



**OPENING STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
57TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY ORGANIZATION**

DELIVERED BY MRS. V. MABIZA

SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

Thank you Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

It is a pleasure and honour for me, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, to address the Fifty-Seventh Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

The Zimbabwean delegation wishes to join other delegations in congratulating you and your vice Chairs for having been nominated to chair this Assembly. My delegation is confident that you will steer the proceedings diligently and successfully.

Chairperson,

Please allow me to acknowledge the meticulous work by the Director of WIPO, Dr. Francis Gury, and his Secretariat in preparing all the working documents and availing wonderful facilities for these meetings.

On the outset, my delegation would like to fully associate itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished delegation of Senegal, on behalf of the African Group.

Chairperson,

Allow me to take this opportunity to appraise you on the IP developments in my country, since the last Session of the Assemblies. I am happy to report that the Zimbabwe National IP Policy and Strategy, which was developed with the assistance and technical cooperation from WIPO, has since been approved by the Government and is ready for implementation. We are also banking on the WIPO support for the implementation of this Policy.

Zimbabwe continues to make significant progress in its legal regime, with a number of IP laws being revised to align them with provisions of the Constitution and international best practice. To this end, in March this year, Zimbabwe gazetted the Trademarks (Madrid Protocol) Regulations in order to give effect to the Madrid Protocol. On the international arena, Zimbabwe has since commenced processing Madrid applications and is also in the process of becoming party to the Marrakesh Treaty.

My delegation notes with appreciation, the continued support by WIPO, towards the modernization and digitalization of our national IP office (ZIPO) including the upgrade of the IPAS software. Zimbabwe has continued to benefit from the Japan-funds in trust administered through WIPO which includes the digitization of records currently taking place. For this we are ever grateful and it is our vision that this will transform ZIPO into a more modern, efficient, transparent and reliable IP office.

Zimbabwe continues to be a beneficiary of the WIPO Academy training programs, in particular the Masters in Intellectual Property (MIP) program jointly offered by WIPO, ARIPO and Africa University. This program has produced a

critical mass of IP personnel with required skills in Government and other important institutions.

Chairperson,

Zimbabwe would like to commend WIPO for the mainstreaming of developmental programs in its programs. Development is at the heart of every nation and I am happy that the Development Agenda encompasses issues that are of critical importance to Africa.

We also take cognisance of the work of the IGC and we commend the progress made thus far and wish for a speedy conclusion of this matter.

Chairperson,

Let me conclude by commending WIPO for the good work in promoting IP on the African continent.

I Thank you.