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Dubai - United Arab Emirates

**June 19, 2023**

**To all the Members of the AIPPI - UAE National Group**

**Subject: 6th Circular/ 2023**

Dear all,

* **The role of IP organizations in the advancement of women in intellectual property**

Women’s representation in the workforce, work-life balance, career advancements are all important dialogues for IP organizations to focus on. The network of legal professionals must work together to advance opportunities for women, and mentor female colleagues in the field of intellectual property law. Regional IP organizations such as AIPPI UAE Group, Brand Protection Group (BPG) and other groups in our region are examples of active groups with a strong female representation.

For instance, the BPG’s board of directors has (7) female members actively participating in its decisions. AIPPI’s UAE Group has a female president and (15) female members from its total number of members. These are not figures to be ignored and shows a healthy trend towards actively involving women in key legal organizations in order to enhance female leadership within the IP profession.

With a strong female representation in the IP professional, this will lead to encouraging more women to use the IP system. It is the entire IP ecosystem that requires an inclusive approach and to conduct thorough research to understand the underlying issues arising from fewer women benefitting from IP.

If we take China as an example, when it comes to practicing IP law, China has [more female IP practitioners than male](https://www.cnipa.gov.cn/module/download/downfile.jsp?classid=0&showname=2022%E5%B9%B4%E5%85%A8%E5%9B%BD%E7%9F%A5%E8%AF%86%E4%BA%A7%E6%9D%83%E6%9C%8D%E5%8A%A1%E4%B8%9A%E7%BB%9F%E8%AE%A1%E8%B0%83%E6%9F%A5%E6%8A%A5%E5%91%8A.pdf&filename=3ff02512772840b3a28675570e179233.pdf), since about 53% of employees engaged in China’s IP service industry are female.

Besides national initiatives, China is also actively participating in international projects aimed at promoting women's participation in innovation and intellectual property. *\* Sources:* [Empowering and Embracing Women in IPR and Innovation - Policies and Measures in Africa, China, India, Latin America or South-East Asia (World IP Day 2023) (europa.eu)](https://intellectual-property-helpdesk.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/empowering-and-embracing-women-ipr-and-innovation-policies-and-measures-africa-china-india-latin-2023-04-26_en). Namely:

* “[WeEmpowerAsia](https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/women-poverty-economics/weempowerasia)”, launched in 2016 by the United Nations, project works with businesses, governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to increase women's access to economic opportunities and leadership positions.
* “[Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative](https://we-fi.org/)” (We-Fi), a global partnership launched in 2017 by the World Bank Group, supports women entrepreneurs in developing countries by providing them with access to capital, markets, networks, and other resources needed to start and grow successful businesses. China is one of the founding financial contributors.
* "Together Digital" program launched jointly by the UN Women and Ant Foundation aims to support women-led micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in participating and thriving in the digital economy.
* [The Asia Pacific Women Innovators and Entrepreneurs Programme](https://china.un.org/en/191040-un-women-and-ant-foundation-launch-), launched in 2022, with 12 episodes of weekly webinars, attended by 50 participants every week from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Viet Nam, India, and China, reaching a total of 150 women entrepreneurs and inventors.

For the UAE, we are proud to have strong female leadership in the IP with the Head of Trademarks and other key leadership roles being women led.  In addition, according to a recent article in 2023 from Euro news (\*sources: [STEM pioneers: the UAE women empowering the Middle East | Euronews](https://www.euronews.com/next/2022/02/21/stem-pioneers-the-uae-women-empowering-the-middle-east)) which stated thatArab women play a vital role in the development of science research and innovation across the Middle East. UNESCO figures show up to 57% of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics graduates in Arab countries are women, while in the United Arab Emirates 61% of university STEM students are female.

Despite these promising figures and the fact that women in the UAE are poised to drive economic growth (\*sources: [Women in the UAE poised to drive economic growth in 2023 - GulfToday](https://www.gulftoday.ae/business/2023/01/01/women-in-the-uae-poised-to--drive-economic-growth-in-2023)), there are still obstacles where women face at different stages of their careers.  It is therefore important that all organisations and stakeholders create an environment that will enable for these obstacles to be removed to allow women from the early stages (as early as the teenage years) to start their journey on an equal playing field.

Kind regards,

On behalf of the Communication Committee

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