JOINT COMMENTS OF APRAM, BMM, ECTA, GRUR, MARQUES, UNION-IP to the Proposal by the Delegation of the United Kingdom presented during the Twenty-Third Session of the Working Group on the Legal Development of the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks (Geneva, 22 – 26 September 2025)

September 2026

The undersigned organisations welcome the opportunity to provide comments **on the possibility of amending the Madrid System regulation to introduce partial renewals for International Registrations**.

As a background, the partial renewal proposal was introduced by the UK as part of a broader package of Madrid System reforms during the Twenty-Third Session of the Working Group on the Legal Development of the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks (Geneva, 22 – 26 September 2025, Doc. MM/LD/WG/23/4). This proposal would allow holders of international registrations to renew protection only for selected classes, whereas under the current system partial renewal by class is not possible and holders may only drop designated countries.

The main rationale behind the proposal is that partial renewal would give holders greater flexibility and reduce costs by allowing them to maintain protection only for the classes that are and remain commercially relevant.

The proposal received predominantly positive feedback; several delegations and user associations, including the United States, Australia, Japan, Tunisia, Ukraine, JIPA and JPAA, considered this amendment a useful and practical improvement of the Madrid System. On the other hand, some concerns were raised based on the fact that implementing partial renewals would require significant IT and procedural changes on the part of the designated offices.

The Working Group agreed to continue discussions and requested the International Bureau, in cooperation with the UK delegation, to prepare a further document analysing the legal, operational, IT and practical implications of the proposal.

The undersigned organisations wish to contribute to the discussion from the perspective of users of the Madrid System, with a view to supporting solutions that enhance legal certainty, procedural efficiency, accessibility and the practical value of the System for trademark holders and their representatives.

The undersigned organisations support the approval of the UK proposal allowing partial renewals, as it would give International Registrations holders a practical and cost-effective means of maintaining protection only where it is needed.

Under the current Madrid System, holders may decide not to renew protection in respect of certain designated Contracting Parties, but they cannot renew an international registration only for selected classes. This creates unnecessary rigidity and may result in the renewal of goods or services that

are no longer of commercial interest to the holder, leading to unnecessary cost for the holder and "overblocking", by maintaining trademark registrations exceeding the IP protection actually required by the holder:

Introducing partial renewal would significantly improve the administration of trademark renewals and allow holders to align the scope of renewed protection with their actual commercial needs, reduce renewal costs, and facilitate more efficient portfolio management. This is particularly important for businesses managing large international portfolios, for which renewal costs may represent a significant budget item, and for SMEs that have limited budgets for IP portfolios and need to rationalize costs. The resulting savings could also enable them to allocate resources to the protection of other commercially relevant trademarks or to enforcement actions.

Partial renewal would also help reduce "deadwood" on the registers. Deadwood consists of trademarks that remain covered despite no longer being in use or of commercial interest and may create unnecessary obstacles for third parties seeking to clear and register legitimate new marks.

Although many designated Contracting Parties provide mechanisms for third parties to challenge unused marks, such as non-use cancellation actions, those mechanisms require time and expense and place the burden on third parties. In contrast, partial renewal would give holders a simple and cost-effective way to proactively narrow their rights at renewal, benefiting the system as a whole.

The undersigned organisations note the concerns raised by delegates regarding legal certainty and implementation with respect to the possibility to amend the regulation in order to allow renewals for only part of a class.

The undersigned organisations consider that the proposed reform should, as an initial step, permit partial renewals by Contracting Party and by whole class or classes.

Conversely, the renewal of only part of a class, or of specific goods and services within a class, should remain subject to the rules on limitation, as such requests may require further examination by the designated Offices, potentially slowing the renewal process and creating legal uncertainty as to the scope of protection of the mark at national level.

The UK proposal does not explicitly refer to the situation where the holder wants to reduce the number of classes of the trademark only for *a part of* the Designated Countries. R. 9 (4)(a) (xiii) allows in case of an international *application* for different limitations in respect of each Contracting Party. This option of the holder should be extended to the renewal process. The UK's proposed amendment of R. 30 (2) (aa) may be further amended at the end as follows:

"(…) *The request for renewal may contain limitations of the list of goods and services in respect of one or more designated Contracting Parties; the limitation in respect of each Contracting Party may be different.*"

The introduction of partial renewal would benefit both trademark holders and third parties by improving the accuracy of the International Register and national or regional registers, reducing unnecessary clutter, and promoting a more efficient and commercially realistic Madrid System.

