

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION**

Holding Socotec v. Mohamed Ali Ferjani, Mohamed Ali Ferjani  
Case No. D2026-0726

### **1. The Parties**

The Complainant is Holding Socotec, France, represented by CSC Digital Brand Services Group AB, Sweden.

The Respondent is Mohamed Ali Ferjani, Mohamed Ali Ferjani, France.

### **2. The Domain Name and Registrar**

The disputed domain name <socotec-group.com> is registered with Tucows Domains Inc. (the “Registrar”).

### **3. Procedural History**

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the “Center”) on February 20, 2026. On February 20, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On February 20, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response, disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 24, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on February 26, 2026.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Policy” or “UDRP”), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Rules”), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the “Supplemental Rules”).

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on February 27, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 19, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent’s default on March 20, 2026.

The Center appointed Nathalie Dreyfus as the sole panelist in this matter on April 17, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

#### 4. Factual Background


The Complainant, Holding Socotec, is a company specialized in risk management and performance improvement founded in France in 1953. The Complainant operates in the construction and infrastructure sectors, and employs around 14,000 experts, engineers and technicians around the world. The Complainant generated a turnover of EUR 1.6 billion in 2024.


The Complainant notably owns the following, but not limited to, SOCOTEC trademarks:

- The International trademark SOCOTEC No. 1436433, registered on March 19, 2018 and covering services in classes 35, 37, 38, 41 and 42.

- The French figurative trademark  No. 1613632, registered on January 20, 1988, duly renewed since then and covering goods and services in classes 6, 9, 19, 35, 36, 37 and 42.

- The International figurative trademark  No. 595125, registered on December 22, 1992, duly renewed since then, and covering goods and services in classes 6, 9, 19, 35, 36, 37 and 42.

- The European Union figurative  trademark No. 011287398, registered on March 22, 2013, duly renewed since then and covering goods and services in classes 6, 9, 19, 35, 36, 37 and 42.

- The French figurative trademark  No. 4396141, registered on October 13, 2017 and covering services in classes 35, 37, 38, 41 and 42.

The Complainant also operates the domain names <socotec.com> and <socotec.fr>.

The disputed domain name <socotec-group.com> was registered on April 25, 2025. Mail Exchange (“MX”) servers were configured. At the time of filing of the Complaint, the disputed domain name resolved to a website offering automotive spare parts, unrelated to the Complainant’s products.

Since the Respondent did not participate in the proceedings, nothing is known other than the Registrar-disclosed details of the Respondent.

#### 5. Parties’ Contentions

##### A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that it has satisfied each of the elements required under the Policy for a transfer of the disputed domain name.

First, the Complainant submits that the disputed domain name incorporates the Complainant’s SOCOTEC trademark in its entirety. The Complainant adds that the term “group” increases the confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the Complainant’s trademark, in particular because this term is closely linked and associated with the Complainant, which is part of the Socotec Group.

Secondly, the Complainant argues that, as the owner of the SOCOTEC trademark, it alone is authorized to use the SOCOTEC trademark in commerce or in connection with the relevant goods and services. The Respondent is not sponsored by or affiliated with the Complainant and the Complainant has not given

permission to use the SOCOTEC trademark or to register domain names incorporating the Complainant's trademark. Thus, where no evidence, including the Whois record for the disputed domain name, suggests that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name, then the Respondent cannot be regarded as having acquired rights to or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

Moreover, the Complainant's argues that the Respondent has not used the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods or services or for a legitimate noncommercial or fair purpose. The Respondent does not make any legitimate use of the disputed domain name, even where it redirects Internet users to content unrelated to the Complainant. The Complainant further submits that the active MX records associated with the disputed domain name suggest a risk that the Respondent may use an email address associated with the disputed domain name to mislead Internet users into believing that they are dealing with the Complainant.

Finally, the Complainant argues that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. The Complainant and its SOCOTEC trademarks are internationally known, and the Respondent was therefore aware of the prior trademark when registering the disputed domain name. The Complainant asserts that it is clear that the Respondent selected the disputed domain name to intentionally confuse unsuspecting Internet users into visiting its website. The Respondent's act of hosting a commercial website on the disputed domain name, even if not directly competitive with the Complainant, may be considered a disruption of the Complainant's business and thus evidence of bad faith registration and use. The existence of active MX records attached to the disputed domain name, permitting the ability for the disputed domain name to be used for email, creates an ongoing implied threat to the Complainant that the disputed domain name may be used for fraudulent activities, which further supports an inference of bad faith.

