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## Ghana to strengthen intellectual property protection through international cooperation project with Switzerland



At an official signing ceremony, the Hon. Dr. Ekwow Spio-Garbrah, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Ghana, the Hon. Marietta Brew Appiah-Opong, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Republic of Ghana, and the Hon. Gerhard Brügger, Ambassador of Switzerland in Ghana, signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the second phase cooperation project focusing on intellectual property.

This second phase has a duration of four years, and is funded by a contribution of the Government of Switzerland of USD 1.4 million. The signing ceremony has taken place at the occasion of the public launch of the Ghanaian national IP policy on January, 21.

Accra, 19 January 2016

### Swiss-Ghanaian Intellectual Property Cooperation Project

Knowledge has become an important commercial asset of the modern economy. Innovation and creation can be protected by intellectual property rights. This includes patents, trademarks, designs, copyrights and geographical indications. A well-balanced protection of intellectual property rights can contribute to higher competitiveness and more value added to Ghanaian products. It can create a favorable climate for innovative activities in Ghana, where innovation is one of the main drivers of economic growth. With the Swiss-Ghanaian intellectual property cooperation project, the Ghanaian Government intends to make progress in reaching such a well-balanced protection of intellectual property rights. The Swiss Government provides support in this regard to Ghana, one of its priority countries for economic development cooperation.

The second phase of the Swiss-Ghanaian intellectual property technical cooperation project continues the successful cooperation between Ghana and Switzerland in the field of intellectual property established during the first phase of the project, which was implemented from 2008 onwards. The main objective of the first project phase was to develop the National Intellectual Property Policy for Ghana. While Ghana's legal framework in the field of IPRs is well developed, challenges remain. The second phase of the project thus provides capacity-building to the intellectual property enforcement authorities so that they can deliver better services to the holders of intellectual property rights. Moreover, the second phase will promote intellectual property rights among key stakeholders, such as representatives of the private sector,



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universities, inventors and artists, so they can better use intellectual property rights for their economic benefit. A further objective of the project is to develop the protection system of geographical indications in Ghana. Geographical indications can be an important marketing tool for the domestic and export trade of Ghanaian quality products like famous Kente or Smock Cloth, Pona Yam, Sugar Loaf Pineapple, Zoomi Palm oil and Bolga baskets.

The Project has a duration of four years, and the Government of Switzerland will contribute USD 1.4 million for its funding. It will be implemented by the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property (IPI). The main institutional partners and beneficiaries in Ghana are the Registrar Department General and the Copyright Office. Additional beneficiaries include other governmental entities, representatives of academic institutions, the private sector and producers of traditional products from rural areas.

For more information on and contact details for the Swiss-Ghanaian intellectual property technical cooperation project, please consult:

<https://www.ige.ch/en/legal-info/international-cooperation/country-specific-projects/ghana.html>

### **Switzerland's international cooperation with Ghana**

Ghana has been a priority country for Switzerland's economic development cooperation since 2002. The economic development cooperation program focuses on promoting good economic governance and strong institutions as well as strengthening competitiveness and inclusiveness. Switzerland provides technical and financial assistance in the areas of economic and financial management, private sector development and entrepreneurship, sustainable trade value chains and infrastructure, with an average annual budget of around CHF 20 million in grants.

For more information on Switzerland's economic development cooperation in Ghana please consult:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/ghana/en/home/international-cooperation.html>