

**GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE GAMBIAN DELEGATION TO THE 54th
ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION-
GENEVA- 22nd September 2014.**

The Chairman of the General Assembly;

The Director General of WIPO;

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen;

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of The Gambia, let me begin by congratulating the chair for the excellent manner in which you have been steering the affairs of our organization since your election into office as well as your vice chairs.

I also wish to place on record our heartfelt congratulations to the Director General of WIPO, Francis Gurry for his re-election for a second term of office as well as the incoming senior management team. We pledge our full support and cooperation to him in the coming years. We also wish to pay tribute to the outgoing members of the senior management team for their outstanding contribution to the world of intellectual property over the past years.

The Gambia wishes to align itself with the sentiments expressed by Kenya on behalf of the Africa Group as well as Benin on behalf of the LDC Group.

Let me also join my other delegates who spoke before me to congratulate WIPO`s administration and the general membership for the efforts that went into the construction of this magnificent conference hall which was built within time and budget.

Madam Chair, as highlighted by Benin on behalf of the LDC Group, we continue to count on the usual support of WIPO for a more balanced global intellectual property landscape in line with the development agenda of the organization.

However notwithstanding the tremendous gains made by the organization in the past two years in its norm setting agenda, we note with concern the slow progress of the negotiations in the norm setting agenda of the Inter-Governmental Committee. We implore all member states to put in similar kind of commitment and political will so that meaningful progress will be attained in the negotiation and eventual adoption of the long overdue Treaty on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Folklore.

Madam Chair, on the home front a lot of effort has been put into norm setting, institutional capacity building and awareness creation in a bid to sustain an Intellectual Property culture in The Gambia-

1. We have set in motion the necessary internal procedures for The Gambia to join the growing number of members of the Madrid System by acceding to the Madrid Protocol. After an intensive stakeholder awareness seminars on the Madrid system and the granting of Executive approval, the National Assembly of The Gambia ratified the Madrid Protocol in August 2014. It is hoped that by the end of this year, the necessary arrangements for the deposit of the instrument of accession would be completed. In the meantime we are working closely with the International Bureau of the Madrid Union to ensure that our trademark law is compatible with the Madrid legal regime.

2. In a similar vein, the National Assembly also ratified the Swakopmund Protocol on the Protection of Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Expressions of Folklore.
3. The Gambia is also a beneficiary of WIPO's IPAS automation project, which is now up and running; thus facilitating access and searches.
4. With the support of WIPO, a study on the contribution of the copyright industry to economic development of The Gambia has been commissioned. On the conclusion of the study, it is hoped that intellectual property in general and the copyright sector in particular will be given added impetus on the development agenda of the country.
5. It goes without saying that an integral element of the development of the Intellectual Property landscape is the development of a critical mass of I.P practitioners. Thus we have now succeeded in integrating the study of Intellectual Property law into the University syllabuses. WIPO has also offered tremendous support in this regard in collaboration with the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) by sponsoring Gambian to undertake the masters degree program in Intellectual Property law.
6. Finally, since 2012, we have been working on the development of an Intellectual Property policy and strategy through the support of WIPO. A delay in the

copyright component of the needs assessment mission has slowed down progress on this issue. However that has now been completed and I am happy to report that the process is on course.

Let me conclude by commending the Secretariat for the excellent documentation and preparations for this 54th Assemblies and we look forward to fruitful deliberations in the course of the coming days.

Thank you.