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**Dubai - May 28th, 2020**

**To all the Members of the AIPPI UAE Chapter**

**Subject: E-payment for Trademark Services in UAE- “3G E-Dirhams” based on administrative circular No. (6) for the year 2020**

Administrative circular No. (6) for the year 2020 was recently issued by UAE Ministry of Economy/Trademark office on May 14th, 2020 introducing the third generation E-dirhams card “3G E-dirhams”. The 3G E-dirhams will replace the current card and can be solely used, at this stage, for all trademark filing and prosecution matters and official transactions, including searching, filing, publication, registration, oppositions and appeals.

Like all other government authorities, the Trademark Office is currently accepting payments via the second-generation e-Dirham cards and/or credit cards. However, the newly introduced 3G E-dirhams card is designed to provide a more enhanced experience to users, to overcome common errors during refund requests, to achieve better accuracy and less duplication in payments, to provide more flexibility to users and help provide a clearer mechanism to reconcile their transactions.

According to this recent circular, the second generation e-dirhams will no longer be useable for trademark services as of March 31, 2020. Therefore, all firms, agents and entities that pursue trademark services directly before UAE Trademark office will need to have 3G e-dirhams to complete their transactions. It is still unclear if using credit cards will be available although using credit cards for governmental services is not the first choice for services providers as it involves payment of additional administrative fees when compared to E-Dirhams cards.

Since circular (6) of 2020 was released, we sought some clarification from the UAE Ministry of Economy and were able to confirm the following important information to IP practitioners and service providers that handle services directly with the UAE Trademark Office:

- All governmental transactions, except trademark services, will remain available via second generation card. Using 3G E-dirhams card will only be required for trademark services at the Ministry of Economy.
- The rest of services of the Ministry of Economy, such as ones handled by the copyright and patent offices, will be later transitioning to the 3G E-dirhams card. For the time being, those services will continue as usual using the second-generation E-dirham card.
- The Ministry of Economy will make additional announcements, likely to be in June or Jul 2020, applying the 3G E-dirhams for other services offered by the Ministry.

- All other governmental services will gradually convert to the 3G E-dirhams card which will eventually replace the second-generation card. The Ministry of Economy is the first governmental department in UAE to activate and use 3G E-dirhams card on its payment platform.

- All firms and trademark agents are invited and urged to proceed on urgent basis to apply for the 3G E-dirhams card to avoid any complications in processing these services or delays in receiving their cards.

- The Ministry of Economy assured all holders of second-generation E-dirhams that their existing funds are refundable and advised of the mechanism on how to claim such refunds.

As of May 21, 2020, we have learnt that only a few firms and agents applied to obtain 3G E-dirhams card and therefore, AIPPI communications committee wanted to make sure that more awareness is made within local IP community in UAE to ensure their business continues without distributions. As we mentioned above, the new 3G e-Dirham card will be available for use in relation to trademark services on 05/31/2020 instead of the currently used E-dirhams card.

**On behalf of Communications Committee**

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