## **B. Respondent**

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

## **6. Discussion and Findings**

### **A. Identical or Confusingly Similar**

It is well accepted that the first element functions primarily as a standing requirement. The standing (or threshold) test for confusing similarity involves a reasoned but relatively straightforward comparison between the Complainant's trademark and the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)"), section 1.7.

The Complainant has shown rights in respect of a trademark or service mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.2.1.

Indeed, the Panel finds that the entirety of the Complainant's SOCOTEC trademark is reproduced within the disputed domain name. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.7.

Although the addition of other terms here, "group" may bear on assessment of the second and third elements, the Panel finds the addition of such term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity between the disputed domain name and the mark for the purposes of the Policy. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 1.8.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

### **B. Rights or Legitimate Interests**

Paragraph 4(c) of the Policy provides a list of circumstances in which the Respondent may demonstrate rights or legitimate interests in a disputed domain name.

Although the overall burden of proof in UDRP proceedings is on the complainant, panels have recognized that proving that a respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in a domain name may result in the difficult task of “proving a negative”, requiring information that is often primarily within the knowledge or control of the respondent. As such, where a complainant makes out a prima facie case that the respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests, the burden of production on this element shifts to the respondent to come forward with relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the domain name (although the burden of proof always remains on the complainant). If the respondent fails to come forward with such relevant evidence, the complainant is deemed to have satisfied the second element. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.1.

Having reviewed the available record, the Panel finds the Complainant has established a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. The Respondent has not rebutted the Complainant’s prima facie showing and has not come forward with any relevant evidence demonstrating rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name such as those enumerated in the Policy or otherwise.

Indeed, the Panel finds that the Respondent, identified as “Mohamed Ali Ferjani”, has no known connection to the Complainant. The Panel notes that the website at the disputed domain name is allegedly operated by “Socotec”, “your expert in auto spare parts in Tunisia” (translated from French) and offers automotive spare parts. While it is unclear whether any such goods have actually been sold through the website at the disputed domain name, there is no evidence before the Panel that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name or by the name “socotec”. In light of the Complainant’s online presence, the composition of the disputed domain name combining the Complainant’s trademark with the term “group” whereas the Complainant is part of the Socotec Group, and the absence of any explanation by the Respondent for its choice of name, the Panel finds it more probable than not that the disputed domain name was registered on account of its value based on the Complainant’s name and mark and with intent to target it.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

### **C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith**

The Panel notes that, for the purposes of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy, paragraph 4(b) of the Policy establishes circumstances, in particular, but without limitation, that, if found by the Panel to be present, shall be evidence of the registration and use of a domain name in bad faith.

Paragraph 4(b) of the Policy sets out a list of non-exhaustive circumstances that may indicate that a domain name was registered and used in bad faith, but other circumstances may be relevant in assessing whether a respondent’s registration and use of a domain name is in bad faith. [WIPO Overview 3.0](#), section 3.2.1.

The Complainant and its SOCOTEC trademark benefit from an international reputation and have been used in commerce since 1953, well before the registration of the disputed domain name on April 25, 2025. Considering the composition of the disputed domain name, which incorporates the Complainant’s SOCOTEC trademark in its entirety together with the descriptive term “group”, and the Respondent’s reported location in France where the Complainant is also based and known, the Panel finds it unlikely that the disputed domain name was registered in good faith. The addition of the term “group,” closely associated with the Complainant, on balance, indicates that the Respondent had the Complainant and its business in mind at the time of registration. Such composition is unlikely coincidental and, coupled with the use of the SOCOTEC trademark on the website and featuring the copyright notice in the name of “SOCOTEC” rather points to a deliberate attempt to create an impression of affiliation or endorsement, likely intended to attract Internet users for commercial gain.

In the present case, the Panel finds that the Respondent registered and used the disputed domain name with the intention of attracting Internet users to his website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the Complainant’s mark, which constitutes evidence of bad faith under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

Having reviewed the record, the Panel finds the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitutes bad faith under the Policy.

The Panel finds that the Complainant has established the third element of the Policy.

## **7. Decision**

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <socotec-group.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

*/Nathalie Dreyfus/*

**Nathalie Dreyfus**

Sole Panelist

Date: May 1, 2026