

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### **54<sup>th</sup> MEETING: ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO JOINT ASEAN STATEMENT AGENDA 5: GENERAL STATEMENTS**

1. On behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), I wish to convey our congratulations on your election as President of the 54<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States. We would also like to congratulate Dr Francis Gurry on his unanimous re-election as WIPO's Director General. Under both your able leadership, we are confident of progressing our agenda and the steering of the Meeting to its successful conclusion.
2. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr. Francis Gurry and the WIPO Secretariat team for the excellent preparations, particularly the hard work to ensure clarity and consistency of the issues and the documentation for this Meeting.
3. Over the last few years, the ASEAN region has been defined by sustained economic growth and development. We expect the growth trajectory to continue despite the uncertain global environment. In particular, expanding domestic demand and strong FDI will remain the drivers of ASEAN economic expansion. ASEAN recognises that sustaining this momentum is crucial, and it is for this reason that ASEAN has continued to place emphasis on economic integration.
4. An important element of this regional undertaking is to continue to achieve integration with global trade flow through the use of the intellectual property system. Intellectual Property is an integral part of our economies. We, the ASEAN Member States, continue to participate in innovative endeavours as we attempt to increase our engagement in higher value-added activities. Guided by the ASEAN IPR Action Plan, regional initiatives covering the entire intellectual property spectrum have been pursued since 2011 in a manner that addresses the different levels of development among the Member States. The progress that we have achieved so far in our Action Plan would not have been possible without the support of our various Dialogue Partners, particularly WIPO. We convey our deep appreciation to WIPO's contributions to ASEAN's community building goals.
5. At the regional level, WIPO has partnered with ASEAN to provide support on Madrid Protocol training for ASEAN trademark examiners. Several Member States – Philippines, Singapore and Viet Nam – are already parties to the Madrid Protocol. The remaining Member States are working for possible treaty membership in the future.
6. Membership in the Hague Agreement also continues to expand. Brunei Darussalam recently became the second ASEAN Member State to accede to the Hague Agreement after Singapore. The remaining Member States will continue to consider pre-accession initiatives aimed to provide creators of industrial designs with an efficient procedure to secure and maintain design protection through a single international registration.

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7. WIPO's presence in the region has also been key to the IP development in ASEAN. The WIPO Singapore Office (WSO) has worked closely with ASEAN Member States to deepen cooperation in the region and promote the effective use of PCT, Madrid and Hague systems. Over the past 2 years, there were over 20 seminars, workshops and training programmes, and 1 WIPO Summer School programme, reaching about 500 participants from 20 countries.

8. Apart from assisting ASEAN in preparing for accession to these instruments, WIPO has been supporting the IT infrastructure of ASEAN IP Offices through the IPAS and digitisation of documents. WIPO's support on the WIPO CASE, particularly the virtual forum for patent examiner exchanges in ASEAN, will also help ASEAN patent examiners collaborate more effectively and deliver efficient services to stakeholders.

Madam President,

9. I should mention that initiatives such as the ASEAN Patent Examination Cooperation (ASPEC) programme, a PPH-like work-sharing arrangement in ASEAN has seen office actions taken within 6-9 months. Through the Philippines's leadership, we have also enhanced IP protection and enforcement in ASEAN. I am pleased to announce that the Philippines has recently graduated from the Special 301 list. An annual enforcement summit will gather judiciary experts in the region to discuss IP rights and enforcement in October. We have also established dedicated taskforces to look into patent and trademark matters in ASEAN. Malaysia is leading the new trademark task force aiming to reduce backlog of trademark applications and moving towards a common trademark examination guidelines. The first trademark TF meeting was hosted by Brunei on TM classification. Member states saw greater cooperation on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions, championed by Indonesia and supported by Cambodia and Laos through a policy workshop hosted by Indonesia to facilitate the development and amendment of domestic policies. A Geographical Indication (GI) exhibition was held earlier this September in Hanoi for the protection of GI, an initiative led by Thailand and Viet Nam. Thailand has also spearheaded effort for a creative ASEAN through the ASEAN animation contest and an upcoming ASEAN Design Contest. The establishment of Myanmar IP office is also a testament to the close working relationship of ASEAN in building a regional IP ecosystem. Myanmar has played an active role as observer at the ASPEC taskforce meeting and participant at the ASEAN Community of Practice meeting which saw the exchange of best practices for patent examiners in ASEAN. Earlier last month, Singapore has completed efforts to revamp the ASEAN IP portal with the support from all member states. The collective online platform will serve as the IP knowledge gateway to ASEAN. In addition, an ASEAN TMview containing more than 2 million trade marks in the region was also launched with revamped portal.

10. The progress that we have achieved so far in our Action Plan would not have been possible without the support of our various Dialogue Partners, including WIPO, Australia and New Zealand through the ASEAN-Australia-New

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Zealand FTA (AANZFTA), European Patent Office (EPO), Japan Patent Office (JPO), Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of China (SIPO), United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). We convey our deep appreciation to all our Dialogue Partners for their contributions to ASEAN's IP community.

11. WIPO recently entered into collaboration with ASEAN on a study to assess how far the goals of the IPR Action Plan have been met. The study is based not only on the progress of completed and on-going projects but also on the expected achievements and possible implementation gaps. A post-2015 vision is likewise being considered by ASEAN with the goal of deepening and broadening economic integration. Accession to WIPO-administered instruments, such as the Marrakesh Treaty, Beijing Treaty, WCT and WPPT are part of this future vision of ASEAN. It will incorporate the IP priorities and expectations of AMS and take into account the IP developments at the international level as well as the varying levels of economic and IP development of ASEAN.

Thank you.