Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-108362

Case number	CAC-UDRP-108362
Time of filing	2026-01-23 14:35:58
Domain names	softbankchain.com

Case administrator

Organization	Iveta Špiclová (Czech Arbitration Court) (Case admin)

Complainant

Organization	SoftBank Group Corp

Complainant representative

Organization	CSC Digital Brand Services Group AB

Respondent

Name	xxxxxx xxxxxx

OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

The Panel is not aware of any other legal proceedings which are pending or decided and which relate to the disputed domain name <softbankchain.com>.

IDENTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

SoftBank Group Corp. (the "Complainant") is the owner of the registered trademark SOFTBANK, protected in numerous jurisdictions worldwide, including the United States, Japan, and the European Union.

The Complainant holds multiple trademark registrations for SOFTBANK, including but not limited to:

- SOFTBANK (JP Reg. No. 1858515), registered April 23, 1986;
- SOFTBANK (JP Reg. No. 4476883), registered May 25, 2001;
- SOFTBANK (US Reg. No. 2542547), registered February 26, 2002;
- SOFTBANK (EU Reg. No. 002070225), registered December 19, 2002;
- SOFTBANK & Design (WIPO Reg. No. 861654), registered June 7, 2005.

These registrations long predate the registration of the disputed domain name.

In addition to its trademark portfolio, the Complainant operates numerous domain names incorporating the SOFTBANK mark, including <softbank.jp> and <group.softbank>, through which it promotes its global business activities. The Complainant maintains

a substantial online presence and has established significant goodwill and recognition worldwide under the SOFTBANK trademark.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complainant, SoftBank Group Corp., is a Japanese multinational conglomerate holding company established in 1981. It is the parent company of a global portfolio of subsidiaries and affiliates engaged in investment activities, information and communication technology services, internet services, Internet of Things, financial and payment services, robotics, semiconductor and microprocessor intellectual property, and artificial intelligence-related investments.

As of March 31, 2025, the Complainant had 965 subsidiaries and 67,229 employees on a consolidated basis.

SoftBank has achieved substantial global recognition. It was ranked #27 in the Forbes Global 2000 in 2021 and #184 in Fortune's Global 500 list. It has also been recognized among the World's Most Admired Companies and is the second largest publicly traded company in Japan after Toyota.

The Complainant maintains a significant online presence, including through its primary website at <softbank.jp> and its corporate website at <group.softbank>. According to Similar web data submitted by the Complainant, <softbank.jp> receives tens of millions of visits and ranks highly both globally and within Japan.

In January 2025, the Complainant announced the "Stargate Project," a large-scale artificial intelligence infrastructure initiative aimed at building next-generation data centers, with planned investments of up to USD 500 billion over several years.

The disputed domain name <softbankchain.com> was registered on January 17, 2025.

PARTIES CONTENTIONS

COMPLAINANT:

• The disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to the protected mark

The Complainant submits that, by virtue of its registered SOFTBANK trademarks, it has established rights in the SOFTBANK mark. It relies on section 1.2.1 of the WIPO Overview 3.0, which provides that ownership of a nationally or regionally registered trademark prima facie satisfies the requirement of having trademark rights for purposes of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name <softbankchain.com> incorporates the SOFTBANK trademark in its entirety and merely adds the generic term "chain." The Complainant argues that the addition of a generic or descriptive term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity where the trademark remains clearly recognizable within the domain name (WIPO Overview 3.0, section 1.8).

The Complainant also contends that the Respondent's use of the disputed domain name reinforces the confusing similarity. Specifically, the disputed domain name resolves to a website that claims affiliation with, or authorization by, the Complainant and prominently uses the SOFTBANK mark in its content.

On this basis, the Complainant submits that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its SOFTBANK trademark within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

• The Respondent does not have any rights or legitimate interest in the disputed domain name

The Complainant submits that its trademark registrations for SOFTBANK constitute prima facie evidence of the validity of the mark, its ownership, and its exclusive right to use the mark in commerce.

The Complainant states that the Respondent is neither sponsored by nor affiliated with the Complainant in any way, and that it has never licensed, authorized, or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use the SOFTBANK trademark, including in the disputed domain name. In the absence of such authorization, the Complainant contends that no bona fide or legitimate use of the disputed domain name could reasonably be claimed.

The Complainant argues that there is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy. The Respondent also used a privacy Whois service at the time of filing, which, according to the Complainant, further supports the absence of any legitimate interest.

