

**ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF
THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION**

SIXTY-THIRD SERIES OF MEETINGS

14 July 2022

GENEVA

GENERAL STATEMENT – AUSTRALIA

Australia thanks Director General Daren Tang and the Secretariat for their excellent work over the past year and in preparing for this General Assembly. We welcome the opportunity to attend these assemblies in person again and offer our support to the Chair and Vice Chairs in making them a great success.

We appreciate the Director General's measured and pragmatic leadership of WIPO during these challenging and difficult times and commend the Secretariat, Chairs and Vice-Chairs for continuing to arrange these hybrid physical and virtual meetings.

Australia acknowledges the significant and devastating impact that COVID-19 continues to have on communities around the world, affecting both lives and livelihoods. It is of paramount importance that WIPO and the broader international IP system continue to play an active and urgent role in responding to the pandemic. We recognise the crucial work that WIPO has done, including in partnership with the World Trade Organization and the World Health Organization, to support these efforts.

Australia condemns in the strongest terms Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and continues to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We call for Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and for WIPO and its Member States to consider all options for supporting the people of Ukraine and the support of its innovation and intellectual property system.

We emphasise the continued importance of innovation for the wellbeing of all people, and the key role of IP in the innovation process. We have seen the appetite for innovation rise to the fore during the COVID-19 pandemic, with Australian applications for patents, trade marks and designs rights all reaching record highs in 2021. Patenting by Australian small and medium enterprises reached its highest level in at least a decade, with strong growth in patents for computer and audiovisual technology, as COVID-19 forced organisations to digitise their operations. Trade marks – which businesses use to announce new offerings – have surged for household products and telecommunication services to support the shift to remote work.

In the spirit of continually striving to improve our support for creative and inventive endeavour, we look forward to working with WIPO and Member States to help simplify the international IP system, to make it more accessible to innovators, creators and businesses – especially small and medium enterprises – and to ensure that IP is an everyday asset that benefits everyone, everywhere.

Australia welcomes continued cooperative and constructive discussions in WIPO's committees and working groups. We reiterate our strong support for ongoing improvements to the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid Protocol, and work towards a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organisations.

We continue to urge member states to join the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled to spread its clear humanitarian benefits.

In closing, Australia expresses its strong commitment to working with WIPO and Member States to ensure that the international IP system continues to fulfil its social and economic purposes and serves our innovators, creators, and businesses, as well as the broader public.