

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

To:
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Date of mailing
(day/month/year) **11 January 2016 (11.01.2016)**

Applicant's or agent's file reference 64963371PC06		FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraph 2 below	
International application No. PCT/US2015/051833	International filing date (day/month/year) 24 September 2015 (24.09.2015)	Priority date(day/month/year) 29 September 2014 (29.09.2014)	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC A61F 13/15(2006.01)i, A61F 13/47(2006.01)i, A61F 13/49(2006.01)i			
Applicant KIMBERLY-CLARK WORLDWIDE, INC.			

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☐ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☐ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☐ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☐ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. **FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.
For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/KR International Application Division Korean Intellectual Property Office 189 Cheongsa-ro, Seo-gu, Daejeon, 35208, Republic of Korea Facsimile No. +82-42-472-7140	Date of completion of this opinion 19 November 2015 (19.11.2015)	Authorized officer Han, Inho Telephone No. +82-42-481-3362
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**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.

PCT/US2015/051833

Box No. 1 Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of :

- ☒ the international application in the language in which it was filed
- ☐ a translation of the international application into _____ which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (Rules 12.3(a) and 23.1(b))

2. ☐ This opinion has been established taking into account the **rectification of an obvious mistake** authorized by or notified to this Authority under Rule 91 (Rule 43*bis*. I(a))

3. ☐ With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, this opinion has been established on the basis of a sequence listing:

- a. ☐ forming part of the international application as filed:
☐ in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file.
☐ on paper or in the form of an image file.
- b. ☐ furnished together with the international application under PCT Rule 13*ter*. I(a) for the purposes of international search only in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file.
- c. ☐ furnished subsequent to the international filing date for the purposes of international search only:
☐ in the form of an Annex C/ST.25 text file (Rule 13*ter*. I(a)).
☐ on paper or in the form of an image file (Rule 13*ter*. I(b) and Administrative Instructions, Section 713).

4. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that forming part of the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

5. Additional comments:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.

PCT/US2015/051833

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-20	YES
	Claims	NONE	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1-20	YES
	Claims	NONE	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-20	YES
	Claims	NONE	NO

2. Citations and explanations :

2.1. Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: WO 2006-108029 A1 (THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY) 12 October 2006

D2: US 5458591 A (ROESSLER, T. H. et al.) 17 October 1995

D3: US 2003-0088224 A1 (CEMAN, G. F. et al.) 8 May 2003

D4: US 2009-0112174 A1 (DREVIK, S. et al.) 30 April 2009

D5: US 6793649 B1 (FUJIOKA, Y. et al.) 21 September 2004

2.2. Novelty and Inventive Step

D1, which is considered to be the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claims 1-20, discloses a disposable absorbent article adapted to be worn about a lower torso of a human body and having a chassis, a primary replaceable absorbent core component disposed in a crotch region of the chassis, and a secondary replaceable absorbent core component disposed in capillary liquid communication with the primary replaceable absorbent core component. The secondary replaceable absorbent core component may be removed and a like absorbent core component may be substituted in place of the removed absorbent core component without the removal of the disposable absorbent article from a wearer. The secondary replaceable absorbent core component is disposed at least partially inside a pocket formed by the primary replaceable absorbent core component, with access for its removal and replacement provided by an aperture in a backsheet or an area where a backsheet and a topsheet may be separated (see abstract; claim 1; figures 1-12).

The subject-matter of claim 1 relates to a method of manufacturing a multiple use absorbent article comprising: producing an absorbent article having a liquid permeable chassis topsheet, a liquid impermeable chassis backsheet, and a chassis absorbent core sandwiched between the

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chassis topsheet and the chassis backsheet; producing an absorbent insert having an insert topsheet, an insert backsheet, and an insert absorbent core, the insert absorbent core having a core peripheral outer edge and being sandwiched between the insert topsheet and the insert backsheet, the absorbent insert including a peripheral sealing region sealing the insert topsheet to the insert backsheet at or outside the core peripheral outer edge; producing a separable line of weakness within or adjacent to the peripheral sealing region; and bonding the insert backsheet to the chassis topsheet, wherein the line of weakness provides for separation of the absorbent insert into a removable portion configured to be removed from a chassis absorbent unit, and a resident portion that remains bonded to the chassis absorbent unit. None of the prior art documents disclose or suggest the method comprising producing the separable line of weakness within or adjacent to the peripheral sealing region, and bonding the insert backsheet to the chassis topsheet, wherein the line of weakness provides for separation of the absorbent insert into the removable portion configured to be removed from the chassis absorbent unit of the present invention. Accordingly, the subject-matter of claim 1 is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious to a person skilled in the art by the prior art documents. Therefore, claim 1 is novel under PCT Article 33(2) and inventive under PCT Article 33(3).

Claims 2-19 are substantially dependent on claim 1 and therefore claims 2-19 meet the requirements of PCT Article 33(2) and (3).

The subject-matter of claim 20 relates to a method of manufacturing a multiple use absorbent article comprising: producing an absorbent article having a liquid permeable chassis topsheet, a liquid impermeable chassis backsheet, and a chassis absorbent core sandwiched between the chassis topsheet and the chassis backsheet; producing a first absorbent insert having a first insert topsheet, a first insert backsheet, and a first insert absorbent core, the first insert absorbent core having a core peripheral outer edge and being sandwiched between the first insert topsheet and the first insert backsheet, the first absorbent insert including a peripheral sealing region sealing the first insert topsheet to the first insert backsheet outside the core peripheral outer edge; producing a separable line of weakness within or adjacent to the peripheral sealing region of the first absorbent insert; bonding the insert backsheet to the chassis topsheet; producing a second absorbent insert having a second insert topsheet, a second insert backsheet, and a second insert absorbent core, the second insert absorbent core having a core peripheral outer edge and being sandwiched between the second insert topsheet and the second insert backsheet, the second absorbent insert including a peripheral sealing region sealing

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the second insert topsheet to the second insert backsheet outside the core peripheral outer edge; producing a separable line of weakness within or adjacent to the peripheral sealing region of the second absorbent insert; and bonding the second insert backsheet to one or both of the first insert topsheet and the chassis topsheet. None of the prior art documents disclose or suggest the method comprising producing the separable line of weakness within or adjacent to the peripheral sealing regions of the first and second absorbent inserts of the present invention. Accordingly, the subject-matter of claim 20 is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious to a person skilled in the art by the prior art documents. Therefore, claim 20 is novel under PCT Article 33(2) and inventive under PCT Article 33(3).

2.3. Industrial Applicability

Claims 1-20 are industrially applicable under PCT Article 33(4).