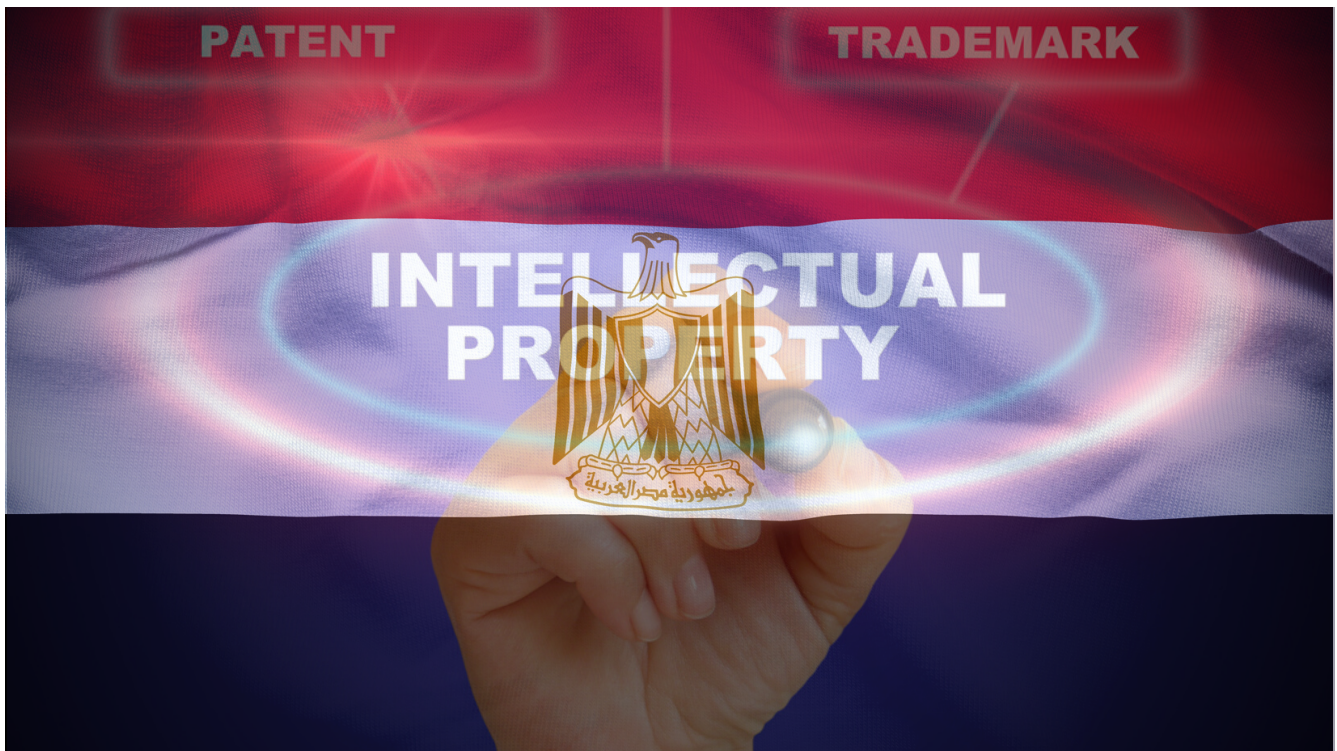




IP AFRICA NEWS

INNOVATION ON THE NILE: EGYPT'S LATEST LEAP IN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GOVERNANCE



On August 6, 2023, the Egyptian Authority for Intellectual Property (EAIP or the Authority) was established pursuant to Law No. 163 of 2023. The law empowers the EAIP to drive innovation, creativity, and economic growth. The Authority will oversee the registration, strategy development, collaboration with ministries, and international alignment on IPR affairs.

The creation of this new agency is a step in the right direction, considering the multiplicity of administrative agencies responsible for managing intellectual property and its subordination to many ministries and agencies, which resulted in weakness in the IPR Process.

