

**Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO
Fifty-Eighth Series of Meetings
Geneva, 24 September - October 2, 2018**

Statements of the CEBS Group

General Statement

1. Before starting, I would like to offer sincere condolences on behalf of all countries in our regional group on the passing away of His Excellency Mr Tran Dai Quang, the President of Vietnam.
2. Honourable Chair, Excellences and distinguished delegates, the delegation of Lithuania is honoured to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Central European and Baltic States.
3. Our Group would like to express its gratitude to you, your Excellency, for your full-hearted engagement in preparation for 58th series of WIPO Assemblies. This Group expresses confidence in your able guidance of the work ahead of us and your leadership during these Assemblies with a view to achieving progress on pending issues.
4. Our Group also extends compliments to the Director General for his leadership of the Organization that allowed to ensure the WIPO's excellent performance in delivering IP services and remain in sound and healthy financial situation. Our thanks also go to the Secretariat for its commendable work since the last Assemblies and for their efforts in preparing 58th series of meetings.
5. Our Group would also like to express appreciation for the work of the External Auditor, which was carried out by the Controller and Auditor General of India during last 6 years and welcome the UK National Audit Office, which is taking over duties of WIPO External Auditor. Let me underscore the importance our Group attaches to the oversight system of WIPO, and extend our thanks to the Independent Advisory Oversight Committee (IAOC) as well as to Internal Oversight Division (IOD) for their hard work in performing this important function.
6. On WIPO performance, Mr. Chair, the CEBS Group notes and appreciates very positive financial result for the biennium 2016/2017. We welcome the continuous growth of Global IP services and believe that such growth will be furthered by constantly improving the systems that would allow to meet the needs of the users. Moreover, we are convinced that WIPO shall continue provision of services through PCT, Madrid, Hague and Lisbon systems by allocating needed resources for their use and promotion providing equal treatment to all systems.
7. Mr. Chair, we believe that the current session of the General Assembly should devote special attention to the pending legislative agenda. Let me restate the importance, which our Group attaches to the adoption of the Design Law Treaty. We regret the lack of agreement on convening the diplomatic conference for the adoption of the DLT at the Assemblies of last year. We believe that the text of the draft Treaty, which was finalized a few years ago, is mature and hope that the agreement on convening the diplomatic conference will be reached during this Assembly. During the years of negotiations our Group showed flexibility and engaged in constructive discussions in order to find a universally acceptable compromise and advance the work in respect of convening a diplomatic conference.

8. The CEBS Group also believes that the Member States should invest more efforts in finalizing the Treaty on the Protection of the Broadcasting Organizations. The CEBS group reiterates the necessity to take into account the rapid developments in the field of communication technologies and make sure that the Treaty addresses and reflects current situation in the field. We are looking forward to progress towards developing an adequate and effective legal instrument and favour the approach which equally protects any transmissions of broadcasting organization over any other medium.

Against this backdrop, Mr. Chair, our Group is prepared to continue its constructive engagement in the work towards the completion of these negotiation.

9. The CEBS group would like to acknowledge the importance of WIPO's presence around the globe. Regarding WIPO External Offices, let me restate the position of the CEBS group that the Guiding Principles adopted during the General Assembly in 2015 should guide any specific decision on EOs. We believe that the network of the External Offices must provide an added value to this organization and should be based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution. While recalling the guiding principle that the priority should be given to the regions without any External Office, we would like to draw your attention that the CEBS region remains the only region without any External Office and Romania is the only country, which applied for an EO from the CEBS Group.
10. In respect of the IGC, the CEBS Group notes progress achieved during three IGC sessions under its current mandate. We restate our commitment to constructively engage in further work during remaining three IGC sessions, which are in particular devoted to issues of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, with a view of having a stock taking debate at IGC-40 on all three issues: genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.
11. In relation to the work on the WIPO's Development Agenda, CEBS would like to reaffirm its support and commitment to the appropriate implementation of the recommendations of the Development Agenda.
12. By way of concluding, Mr. Chair, we believe that the spirit of constructive deliberations will prevail during the discussions which will help us to come to the agreement on the complex issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chair