Decision for dispute CAC-UDRP-108871

Case number	CAC-UDRP-108871
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Domain names	novartisuport.com

Case administrator

Name	Olga Slanařová (Case admin)

Complainant

Organization	Novartis AG

Complainant representative

Organization	Abion GmbH

Respondent

Organization	Novartesuport

OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

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

IDENTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

The Complainant has adduced evidence that it owns the following trademarks for the NOVARTIS brand:

- International trademark No. 663765 registered on 1 July 1996 in Nice Classification List classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 20, 22, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 40, 42 (with Egypt designated);

- International trademark No. 666218 registered on 31 October 31 1996 in classes 41 and 42 (with Egypt designated);

- US trademark No. 2336960 registered on 4 April 2000 in classes 1, 5, 9, 10, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 42;

- EU trademark No. 13393641 registered on 17 March 2015 in classes 9 and 10;

- International trademark No. 1349878 registered on 29 November 2016 in classes 9, 10, 41, 42, 44 and 45 (with Egypt designated);

- International trademark No. 1544148 registered on 29 June 2020 in classes 9, 35, 38 and 42.

It also adduced evidence that the Complainant is the registrant of the domain name <novartis.com>, registered on 2 April 1996, as well as of its registration of the domain names <novatispharma.com> and <novatis.net>.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain name <novartisuport.com> on 1 April 2026 according to the Registrar Verification obtained by the CAC Case Administrator.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complainant is a global pharmaceuticals and healthcare company based in Switzerland and with a direct sales footprint in some 120 countries according to present data. The Complainant's history goes back some 250 years but the Novartis brand was adopted in 1996 with the establishment of the Novartis Group out of two earlier pharmaceutical firms, Ciba-Geigy and Sandoz. Novartis is one of the world's largest groups in its business sector and focuses on evolving needs of nearly 300 million patients worldwide by developing and delivering innovative medical treatments and drugs. In 2025, the Complainant achieved net sales of USD 54.5 billion and had over 75,000 employees. Its group has been present in Egypt for several decades and in 2024 opened new premises in the business district of New Cairo. Its offerings available there specifically include, as shown in screenshot evidence, the Novartis Patient Support service that extends to therapeutic guidance and advice on healthcare system reimbursements for medication up to financial assistance in some cases.

The Complainant adduced evidence of a webpage to which the disputed domain name resolves that simply confirms registration of the domain name and website hosting is available. In addition, it submitted evidence showing that the Respondent has activated e-mail server addresses associated with the disputed domain name and that the Complainant had written a cease and desist letter to the Respondent. The Complainant avers that it received no response to its letter. Search results for online enquiries the Complainant made about the Respondent and the disputed domain name were also made. Finally, the Complainant adduced evidence as to its social media presence and as to this extending to Egypt.

The Panel observes from the Registrar Verification that the Respondent, in the contact details given at registration, provides "Novartesuport" as the organization name, a postal address with the street name "Road" and a postcode in Cairo yet with New Cairo for "state" (i.e. region).

PARTIES CONTENTIONS

COMPLAINANT:

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

The disputed domain name <novartisuport.com> incorporates in its stem the Complainant’s well-known trademark NOVARTIS in its entirety and the term “uport”. Addition of the term “uport” in the stem does not prevent a finding of confusing similarity to the Complainant's trademark while the presence of the generic gTLD extension <.com> is a standard registration requirement that may be disregarded when assessing whether the disputed domain name is confusingly similar. The disputed domain name is therefore confusingly similar to the Complainant’s trademark NOVARTIS.