The new Egyptian Authority for Intellectual Property replaces the ministries concerned with affairs of higher education and scientific research, supply and internal trade, culture, communications and information technology, agriculture and land reclamation, trade and industry, the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, the Internal Trade Development Agency, the Supreme Council for Media Regulation, the Patent Office, and the Plant Varieties Protection Office, in terms of the responsibilities prescribed for each of them in the laws regulating the protection of intellectual property rights.

The Authority will begin exercising its powers within a maximum period of one year from the date of enforcement of the new law, this period may be extended to six months by a decision of the Prime Minister.

NIGERIA



LEADERSHIP TRANSITION IN INVESTMENT AND TRADE: MEET DR. DORIS UZOKA-ANITE

President Bola Tinubu, the incumbent head of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, has officially designated Dr. Doris Uzoka-Anite to assume the pivotal role of Minister of Investment and Trade within the government.

This role is pivotal to overseeing the nation's economic growth and international business relations. The safeguarding of Trademarks, Patents, and Designs in Nigeria is also managed under the purview of the Commercial Law Department of the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Investment.

Dr. Uzoka-Anite's professional journey began in the field of medicine as a medical doctor. However, she expanded her expertise into the Financial Services sector. Notably, she held a prominent position at Zenith Bank, where she spearheaded trade and treasury operations and went on to become the Commissioner for Finance and Coordinating Economy, Imo State.

SOUTH AFRICA



ZUMA SA AND ZUMA UK

In a recent case of Zuma SA and Zuma UK, a UK company, Azumi Limited t/a Zuma Restaurant (Zuma UK) not having a strong trademark presence in SA, approached the Advertising Regulatory Board (ARB) complaining that Zuma SA made a misrepresentation on its website stating that it is the internationally established brand and that it owes the sole trademark in South Africa.

Zuma SA raised an objection that the ARB has no jurisdiction to hear the matter as Zuma UK is not a member of the ARB. It also contested that its ads are misleading. The ARB held that it has jurisdiction to consider on behalf of its members' complaints in respect of advertisements published by non-members of the ARB, so that its members may make an election whether or not they wish to publish that advertisement.

Substantively the Board held that Zuma SA's ad was misleading when it said 'ZUMA is an independent and trademarked entity in South Africa' when its trademark application for the mark is still pending. Zuma SA was also found guilty of deliberately trying to imitate and chose to use the trade name Zuma – and not their registered trademark Zhuma. Also, it was held that ZUMA SA is not an international brand and has misled the public. The Board prohibited its members from accepting advertisements that make use of the name Zuma.

BURUNDI

TRADEMARK RENEWAL IN BURUNDI

Recently the Burundian Office of Copyrights and Neighbouring Rights released an official publication to the effect that all trademarks registered prior to the promulgation of the Intellectual Property (IP) law in Burundi in 2009 were designated for renewal by the 28th of July 2019, with a prescribed duration of 10 years. Nevertheless, a significant number of trademark proprietors were unable to adhere to the stipulated deadline for renewal. Subsequently, the Burundian Office of Copyright and Neighboring Rights has revised the deadline to the 1st of January 2025 and a late renewal fee with a grace of 6 months.

AFRICA

GOOGLE'S UPDATED TRADEMARK POLICY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR BRAND PROTECTION

Google has revised its Google Ads Trademark Policy, which will affect how trademark complaints will be handled or investigated going forward. Beginning from the end of July 2023, Google now accepts and processes trademark complaints only against specific advertisers and ads rather than all advertisers in the industry. It will phase out trademark restrictions implemented prior to July 24, 2023. The new process involves gathering evidence, contacting the infringer, and submitting a complaint to Google with proof of having a registered trademark where the ad is displayed.

This serves as an alert for brand proprietors to engage in the registration of their trademarks in all nations where their products or services are sold or used. It is also vital to monitor third-party activity, this can be effectively done through Trademark Watch Service, a service offered by Jackson, Etti & Edu.

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