

**WIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**October 2 to 11, 2017**

**General statement of the Finnish delegation**

Thank you Mr Chair,

Let me first thank the Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry, the Secretariat and the staff of the WIPO for their work in the preparation of the Assemblies. We would also like to welcome you, Mr. Chair, for assuming your duties to guide our work in these Assemblies. We are looking forward to an effective and constructive meeting.

The Finnish delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Estonia, on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and by the Delegation of Japan, on behalf of the Group B.

Year 2017 is a big year to Finland as we celebrate the centenary year of our independence. In addition to that, the Finnish Patent and Registration Office celebrates its 75th anniversary as an independent administrative office. It is notable that the functions of the Office date back already to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first Finnish patent was granted by the Imperial Senate already 175 years ago in 1842 and the registration of trademarks began in 1889.

Soon after gaining independence in 1917, Finland started to prepare for signing both the Paris Convention and the Berne Convention. The young republic considered it important to be part of the international community in the field of intellectual property. Finland felt that a well-functioning industrial property system would promote industrial progress and develop the national economy. Protection of creative works was also considered essential for the success of the new nation. In 1921, Finland became party to the Paris Convention, and later in 1928 to the Berne Convention.

A hundred years later Finland is a party to several international treaties administered by the WIPO. Today Finland is one of the leading knowledge-based economies in the world, and both private and public sectors invest strongly in research and development. In the Global Innovation Index of 2017, Finland was among the ten top-ranked innovation nations. IPRs have played a significant role in Finland's hundred years progress reforming the economy and industrial life and increasing productivity.

Finland is an active party in the WIPO negotiations and always willing to contribute to developing solutions on the international level to these questions. Among others, WIPO highlighted at the last Assemblies the point about the importance of metadata, raised by Finland at the WIPO Conference on the Global Digital Content Market organized last year. Consequently a study "Metadata of Digital Music Files" is just about to be published in Finland. It describes the metadata path of a musical file from the studio to the digital music service and tries to adopt best practices to improve the application of moral right as well as correct distribution of remuneration in these digital services.

Digitalization plays a key role also in the development of the Finnish IP-Office's processes and services. Finnish users are actively using global IP-services provided by the WIPO International Bureau and we would like to stress the importance of continuous modernization and updating of the PCT, the Madrid System and the Hague System for the benefit of the users.

The meeting of the PCT Union later this week will bring forward a proposal for an extension of the appointment of the International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authorities for a period of 10 years. The Finnish Patent and Registration Office received this status in 2003 and started its operation in 2005.

This appointment was extended in 2007 and Finland hopes to get the support of all PCT Union member states to this proposal in order to continue this important work.

The work of the WIPO Committees is important. We especially appreciate the success of the recent 26<sup>th</sup> session of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents. We hope this leads to progress and balanced and efficient working programs in other Committees too. We support a coherent international IP framework that encourages innovation and creativity and we believe that stakeholders benefit from a simpler and more harmonized IP system.

Finland has been one of the countries actively providing copyright training for experts from developing countries for almost three decades. Finland considers that it is important to provide possibilities for copyright training also in the future and openly discuss future activities in this area.

Finally, we look forward to continue successful cooperation with WIPO and we trust that under your guidance, Mr. Chair, we will be able to achieve consensus on the items on the agenda.