

GREECE

Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

57th Series of Meetings

Geneva, October 3rd, 2017

General Statement (Agenda item 5)

Chair,
Director General,
Distinguished Delegates,

We would like to congratulate the Ambassador of Vietnam on his election as Chair of the General Assembly for the biennium 2018-2019. Our congratulations are also extended to the vice-Chairs. Mr. Chair, we would also like to express confidence in your able leadership to direct discussions.

We thank the Director General Mr Gurry and the WIPO Secretariat for their excellent work and the continued support in drafting the series of documents of the current Assemblies.

Our delegation would like to align with the statements delivered by group B and by the European Union and its member states. Global intellectual property demand has been a driver for the continuous growth of WIPO's registration systems. The positive results produced in 2016, presenting a surplus of 32 million CHF, provide a sound financial basis. Sufficient liquidity to deal with unforeseen circumstances has been secured. It is noteworthy, that the strong financial performance is a result of efficient and sound management.

The proposed decrease of 10 percent in the contributions of Member states in 2018/19 biennium is welcomed.

Regarding the establishment of new External offices, we are ready to contribute to the discussions in a constructive spirit under the guiding principles decided by the 2015 Assemblies of WIPO.

The prospect of convening a Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of the Design Law Treaty, has been regrettably stagnant in the past years, despite the fact that the draft has been mature to be submitted to a Diplomatic Conference since 2013. Harmonized formalities would benefit users worldwide. Considerations irrelevant to design law, such as a mandatory disclosure requirement, should not prevent further a decision on a Diplomatic Conference.

As regards the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, a realistic work program should be agreed upon, taking into consideration that many outstanding issues remain unresolved. Future work should proceed upon agreement on core issues, following which text-based discussions could continue.

We welcome the work program agreed upon the future work of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents and support the continuation of discussions. We remain interested in discussing issues of harmonization of patent law to the benefit of users and hope that consensus will emerge in the future.

Regarding the Patent Cooperation Treaty, we are supportive of the efforts of the PCT Working Group to improve the system. Although a robust system, it should always respond to new challenges and provide incentives to promote innovative activity. Towards this direction, any fee reductions to encourage university driven innovation should be considered.

The Madrid system for the international registration of trademarks has been operating in our country successfully since August 2000 serving both Greek businessmen in the marketing of their products and services on the world

market as well as foreign businessmen who distribute their products or provide services in our country. Statistical data by the end of September 2017, compared to the corresponding period of 2016, show an increase in the number of international registrations concerning Greece, both as a country of designation and as a country of origin. To the extent that commercial activity contributes to economic growth, this reinforces our expectations for a recovery of the Greek economy, which has suffered much in recent years. Therefore, care of the Greek Trademark Office, which is under the Ministry of Economy and Development, is to contribute to the development and flexibility of the Madrid system in order to make it more efficient for Greek and foreign undertakings. To this end, we welcome the proposals of the Standing Committee on Legal Development of the Madrid system, which aim at the online connection of the International Bureau with the national Office of each contracting Member for faster, safer and more operational management of filings of international registrations and relative communications concerning each member, and on the other hand the independence of the international registration from the basic application or registration within the relevant 5 year period. We constantly participate in the meetings of the relevant Standing Committee and we are committed to submitting and voting proposals that will make the Madrid system more attractive to the benefit of users.

We renew our support to the excellent work of the World Intellectual Property Organization and remain committed to contribute to the discussions in a constructive spirit. Thank you Chair.