The Complainant further submits that the Respondent is not making a bona fide offering of goods or services nor a legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The disputed domain name resolves to a website that prominently uses the SOFTBANK trademark and claims affiliation with or authorization by the Complainant. According to the Complainant, this constitutes a deliberate attempt to take unfair commercial advantage of the goodwill associated with the SOFTBANK mark.

The website appears to offer blockchain-related services unrelated to the Complainant's business activities. The Complainant contends that Internet users seeking the Complainant's services may be misled into believing that the disputed domain name is

operated or endorsed by the Complainant, thereby creating a likelihood of confusion and risking reputational harm.

The Complainant also emphasizes that the disputed domain name was registered on January 17, 2025, decades after the Complainant's first use of the SOFTBANK mark in commerce (1981), long after its trademark registrations, and long after the registration of its primary domain names <softbank.com> and <softbank.jp>. Given the global reputation and longstanding use of the SOFTBANK mark, the Complainant argues that the disputed domain name carries a high risk of implied affiliation, which cannot be considered fair use under UDRP principles.

On this basis, the Complainant submits that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

• The disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith

The Complainant submits that its SOFTBANK trademark is distinctive and internationally well known, having been used since 1981 and registered in numerous jurisdictions worldwide long before the Respondent registered the disputed domain name on January 17, 2025.

According to the Complainant, the disputed domain name <softbankchain.com> incorporates the SOFTBANK trademark in its entirety and merely adds the generic term "chain." The Complainant argues that such composition cannot reasonably be regarded as coincidental. Given the global recognition of the SOFTBANK mark, it is, in the Complainant's view, implausible that the Respondent was unaware of the Complainant at the time of registration.

The Complainant further submits that the disputed domain name resolves to a website that prominently features the SOFTBANK trademark and claims to offer blockchain-related services, thereby creating the false impression that the website is affiliated with or authorized by the Complainant. The Complainant contends that such conduct constitutes an intentional attempt to attract Internet users for commercial gain by creating a likelihood of confusion as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement, within the meaning of paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy.

The Complainant also notes that online searches for "softbank chain" return results referencing the Complainant and its business, and that publicly available sources, including Google's AI-generated overview, expressly clarify that the "SoftBank Chain" blockchain project is not affiliated with SoftBank Group Corp. According to the Complainant, this further indicates that the Respondent is targeting the Complainant's trademark.

In addition, the disputed domain name is configured with active MX records, indicating potential use for e-mail communications. The Complainant argues that this creates a credible risk of phishing, impersonation, or other fraudulent activity, as e-mail addresses incorporating the disputed domain name could mislead recipients into believing that communications originate from the Complainant.

The Complainant further submits, that the Respondent used a privacy service and provided false and incomplete Whois information at the time of registration, which panels have, in certain circumstances, considered indicative of bad faith, particularly where combined with other evidence of targeting.

Taken as a whole, these circumstances support the Complainant's position that the disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith.

Accordingly, the Complainant submits that the requirements of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy are satisfied and requests that the disputed domain name be transferred to the Complainant.

RESPONDENT:

No administratively compliant Response has been filed.

RIGHTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy).

NO RIGHTS OR LEGITIMATE INTERESTS

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the Respondent to have no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy).

BAD FAITH

The Complainant has, to the satisfaction of the Panel, shown the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith (within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy).

PROCEDURAL FACTORS

The Complaint was filed with the Czech Arbitration Court (the "CAC") on January 23, 2026.

In accordance with the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Rules"), the CAC formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint using the contact details available in the Registrar's verification.

No administratively compliant Response was submitted within the prescribed time limit. The CAC therefore proceeded to appoint the Panel to decide the matter.

In accordance with paragraph 14(b) of the Rules, where a party defaults, the Panel may draw such inferences from that party's failure to comply with the Rules as it considers appropriate.

The Panel is satisfied that the procedural requirements under the Policy and the Rules have been met and that the Respondent was afforded a fair opportunity to present its case. The Panel therefore proceeds to issue its decision.

PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The UNIFORM DOMAIN NAME DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY (UDRP) of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) (the "Policy") provides that complainant must prove each of the following to obtain transfer or cancellation of the domain name:

1. that respondent's domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which complainant has rights; and

2. that respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the domain name; and

3. the domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

1) The disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark in which the Complainant has rights

The Panel is satisfied that the Complainant owns numerous trademark registrations for the mark SOFTBANK in multiple jurisdictions, including Japan, the United States, the European Union, and via international registration. These registrations significantly predate the registration of the disputed domain name <softbankchain.com> on January 17, 2025.

