ARBITRATION
AND
MEDIATION CENTER

WIPO
WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

VEON Amsterdam B.V. v. Bayramov Muhammetguly
Case No. D2026-1503

1. The Parties

The Complainant is VEON Amsterdam B.V., Netherlands (Kingdom of the), represented by NLO Shieldmark B. V., Netherlands (Kingdom of the).

The Respondent is Bayramov Muhammetguly, Turkmenistan.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <veon-shop.store> is registered with Beget LLC (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed in English with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on April 9, 2026. On April 9, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On April 14, 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 (Domain Admin, Privacy Protect, LLC (PrivacyProtect.org)) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on April 15, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint.

On April 15, 2026, the Center informed the Parties in Russian and English, that the language of the registration agreement for the disputed domain name is Russian. On April 18, 2026, the Complainant confirmed its request that English be the language of the proceedings and submitted the amended Complaint in English and Russian. The Respondent did not submit any comment on the Complainant's submission.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint and translated 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 in Russian and English the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on April 27, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was May 17, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on May 19, 2026.

The Center appointed Alissia Shchichka as the sole panelist in this matter on May 22, 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 is VEON AMSTERDAM B.V., a Dutch company and the intellectual property holding company of the VEON group. The VEON group is a multinational digital operator providing connectivity and digital services to more than 150 million customers across several countries, including Pakistan, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

The Complainant has provided evidence demonstrating that it is the registered owner of numerous VEON trademarks, including, but not limited to the following:

- European Union Trademark Registration No. 015793524, registered on January 2, 2017, for the word trademark VEON, in class 45;

- Russian Federation Trademark Registration No. 625411, registered on July 28, 2017, for the word trademark VEON, in classes 9, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42, and 45; and

- Algerian Trademark Registration No. 99523, registered on September 28, 2017, for the word trademark VEON, in classes 9, 35, 36, 38, 41, 42, and 45.

The Complainant also owns numerous domain names incorporating the VEON trademark, including <veon.com>, registered on April 24, 1998, which is used in connection with its corporate website and email services.

The disputed domain name was registered on December 26, 2025. The disputed domain name resolves to an inactive website.

The Respondent, according to the disclosed WhoIs information for the disputed domain name, is located in Turkmenistan.

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.

The Complainant asserts that VEON is a distinctive and well-known trademark.

According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its VEON trademark, as it incorporates the trademark in its entirety together with the descriptive term "shop". The Complainant submits that the addition of the term "shop" does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity and, on the contrary, increases the likelihood of confusion by suggesting an official online sales channel operated or authorized by the Complainant. The Complainant further contends that the ".store" generic Top-Level Domain ("gTLD") reinforces this impression and increases the risk of user confusion.

The Complainant contends that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name because: (1) the Respondent is not affiliated with, authorized by, or licensed to use the VEON trademark; (2) there is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name; (3) VEON is an invented term uniquely associated with the Complainant; and (4) the disputed domain name does not resolve to an active website and there is no evidence of any bona fide offering of goods or services or demonstrable preparations to use the disputed domain name for a legitimate purpose. According to the Complainant, the passive holding of the disputed domain name, combined with its composition, does not constitute a legitimate noncommercial or fair use under the Policy.

Finally, the Complainant asserts that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith. In particular, the Complainant submits that: (1) the VEON trademark is well known and predates the registration of the disputed domain name; (2) the Respondent deliberately incorporated the VEON trademark in its entirety together with the term "shop" and the ".store" gTLD in order to create the false impression of an official online sales platform associated with the Complainant; (3) the disputed domain name is being passively held without any legitimate use; and (4) the disputed domain name creates a risk of phishing, impersonation, fraud, or other misleading activities targeting the Complainant and its customers. According to the Complainant, these circumstances constitute evidence of bad faith registration and use under the Policy.

Accordingly, the Complainant requests that the disputed domain name be transferred to the Complainant.

B. Respondent

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

6. Discussion and Findings

Language of the Proceedings

The language of the Registration Agreement for the disputed domain name is Russian. Pursuant to paragraph 11(a) of the Rules, in the absence of an agreement between the parties, or unless otherwise specified in the Registration Agreement, the language of the administrative proceeding shall be the language of the Registration Agreement.

