

**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE  
AFRICAN REGIONAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
ORGANIZATION (ARIPO) DURING THE FIFTY FIRST  
SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE  
MEMBER STATES OF WIPO, GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 23  
TO OCTOBER 3, 2013.**

Madam President, Honourable Delegates,

It is a pleasure and honour for me, on behalf of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) to address the Fifty First Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Firstly, please allow me to congratulate you, Madam Chairperson, for having been elected to Chair this Assembly. I also wish to congratulate your two Vice Chairpersons and I have the confidence that you will steer these Series of Meetings diligently and successfully.

Madam President,

Please also allow me to acknowledge the wonderful work of the Director General of WIPO, Dr. Francis Gurry and his Secretariat for coming up with comprehensive working documents. The working documents for example those relating to the Inter-governmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, the Proposals Related to a WIPO Development Agenda (PCDA), Patent Law Treaty (PLT), the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the WIPO Technical Assistance

programmes, etc. include topics which are very relevant to the Member States of ARIPO and Africa at large.

I am personally honoured and grateful that I have been invited to participate in these Series of Meetings and to represent ARIPO in an Observer capacity. In my new position as Director General of ARIPO, with great satisfaction, I wish to bring on record the activities undertaken by ARIPO and its Member States with the cooperation and support of WIPO. These activities have increased considerably and the working relationship between the two Organizations has grown from strength to strength.

Madam President,

On this score, my delegation fully associates itself with the statements made by the delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African group

As ARIPO is moving towards full implementation of the mandate on copyright and related right, I would like to congratulate WIPO for the conclusion of the two legal instruments on copyright and related rights in Beijing and Marrakech. ARIPO believes that the two instruments will allow stakeholders and sectors reap from intellectual property for social and economic development.

WIPO through its Automation Division supports and helps ARIPO and its Member States and Potential Member States to improve the administration and management of Intellectual Property (IP) through

the Intellectual Property Automation Systems (IPAS) project.

Successful completion of the IPAS project will be followed by the development of an interface between IPAS and the ARIPO software “POLite” which is going to be upgraded with the support of the KOICA-WIPO-ZIPO-ARIPO project financed by the Government of the Republic of Korea. The WIPO Global Infrastructure Division has been very influential in the project and has provided technical and financial support for its success.

The project will be initiated on October 7, 2013, when the Deputy Commissioner of the Korean Intellectual Property Office, (KIPO), KOICA and WIPO technical experts will convene in Harare to officially launch the Project. On completion of the project, it is expected that all procedures for the processing of IP titles including online filing at the ARIPO and ZIPO Offices will be automated.

Madam President,

The importance of patent information in the technological and economic development of the ARIPO Member States remains one of the biggest priorities of the Organization. In this respect, ARIPO in cooperation with WIPO has continued to ensure that the technological needs of the Member States are satisfied through the free-of-charge state-of-the-art search services facility. In addition, WIPO in cooperation with ARIPO, have continued to organize workshops and seminars in the African

region to create awareness on the importance and use of IP for technological and economic development.

The Ministerial Innovation Conference held in Dar es Salaam in February this year and attended by the Director General of WIPO is a true testimony of WIPO's commitment to encourage the use of IP for social and economic development.

Madam Chairperson

WIPO has intensively supported the availability of patent information to Research and Institutions of higher learning, small and medium size enterprise and the public at large through the Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs) and Access to Research for Development and Innovation (ARDI) program.

Projects under the WIPO Development Agenda for Intellectual Property (CDIP) also continue contribute to the development of IP in the ARIPO Member states and the world at large.

Several other projects managed by WIPO like: The WIPO Knowledge Pyramid, the Digital Access Service (DAS), the WIPO Centralised Access to Search and Examination (CASE), Access to Specialized Patent Information (ASPI), International Cooperation on the Examination of Patents (ICE), the Patentscope database, etc., continue to demystify Intellectual Property not only in Africa but the world at large and I would personally be grateful if they are continued.

To complement WIPO's effort in capacity building and human resources development in the region, the ARIPO Academy has increased its capacity building operations by providing training in all matters relating to IP locally.

In this respect, ARIPO in cooperation with the World Wide Academy and the Africa University, have continued to develop the Masters Degree Training Programme for the training of trainers in IP which now is in its sixth year and by next year, over 169 students will have graduated with Master Degrees in Intellectual Property.

Madam President,

ARIPO would also like to commend WIPO for the progress made on the IGC work and it is hoped that these efforts will soon lead to concrete steps towards the adoption of a legal binding instrument for the benefit of holders of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Folklore assets and the whole of human kind.

Further WIPO is supporting ARIPO and its member states in the development of a regional instrument on Geographical Indications and has set up a joint WIPO-ARIPO task force on the improvement of the Banjul Protocol and on how the protocol could be linked to the Madrid System. I want to reiterate our commitment to see those initiatives bring tangible results.

Madam President,

Lastly, I am pleased to report that the ARIPO five year Strategic Plan for the period 2011 to 2015 which gives a focus and direction to the Organization's work in serving its Member States and prioritising its activities to make it more effective and competitive is being strictly followed. WIPO in cooperation with the Japanese Government will hold a "Results Based Management" Seminar from 20 to 23 November in Kampala, Uganda, for the benefit of the Heads of IP Offices of the ARIPO Member States. For sure it will bring a new input on the management of the IP Offices and in the Secretariat.

I therefore greatly acknowledge and appreciate the support rendered by WIPO and other cooperating partners through bilateral Agreements that bind us together in our endeavours to develop the IP in Africa and the world at large.

Thank you for your attention.