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

The Complainant has never granted the Respondent any rights to use the NOVARTIS trademark in any way, including in the disputed domain name. There is no indication in this case that the Respondent is known by the disputed domain name or owns any corresponding registered trademarks; rather, online searches the Complainant made indicate the opposite. The Respondent has not been using, or preparing to use, the disputed domain name in connection with a bona fide offering of goods and services; nor is the Respondent making a legitimate non-commercial or fair use of the disputed domain name. The Respondent used a privacy shield service so as not to disclose the Respondent's contact details. Moreover, the structure of the disputed domain name, incorporating the Complainant’s trademark NOVARTIS in its entirety and the term “uport” – which read together may lead internet users to see “Novartis support” in the disputed domain name's stem – reveals the Respondent’s intention of registering the disputed domain name to refer to the Complainant, its trademark and business activity and to create an association, and a subsequent likelihood of confusion, with the Complainant and its NOVARTIS trademark in internet users’ minds. Indeed, as shown, the Novartis group offers Novartis Patient Support as a specific service. By reading the disputed domain name, internet users may indeed believe that it is directly connected or authorized by the Complainant, including in respect of its Novartis Patient Support service, and that the user's search will resolve to the Complainant’s official website, which is not the case. Instead, the disputed domain name resolves to a parking page. Accordingly, the disputed domain name is being passively held, and there is no evidence showing that the Respondent is using, or preparing to use, the disputed domain name legitimately.

(3) The disputed domain name was registered and is being used in bad faith

The Complainant’s trademark registrations significantly predate the registration of the disputed domain name. It is pertinent that the NOVARTIS trademark is a well-known trademark registered in many countries and having a strong presence online, including in Egypt. It is further relevant that the Respondent is based in New Cairo where Novartis Pharma S.A.E. has its premises. Simple online searches would have revealed information to the Respondent about the Complainant, its trademark and business. It is therefore implausible that the Respondent did not know about the Complainant, its products, and its NOVARTIS trademark when it registered the disputed domain name. Furthermore, the structure of the disputed domain name therefore reflects the Respondent’s clear intention to create an association, and a subsequent likelihood of confusion, with the Complainant’s trademark in internet users’ minds, while several factual considerations are clear indicators of bad faith use: the trademark's notoriety and distinctiveness; the disputed domain name resolving to a parking page (passive use); non-disclosure of identifying details; and the presence of active MX records with the corresponding risk that email addresses are being used. Internet users receiving emails from email addresses

associated with the disputed domain name in the format<@novartisuport.com> may be led to believe that they are being personally contacted by the Complainant. Being so deceived, internet users might start to interact with the sender and possibly become victims of fraud attempts thanks to such impersonation of 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 that 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 Panel is satisfied that all procedural requirements under the UDRP were met and that there is no other reason why it would be inappropriate to provide a decision.

The Panel notes that in its résumé of the Parties' contentions, citation of several decisions of past ADR panels contained in the Amended Complaint has not been repeated in the present decision since these are in view of this proceeding's factual circumstances not pertinent for arriving at determinations with reference to the UDRP.

PRINCIPAL REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. Background considerations related to the facts and preliminary evidential findings

This is, in essence, a case in which the central issue raised is typosquatting. This can be inferred from the Complainant's allegation in relation to the composition of the disputed domain name, <novartisuport.com>, whereby the Respondent, without any right registered and is using the Complainant's protected brand in conjunction with an incorrectly spelt element in order to mislead the Complainant's actual or potential customers, including those who may be familiar with or wish to seek to find out about the Complainant's Novartis Patient Support service.

But this is not the sole issue raised by the Complainant, who, in the evidence it has submitted and its contentions, seeks to build its case around a connection to Egypt. This derives from the contact details the Respondent gave at registration and not to any characteristic of the disputed domain name itself. However, cursory examination of the contact details provided pursuant to the Registrar Verification reveals glaring inconsistencies in the contact details; namely, no street name is given while a Cairo postcode is included in seeming ignorance of the fact that the region specified by the Respondent (New Cairo) is both a different city and region. This thus undermines the credibility of the connection the Complainant assumes; on the other hand, a global company like the Complainant with an offering such as Novartis Patient Support has a connection also well beyond Egypt. It may be that the Complainant's establishment of a presence in New Cairo had relevance in the Respondent's mind. But the Panel FINDS that this cannot be assumed on the evidence or that it is sufficiently material to the application of the UDRP in this case even if it were.

By contrast, the Panel FINDS that the contact details as given are suspect and thus, in line with ICANN policies reflected in the applicable registration agreement, the registration itself may not be valid in the first place.

