



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

STATEMENT BY: HIS EXCELLENCY MR. MOTHUSI B.R. PALAI

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE & AMBASSADOR,

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL
ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA,**

**56th WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION (WIPO)
SERIES OF ASSEMBLIES**

3rd - 11th October 2016

Geneva, Switzerland

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Director-General Gurry,

Honourable Ministers

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

1. Allow me to join other delegations in congratulating you on your appointment as the Chairman of the 56th Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. We would like to assure you and your bureau of our support in the discharge of your mandate and the successful conclusion of this sitting of the Assemblies. We also wish to recognise and appreciate the leadership of the outgoing Chair during his tenure in office.

2. Our gratitude is also extended to the Director-General and his team for the efforts invested in preparing for this Assembly.

3. Botswana aligns herself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

4. We note with appreciation the progress made by the IGC on the text-based negotiations on traditional knowledge, genetic resources and traditional cultural expressions. Botswana, therefore, looks forward with

anticipation the adoption of a legally binding international instrument geared towards protection for the benefit of our communities. The delay in the conclusion of this matter deprives a huge constituency of WIPO the opportunity to exploit its resources for the benefit of their people.

5. The same can be said about the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) on exceptions and limitations for libraries and archives and for educational research institutions. We urge Member States to show willingness to accommodate these issues as they play a significant role in education and access to information for developing countries, including Botswana.

6. We, therefore, wish to encourage this Assembly to ensure that the work of these bodies is continued in order to develop solid resolutions, which Member States can thereafter implement.

Mr Chairman,

7. Botswana notes with interest the developments so far achieved by the Standing Committee on Patents (SCP) with regards to Patents and Health. This is an issue that is vital for us as developing countries since it stands to contribute immensely to improving access to medicines and public health. We are, therefore, keenly interested in seeing progress in this area. We also note progress made by the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT) with regards to protection of country names against registration and use as trademarks.

Furthermore **Mr. Chairman,**

8. My delegation also takes note of progress made on the accession and ratification of the two (2) new copyright treaties, namely the Beijing Treaty and the Marrakesh Treaty. I am pleased to inform this Assembly that Botswana will during the course of this sitting join other Member States in acceding to the Marrakesh Treaty. By this we will be signalling our resolve to mainstream into the national agenda the interests of people living with disabilities.

9. Botswana notes with enthusiasm the positive development in the approval to establish WIPO External Offices in the biennia 2016/17 and 2018/19, giving priority to Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

10. At this juncture, allow me to inform this Assembly that on the 30th of September 2016, that is 3 days ago, Botswana commemorated her golden jubilee. As we count our successes in the past 50 years, WIPO, receives credit for its support that contributed to the development of Botswana's Intellectual Property System.

11. To name a few initiatives, WIPO is currently assisting Botswana through the IP Model Office Project which is intended to assist in providing online IP services to its customers. To enable Botswana to

effectively benefit from the Madrid System, WIPO sensitised the business community. Capacity building was also provided to the IP office on processing international trademarks applications.

Mr Chairman,

12. In our quest to transform our country to a knowledge-based economy, we have been working with WIPO on the development of an IP policy framework for Government Funded Research Organizations and Academic Institutions. This we hope will greatly stimulate innovations, improve management of IP in these institutions, and create improve linkages of these institutions with industries.

Mr Chairman,

13. In July 2016, Botswana was honoured to host a regional workshop organised by WIPO and its cooperating partners to discuss the opportunities and challenges for implementing the Marrakesh and Beijing Treaties, the WIPO Connect and TAG of Excellence for Collective Management Organisations. The workshop contributed to Botswana's finalisation of the decision to accede to the Marrakesh Treaty, and in defining the working relationships between the collective management organisation and the copyright office.

Mr. Chairman,

14. In conclusion, my delegation looks forward to making constructive contributions towards tangible outcomes of the 56th Assemblies as we look beyond 2016.

15. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.