In exercising its discretion to use a language other than that of the registration agreement, the Panel has to exercise such discretion judicially in the spirit of fairness and justice to both parties, taking into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including matters such as the parties' ability to understand and use the proposed language, time and costs (see WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions ("WIPO Overview 3.1"), section 4.5.1).

The Complaint was filed in English, and the Complainant requested that English be adopted as the language of the proceedings. The Complainant submits that English is an appropriate language for the proceedings and is likely to be understood by both Parties.

The Panel further notes that, following the Center's communication providing the details of the Respondent, the Complainant, while maintaining its request that English remain the language of the proceedings, nevertheless submitted a Russian translation of the amended Complaint generated through an automated translation tool.

The Center notified the Respondent of the Complaint in both English and Russian and expressly invited the Respondent to comment on the language of the proceedings. The Respondent did not submit any comments regarding the language issue and did not otherwise participate in the proceedings.

Having considered all relevant circumstances, including the absence of any objection, and the need to avoid undue delay or expenses by translating all materials for the Complainant, the Panel finds it appropriate to exercise its discretion under paragraph 11(a) of the Rules. The Panel concludes that conducting the proceedings in English is fair, reasonable, and efficient and that the Respondent will not be disadvantaged by this decision.

Accordingly, the Panel determines that English shall be the language of the proceedings.

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 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.

The entirety of the mark 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, "shop", 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.

The Complainant has confirmed that the Respondent is neither affiliated with the Complainant, nor otherwise authorized or licensed to use the VEON trademark or to seek registration of any domain name incorporating the trademark. The Respondent is also not known to be associated with the VEON trademark, and there is no evidence showing that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 2.3.

Furthermore, the use of the Complainant's VEON trademark in the disputed domain name, combined with the term "shop", may create the impression that the disputed domain name is connected to the Complainant, as Internet users may reasonably expect it to refer to an official online store, retail platform, or authorized sales channel operated or endorsed by the Complainant.

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.

Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Respondent does not have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, and the Complainant has met its burden under paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

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.

In the present case, the Panel observes that the Complainant's VEON trademarks predate the Respondent's registration of the disputed domain name. The record further shows that the Complainant is a multinational digital operator providing services to more than 150 million connectivity customers and over 205 million active digital customers. The Complainant operates in multiple countries, including Pakistan, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, and is publicly traded on the NASDAQ stock exchange.

Having regard to the nature and scale of the Complainant's activities and the fact that the disputed domain name reproduces the Complainant's VEON trademark in its entirety, the Panel finds it more likely than not that the Respondent was aware, or should have been aware, of the Complainant's trademark rights when registering the disputed domain name. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.2.

The Panel further considers that the circumstances of this case reinforce such conclusion. The Respondent has incorporated the Complainant's VEON trademark in its entirety within the disputed domain name, together with the term "shop" and the gTLD ".store". In the Panel's view, both the additional term and the selected gTLD carry a clear commercial connotation and increase the likelihood that Internet users would expect the disputed domain name to be associated with an online store or retail platform connected with the Complainant. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.2.1.

As regards the current non-use, panels have found that the non-use of a domain name would not by itself prevent a finding of bad faith under the doctrine of passive holding. To the contrary, in looking at the totality of circumstances in each case, panels have found that the registration and non-use of a domain name can still constitute bad faith for purposes of the Policy. WIPO Overview 3.1, section 3.3. Having reviewed the available record, the Panel notes the distinctiveness or reputation of the Complainant's trademark, lack of response and the composition of the disputed domain name, and finds that in the circumstances of this case the current passive holding of the disputed domain name does not prevent a finding of bad faith under the Policy.

The Respondent's selection of a domain name confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademark, coupled with the absence of any response and credible explanation, supports the conclusion that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's reputation and sought to exploit it.

In light of these circumstances, the Panel finds that the Respondent's registration and use of the disputed domain name constitute bad faith.

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 <veon-shop.store> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Alissia Shchichka/
Alissia Shchichka
Sole Panelist
Date: June 5, 2026