In other contentions, the Complainant seeks to rely upon that which the Panel regards as less than persuasive when seen on their own, namely:

- the fact that a privacy service was used at registration. The Panel does not find this to be germane per se to proof of either lack of

a right or legitimate interest on the Respondent's part in the disputed domain name or of bad faith registration and use. It is modern practice for data protection purposes for such a function to be made available to registrants;

- the fact that the Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's cease and desist letter. There is no obligation under the registration agreement or the UDRP to do so;

- the opportunity the Complainant invokes for the Respondent to conduct online searches of the kind the Complainant performed and submitted in evidence. There is similarly no obligation under the registration agreement or the UDRP to do so. Moreover, the Complainant's evidence was not collected with sufficient safeguards against influence from search engine algorithms that operate according to prior searches made on the computer systems used to perform the searches in question.

In sum, these additional issues (except as to the Panel's finding as to the suspect nature of the Respondent's contact details) are at best of circumstantial value only. Accordingly, the Panel will, in applying the UDRP three-part test below, only consider them in so far as is necessary to cast light on the central issue mentioned in the first paragraph of this heading.

2. Establishment of the Complainant's rights and the identicality or confusing similarity of the disputed domain name in their regard

The Complainant has diligently substantiated its trademark rights in the NOVATIS brand and its registration of the <novartis.com> domain name, among others, and has also shown that it offers a Novartis Patient Support service that is likely to be the target, misspelt, of the Respondent in registering the disputed domain name <novartisuport.com>. Given the incorporation of the NOVARTIS brand as the dominant element in the stem of the disputed domain name and the optical resemblance there of the <suport> element to Novartis Patient Support (and as reinforced by the same gTLD extension <.com> as is employed by the Complainant in its main domain name), the Panel FINDS that the disputed domain name has sufficient similarity to the Complainant's brand and its usage to induce confusion in some internet users, particularly those interested in the Complainant's Novartis Patient Support service. This finding takes into account the cognitive tendency of many people to skip over missing or surplus letters in a domain name (here an extra "s" and a missing "p") without noticing. The first part of the UDPR test is accordingly satisfied.

3. Absence of rights or a legitimate interest on the Respondent's behalf in the disputed domain name

There is no indication in the Case File including the Registrar Verification to suggest that the Respondent has any connection with the disputed domain name apart from merely registering it. Yet the Respondent has gone beyond mere registration and the evidence in this case indicates that the Respondent is using the disputed domain name's e-mail DNS feature by activating e-mail servers. This, in the circumstances of suspect registration details and use of a distinctive, well-known brand name in the disputed domain name's stem, raises a definite possibility of an illegitimate purpose being pursued, there being no indication of any fair, non-commercial use. The Panel thus FINDS that the second part of the UDRP test is fulfilled.

4. Bad faith registration and use of the disputed domain name

Registration of a domain name composed of a well-known brand in its stem that is either itself misspelt or combined with a misspelt generic subsidiary term is the hallmark of typosquatting; such a composition applies in this case and it is hard to imagine that it was not intentional given the distinctiveness of the well-known NOVARTIS brand. Furthermore, the Respondent has chosen to use e-mail facilities linked to the disputed domain name to communicate with internet users, a practice which is usually easier for a brand impersonator than constructing a website as well as being less visible to third parties. Additional indication of such impersonation is provided by the contact details the Respondent gave at registration, which purport to be related to an organization whose name, like the stem of the disputed domain name, resembles a combination of "Novatis" and "Support". Lastly, the Complainant's patient support offering includes financial aspects such as reimbursements and assistance in affording the Complainant's treatments and drugs, so providing a typosquatter with a potential source of gain from impersonation. Taken together, a sufficiently clear inferential picture emerges for the Panel to CONCLUDE from the indications mentioned that both bad faith registration and use apply in this case. The third and final part of the UDRP test is thus met.

For these reasons, the Panel ORDERS transfer of the disputed domain name to the Complainant.

FOR ALL THE REASONS STATED ABOVE, THE COMPLAINT IS

Accepted

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

1. **novartisuport.com**: Transferred

PANELLISTS

Name	**Kevin Madders**

DATE OF PANEL DECISION 2026-09-14