The disputed domain name incorporates the SOFTBANK trademark in its entirety and merely adds the term "chain." The Panel notes that the SOFTBANK mark remains clearly recognizable within the disputed domain name.

Under established UDRP jurisprudence, where a complainant's trademark is recognizable within the disputed domain name, the addition of a descriptive or generic term does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity (WIPO Overview 3.0, section 1.8). The term "chain" does not sufficiently distinguish the disputed domain name from the Complainant's mark.

The generic Top-Level Domain ".com" is a standard registration requirement and is disregarded for the purpose of assessing confusing similarity (WIPO Overview 3.0, section 1.11.1).

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to the Complainant's SOFTBANK trademark within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(i) of the Policy.

2) The Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name

Under the Policy, the Complainant must establish a prima facie case that the Respondent lacks rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name. Once such a case is made, the burden of production shifts to the Respondent (WIPO Overview 3.0, section 2.1).

The Complainant has stated that it has not authorized, licensed, or otherwise permitted the Respondent to use its SOFTBANK trademark in any manner, including in the disputed domain name. There is no evidence that the Respondent is commonly known by the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(c)(ii) of the Policy.

The Whois information does not indicate that the Respondent's name corresponds to the disputed domain name. At the time of filing the Complaint, the Respondent employed a privacy service, and following registrar disclosure, the underlying registrant details appear incomplete or obfuscated. While privacy services may have legitimate uses, the record contains no evidence suggesting that the Respondent has been commonly known by the disputed domain name.

The Panel further notes that the disputed domain name resolves to a website that prominently features the SOFTBANK mark and presents blockchain-related services in a manner that suggests affiliation with the Complainant. UDRP panels have consistently held that a respondent cannot establish rights or legitimate interests where a domain name is used in a way that falsely suggests affiliation with the trademark owner (WIPO Overview 3.0, section 2.5.1).

There is no evidence before the Panel that the Respondent is making a bona fide offering of goods or services independent of the Complainant's mark, nor that the Respondent is making legitimate noncommercial or fair use of the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(c)(i) or (iii) of the Policy.

The Respondent has not submitted any Response in these proceedings and has therefore failed to rebut the Complainant's prima facie case.

Accordingly, the Panel concludes that the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(ii) of the Policy.

3) The disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith

The Panel finds that the SOFTBANK trademark is distinctive and has been used internationally for decades prior to the registration of the disputed domain name. The Complainant's trademark registrations significantly predate the disputed domain name, and the record reflects substantial global recognition of the SOFTBANK mark.

The disputed domain name incorporates the SOFTBANK trademark in its entirety and merely adds the term "chain." The Panel considers it more likely than not that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant and its trademark at the time of registration. Given the well-established reputation of the SOFTBANK mark, the selection of this mark in its entirety cannot reasonably be regarded as coincidental.

The Panel further notes that the disputed domain name resolves to a website that prominently features the SOFTBANK mark and presents blockchain-related services in a manner suggesting affiliation with the Complainant. Such use is likely to create confusion as to source, sponsorship, affiliation, or endorsement.

Under paragraph 4(b)(iv) of the Policy, bad faith may be established where a respondent intentionally attempts to attract, for commercial gain, Internet users to its website by creating a likelihood of confusion with the complainant's mark. On the evidence before it, the Panel finds that the Respondent's conduct falls within this category.

The Panel also notes that the disputed domain name is configured with active MX records. While the mere presence of MX records does not independently establish bad faith, in circumstances where a domain name closely imitates a well-known mark and is used in a manner suggesting affiliation, such configuration increases the risk of potential misuse, including impersonation or fraudulent communications.

Further, the Respondent initially employed a privacy service and the underlying registrant details appear incomplete or obfuscated. As reflected in WIPO Overview 3.0, section 3.6, privacy services may have legitimate uses; however, in the present case, when considered together with the targeting of a well-known mark and the absence of any Response, these factors reinforce the inference of bad faith.

Taking all circumstances into account, the Panel is satisfied that the disputed domain name was registered with knowledge of the Complainant's trademark and is being used in bad faith within the meaning of paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

AND THE DISPUTED DOMAIN NAME(S) IS (ARE) TO BE

1. **softbankchain.com**: Transferred

PANELLISTS

Name	**Barbora Donathová**

DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2026-03-03

Publish the Decision