

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

TRANSLATION

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

To:

Date of mailing (day/month/year)	27.01.2015
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Applicant's or agent's file reference AC836-PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraph 2 below
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International application No. PCT/JP2014/080795	International filing date (day/month/year) 20.11.2014	Priority date (day/month/year) 20.03.2014
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International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
A61F13/49 (2006.01) i, A61F13/511 (2006.01) i, A61F13/53 (2006.01) i

Applicant
UNICHARM CORPORATION

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 or 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/JP	Date of completion of this opinion	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.		Telephone No.

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Box No. I 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*.1(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 filed or furnished:
 - a. (means)
 - on paper
 - in electronic form
 - b. (time)
 - in the international application as filed
 - together with the international application in electronic form
 - subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search
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 in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
5. Additional comments:

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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	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%; vertical-align: top;">Novelty (N)</td> <td style="width: 60%;"> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Inventive step (IS)</td> <td> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Industrial applicability (IA)</td> <td> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Novelty (N)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	Claims	1-14	YES	Claims		NO		Inventive step (IS)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	Claims		YES	Claims	1-14	NO		Industrial applicability (IA)	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;">Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;">1-14</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: right;">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Claims</td> <td style="border-bottom: 1px solid black;"> </td> <td style="text-align: right;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	Claims	1-14	YES	Claims		NO	
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2. Citations and explanations:	<p>Document 1: JP 8-507232 A (THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY) 06 August 1996, page 12, line 27 to page 13, line 13, page 17, lines 15-18, page 21, lines 8-15, fig. 2A, 3 & US 1377 H & EP 686022 A1 & WO 1994/018926 A1</p> <p>Document 2: JP 2006-115957 A (KAO CORP.) 11 May 2006, paragraphs [0010], [0011], fig. 2</p> <p>Document 3: CD-ROM of the specification and drawings annexed to the request of Japanese Utility Model Application No. 48217/1992 (Laid-open No. 426/1994) (NEW OJI PAPER CO., LTD., KABUSHIKI KAISHA NEPIA) 11 January 1994, fig. 2, 3</p> <p>Document 4: JP 2011-279 A (LIVEDO CORP.) 06 January 2011, paragraph [0036], fig. 5</p> <p>Document 5: JP 11-285513 A (KAO CORP.) 19 October 1999, paragraph [0006]</p> <p>Document 6: JP 2009-62650 A (KAO CORP.) 26 March 2009, paragraphs [0015]-[0017], fig. 1, 2</p>																											

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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

The invention as in claim 1 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-3 cited in the ISR.

Document 1 (see, in particular, page 12, line 27 to page 13, line 13 and fig. 2A) describes an absorbent article which is provided with a surface member having a pair of first overlapping parts that include overlapping portions formed by overlapping a pair of side sheet members with a central sheet member from the skin-surface side and extend in a longitudinal direction, wherein each of the pair of first overlapping parts has a first joining part that joins the central sheet member and the side sheet member, and extends in the longitudinal direction.

Providing a free edge of a sheet member that extends along the joining part of the sheet member and protrudes in a longitudinal axis direction is a well-known feature as shown in document 2 (see, in particular, paragraphs [0010] and [0011] and fig. 2) and document 3 (see, in particular, fig. 2 and 3), for example. A person skilled in the art could have easily conceived of providing first free edges of a side sheet member that extend along the first joining part and protrude in a longitudinal axis direction, in the absorbent article described in document 1, by applying the abovementioned well-known feature.

The invention as in claim 2 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-3.

A person skilled in the art could have easily conceived of providing a central sheet member with second free edges, in the absorbent article described in document 1, by applying the abovementioned well-known feature.

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The invention as in claims 3-4 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-3.

The concrete degree of the length of free edges in the width direction could be determined, as appropriate, by a person skilled in the art.

The invention as in claim 5 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-3, and document 4 cited in the ISR.

Document 4 (see, in particular, paragraph [0036] and fig. 5) describes a feature wherein: a side sheet member includes multiple sheet pieces that extend in the longitudinal direction thereof, and are arranged side by side in the width direction; and the side sheet member has a second overlapping part that includes an overlapping portion formed by overlapping, from the side of an absorber, a sheet piece that is positioned on the longitudinal axis side with other sheet piece adjacent on the side opposite to the longitudinal axis side and extends in the longitudinal direction.

The invention as in claim 6 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-4.

The feature wherein first free edges have a constant length in the width direction over the entire length thereof in the longitudinal direction could be addressed, as appropriate, by a person skilled in the art.

The invention as in claim 7 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-4, and document 5 cited in the ISR.

Document 5 (see, in particular, paragraph [0006]) describes the feature wherein the basis weight of a region corresponding to the center is larger than that of other region.

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The invention as in claim 8 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-5.

Document 1 (see, in particular, page 21 and lines 8-15) describes the feature wherein the center of an absorber is thick. Furthermore, document 5 (see, in particular, paragraph [0006]) describes the feature wherein the thickness of a region corresponding to the center of an absorber is larger than that of other regions.

The invention as in claim 9 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-5.

Document 1 (see, in particular, page 12, line 27 to page 13, line 13 and fig. 2A) describes the feature wherein an absorber includes an absorption core.

The invention as in claims 10-12 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-5.

Adhesion by means of a hot-melt adhesive is a feature so commonly used that there is no need to provide a document. Applying an adhesive in a linear shape or in a non-linear shape, such as a wave shape or a spiral shape, are also features so commonly used that there is no need to provide a document.

The invention as in claim 13 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-5.

Document 1 (see, in particular, page 17, lines 15-18) describes the feature wherein the liquid permeability of a central sheet member is higher than that of a side sheet member.

The invention as in claim 14 does not involve an inventive step in the light of documents 1-5, and document 6 cited in the ISR.

Forming multiple projection parts on the skin-

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surface side surface of a sheet member is a well-known feature, as shown in document 6 (see, in particular, paragraphs [0015]-[0017] and fig. 1 and 2), for example.