

## Thailand Alert: PCT Receiving Office Now Open

On September 29, 2009, a ceremony was held at the Department of Intellectual Property to officially open Thailand's Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Receiving Office. This ceremony took place after Thai Deputy Minister of Commerce Alongkorn Ponlaboot deposited the instruments of accession to the PCT with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva on September 24, 2009.

The ceremony began with opening remarks by DIP Director-General Puangrat Asavapisit, in which she discussed the number of Thai patent applications currently being filed and stated that accession to the PCT should help to remove some of the existing barriers being faced by Thai applicants. She also praised the cooperation the DIP has received from local law firms, specifically identifying Tilleke & Gibbins, among others.

Deputy Minister Alongkorn followed by discussing the Thai government's commitment to protection and promotion of intellectual property. He noted that during his trip to Geneva, WIPO Director-General Francis Gurry recognized Thailand as a leader among ASEAN nations in the development of its intellectual property system.

With the PCT Receiving Office now open, the PCT will actually enter into force for Thailand on December 24, 2009. However, it is important to note that the PCT national phase filing will not be retroactive for foreign applications which have already been filed in a foreign country before the effective date. Therefore, during the transition period, applicants must continue to file Thai patent applications within 12 months from the first foreign filing date.



Tilleke & Gibbins representatives Dr. Charoen Kanthawongs (left), Srila Thongklang (second from left), and Sonthaya Sungkapongse (right) congratulate Deputy Commerce Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot (center) and DIP Director-General Puangrat Asavapisit (second from right) on the opening of the PCT Receiving Office.



Deputy Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot speaking at the opening ceremony.



DIP Director-General Puangrat Asavapisit and Deputy Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot officially open the PCT Receiving Office.