For these reasons, the undersigned organisations respectfully support the adoption of a measured reform allowing partial renewals by whole class and by Contracting Party, as a balanced step towards a more flexible, efficient and reliable Madrid System.

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APRAM (Association des praticiens du droit des marques et des modèles - Association of trademark and design law practitioners)*, founded in 1978 and with over 1,300 members, is an international Francophile association bringing together the three complementary families/colleges of professionals specialized in intellectual property, namely: (i) in-house counsels (trademark and design owners), (ii) European trademark and design attorneys and (iii) lawyers. APRAM's members in all three colleges cover all economic sectors, including Cosmetics and personal care, Clothing, footwear and accessories, Sports goods, Food, Chemicals, Energy, Toys and games, Jewelry and watches, Handbags and luggage, Recorded music industry, Spirits and wine, Pharmaceutical, etc.*

APRAM's main objective is to protect, assist and promote the common interests of its members amongst all three colleges. APRAM strives to contribute to the development of trademark and design laws and regulations, in particular in France, in the European Union and within WIPO, where APRAM follows the work of the Working Group on the Legal Development of the Madrid System, the Working Group on the Legal Development of the Hague System, and the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications.

*The **Benelux Association for Trademarks and Designs (BMM)** is a professional association for intellectual property practitioners in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Its members include trademark and design attorneys, lawyers, in-house IP professionals and academics. BMM promotes the development and quality of trademark and design law and practice and represents the interests of its members including in contacts with national, Benelux, European and international IP institutions.*

***ECTA** was founded in 1980 and brings together IPR professionals who practice in the field of trade marks, designs, geographical indications, copyright and related matters. These professionals are lawyers, trade mark and patent attorneys, in-house counsels focusing on IPR matters, and also other specialists in these fields. ECTA has members from all EU Member States and, at the same time, ECTA is proud to have associate members from more than 50 countries globally outside of the EU. The extensive work carried out by the Association, following the above guidelines, combined with the high degree of professionalism and recognized technical capabilities of its members, has established ECTA at the highest level and has allowed the Association to achieve the status of a broadly recognized expert body on all questions related to the protection and use of trade marks, designs, geographical indications, copyright and domain names in and throughout the European Union. For more information, please visit: www.ecta.eu.*

*The **German Association for Intellectual Property Law (GRUR)** is Germany's largest and oldest association dedicated to intellectual property law, founded in 1891. With around 5,000 members, it brings together lawyers, patent attorneys, judges, academics, companies and representatives of national, European and international IP authorities. GRUR promotes the academic development of intellectual property law at the German, European and international levels and provides a forum for professional and scholarly exchange. Through conferences, seminars, legal publications and contributions to legislative and regulatory discussions, GRUR plays an important role in the ongoing development of IP law.*

***MARQUES** is the European Association representing the interest of brand owners. It was established in 1986 and is incorporated in the UK as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. MARQUES unites European and international brand owners across all market sectors, to address issues associated with the use, protection and value of IP rights, as these are vital to innovation, growth and job creation, which ultimately enhance internal markets. Its current corporate*

membership includes the owners of many of the best-known brands in the world, covering a wide range of industry sectors. Apart from corporate members owning brands, the membership is also made up of IP professionals and others with an interest in brand management and protection. Overall, there are members from more than 80 countries worldwide, including the 27 Member States of the EU and the UK.

MARQUES is an accredited organisation before the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EU IPO), appointed observer at the EUIPO's Management Board and Budget Committee, an official non-governmental observer at the World Intellectual Property Organization and a registered interest representative organisation (ID 97131823590-44) 34 in the Transparency Register set up by the European Parliament and the European Commission, which extends and replaces the former Register of Interest Representatives, opened by the Commission in 2008. More information about MARQUES can be found on its website at www.marques.org.

UNION of European Practitioners in Intellectual Property (UNION-IP) is an association of practitioners in the field of Intellectual Property, that is of individuals whose principal professional occupation is concerned with Patents, Trade Marks or Designs and related questions and who carry on their profession independently or as employees. UNION-IP aims on the one hand to work continuously on current developments in intellectual property in Europe, in particular by making submissions during the preparation of proposed laws and treaties with the intention of influencing them, and is devoted to the improvement of professional and personal understanding between European practitioners in the intellectual property field in countries across Europe.