc)

SOUTH AFRICA'S NEW PLANT HEALTH (PHYTOSANITARY) ACT 35 OF 2024

In January 2025, South Africa enacted the Plant Health (Phytosanitary) Act 35 of 2024, modernizing plant pest management regulations and replacing outdated legislation. The Act strengthens control over plant imports, exports, and movement, preventing unauthorized distribution of proprietary plant varieties while reinforcing plant breeders' rights and associated intellectual property protection.

By aligning with international standards like the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), it enhances South Africa's intellectual property framework for plant varieties, ensuring compliance with global best practices.

(Source Bergenthium, Inc)



***IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PATENT AND UTILITY MODEL
SYSTEM FOR OAPI MEMBERS***



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IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PATENT AND UTILITY MODEL SYSTEM FOR OAPI MEMBERS

Effective 1 January 2025, the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), which covers a significant portion of French-speaking African countries, has implemented a revised patent and utility model system under the updated Bangui Agreement. This modernization introduces new procedures, updated fees, and enhanced enforcement measures to streamline patent filings and strengthen intellectual property protection across OAPI's 17 member states.

Key changes include increased fees for excess pages, additional claims beyond ten, and annuities, as well as newly introduced fees for examination, divisional applications, and oppositions. Annuities due in 2025 but already paid in 2024 will be subject to the updated 2025 fees, with OAPI expected to notify applicants of any shortfalls.

Additionally, non-PCT applications will now be published within 18 months of the filing or priority date, while all patents will be published upon grant.

These updates enhance efficiency, improve transparency, and strengthen IP enforcement, ensuring smoother filings and better protection for rights holders across the region.

(source Bergethuin Inc)