



STATEMENT

58TH SERIES OF MEETINGS OF ASSEMBLIES OF MEMBER STATES

DELIVERED BY

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The Chairman WIPO General Assembly
Director-General,
Honorable Ministers present,
Excellences,
Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Mr. Chairman

Uganda congratulates you and the vice-chairs on your election to lead the work of the 2018 WIPO General Assemblies. We are ready to work under your able leadership for the success of these meetings.

We also appreciate the secretariat for the excellent work carried out throughout the year, and in particular for the hard work in preparing large volumes of informative documents for the meetings of the Assemblies.

On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Uganda, allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to the Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry and his team in the Secretariat for steering the organization in the right direction of continued growth. We appreciate the continued support towards promoting the protection of IP in Uganda.

At the outset, Uganda fully aligns itself with the statement made by Morocco on behalf of the Africa Group.

Mr. Chairman;

Before the advent of modern knowledge systems, there was remarkable civilization with sophisticated and impressive inventions throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia. A case in point, a considerable number of medicines and treatments we use today, are based on the indigenous knowledge of ancient Africans and Asians. There are also strong indications that traditional health care systems

are gaining widespread acceptability as a complementary or alternative medicine across the world.

Therefore, protection of Traditional knowledge is a matter of priority for us on the normative agenda of the WIPO. We are concerned that, despite near consensus by the entire WIPO membership, of the inadequacy of the modern IP system to offer proper protection to traditional knowledge systems, almost 20 years of negotiations to design an international instrument to extend IP protection to indigenous knowledge are yet to produce tangible results. This is partly due to some WIPO member states' continued insistence on the conventional intellectual property principles as the overarching framework for traditional knowledge protection.

We therefore encourage all member states to exercise the maximum level of political flexibility to accelerate the IGC process, with a view to concluding negotiations in the current IGC biennial mandate, to establish a legally binding, minimum standard, international instrument for protection of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and genetic resources.

Mr. Chairman,

A balanced intellectual property system plays an important role in sustaining innovation, creativity, technology development and diffusion. Science, Technology and Innovation are major enablers for achieving sustainable development goals. The 2007 WIPO Development Agenda espoused principles intended to change the culture of this organization and its primary focus to support and protect intellectual property. It introduced development dimensions to all WIPO's programmes and activities. We therefore encourage WIPO, in its role as the focal point in the United Nations system, for the integrated treatment of intellectual property and development, to enhance its role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthen its collaboration with other UN agencies.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, multilateralism is facing serious storms from many parts of the world. WIPO member States must therefore, collaboratively, work to strengthen the organization to wither the storms. The main question to be answered is how shall we achieve this? The answer could lie in ensuring that no member state feels that they are left behind. We therefore fully support all efforts to aimed at enhance WIPO's democratic governance structures through broader participation of WIPO members in the Coordination Committee and the Programme and Budget Committee, on the **principle of regional proportionality**.

BEFORE I CONCLUDE MR. CHAIRMAN,

I wish to underscore the role of IP as a component of Uganda's development strategies is on an upward trajectory. With the support of WIPO, the country continues to modernize its national IP systems and infrastructure through legal reforms, enhancing the national IP office, and enhancing the capacity of our human resources. These efforts act as a fulcrum for stimulating and sustaining the innovative capacities of our people. Indeed, some of these efforts have already borne fruits as demonstrated by the improved ranking of the country in the Global Innovation Index 2017. We look forward to strengthened cooperation with WIPO and member states in our journey to achieving the Sustainable Development.

With those remarks, I wish us success in the work of the Assemblies and my delegation stands ready to constructively engage on all matters on the agenda.

I thank you.