

Statement the Republic of Uganda
on behalf of the African Group
59th series of meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO
Agenda items 13: Report on the Program and Budget Committee (PBC)
September 30 – October 9, 2019

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.

Mr Chairman,

The African Group is very grateful to you and your vice Chairs for your dedication to the Work of the Program and Budget Committee and your leadership in its previous two sessions which enabled us to achieve many positive outcomes.

We thank the Secretariat for the preparation of the report of the Program and Budget committee and related documents containing decisions of the PBC and information requested by the PBC, as well as documents containing proposals of Member States on the Report of the PBC.

The Report(s) contain valuable information which gives us an overview of the programmatic and financial performance of the organization in the 2018/2019 biennium, as well as the proposed program and budget for the 2020/2021 biennium.

Regarding the programmatic and financial performance in 2018/2019, we are pleased to note that the Organization achieved almost all its expected results, in accordance with the approved 2018/2019 Program and Budget.

Turning to the Proposed Program and Budget for 2020/2021, we are further pleased to note that the organization continues to be in strong financial situation with its incomes forecasted to grow in the excess of 700 Million Swiss Francs in the 2020–2021 biennium enabling the organization to meet all its short, medium and long term expenditure. This gives the organization the ability to deliver its mandate.

As a major demander of WIPO's Technical Assistance and Capacity Building programs, the African Group, would like to underscore the need to allocate sufficient personnel and non-personnel resources to development-oriented activities to facilitate our member states to use of IP for Development.

In that regard, we welcome the increase in resources allocation for development-related activities per the proposed Program and Budget for 2020/2021 (document A/59/8) . However, overall, this expenditure has to cater for a large number of Programs (1 – 8, 20, 21, 30, 31 and 32) including approved Development Agenda projects! We would like to urge the Organization to ensure that there will be sufficient resources to fund all development-related activities, including Development Agenda projects that will be agreed by the CDIP.

We further commend the Secretariat for the much improved practice of mainstreaming of Development Agenda Recommendations (DARs) and the UN sustainable Development Goals

in the program and budget by linking each program to a specific DAR and/or SDG to which it applies. We envisage greater contribution to the implementation of the Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development goals.

Mr. Chairman,

The African Group reiterate the importance it attaches to the work of the PBC which, in our view, constitutes one of the institutional foundations of this Organization. In this regard, the African Group remains deeply committed to the principles of balance, equity and transparency in the allocation of incomes and expenses of the organization.

While we take note of all the decisions of the PBC contained in document A/59/7, we are concerned with the divergence in views regarding the methodology for the allocation of incomes and expenditures among the unions. This impeded the PBC's ability to conclude discussion of the proposed program and budget for 2020/2021.

While we welcome the various proposals intended to bridge existing gaps on the matter, the Group remains convinced that current allocation methodology as applied to the 2018/2019 Program and budget has proved to be fit for purpose and should be maintained for the next budgetary biennium 2020/2021.

Mister Chairman,

Our Group also echoes our previous position regarding the rules governing the convening of diplomatic conferences in the Organization. It has been the practice in the Organization for all diplomatic conferences to be convened at the behest of the unanimous decision of all WIPO Member States sitting in a General Assembly. To the best of our knowledge, this practice has not changed. In the light of the foregoing, any mention that diplomatic conferences should be convened with the consensus of all WIPO Membership is nothing new.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the African Group urges all member states to exercise maximum flexibility, to ensure that the program and budget will be adopted during this Assembly to enable the organization to deliver its mandate, deliver the results that we expect from it in 2020/2021 and address new and upcoming challenges.

We look forward to full and open engagement in discussions on this agenda item.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.