

China to become top patent filer within three years: UN

March 21 2018



Chinese telecommunications firm Huawei, which demonstrated its Mate 10 Pro smartphone driving a Porsche Panamera car at a technology fair last month, topped the world for patent applications last year.

China is on its way to becoming the world leader in international patent

filings, and should overtake the top spot from the United States within three years, the UN said Wednesday.

A record 243,500 international patent applications were filed last year, a hike of 4.5 percent from a year earlier, the World Intellectual Property Organisation said in its annual report.

These patents "represent the best new [technology](#) that is arising in the world," WIPO chief Francis Gurry told journalists in Geneva.

The US kept the top ranking, which it has held for the past four decades, with American-based companies and individuals filing 56,624 applications, or nearly a quarter of the global total.

But it was the rapid growth in international patent filings from China, which passed Japan to reach second place, that drove the global increase, WIPO said.

Chinese companies and individuals filed a total of 48,882 [international patents](#) last year, marking a hike of 13.4 percent from a year earlier, the UN agency said.

China, the only country to record double-digit growth in its patent applications in 2017, has posted growth higher than 10 percent every year since 2003.

"At current trends, (China) is projected to overtake the US within three years as the largest source of applications filed under WIPO's Patent Cooperation Treaty," the agency said.

"One cannot but notice that there has been a remarkable transformation in the Chinese economy, and that China has gone from a position of being largely a user of technologies to a producer of technologies,"

Gurry said.

He refused to comment on whether US President Donald Trump's expressed anxiety over competition from China was warranted.

But he told reporters that "China has clearly arrived as a major competitor in the field of technology."

He stressed though that "the rise of China does not necessarily mean the decline of others."

Two China-based telecoms companies topped the global ranking last year: Huawei Technologies, which filed 4,024 patents, and ZTE Corporation, which filed 2,965.

They were followed by Intel Corporation of the United States, with 2,637 patents and Mitsubishi Electric Corporation of Japan, with 2,521.

The "rapid rise in Chinese use of the international patent system shows that innovators there are increasingly looking outward, seeking to spread their original ideas into new markets as the Chinese economy continues its rapid transformation," Gurry said in a statement.

"This is part of a larger shift in the geography of innovation, with half of all international [patent applications](#) now originating in East Asia," he added.

© 2018 AFP

Citation: China to become top patent filer within three years: UN (2018, March 21) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-03-china-patent-filer-years.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private

study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.