

The global health crisis of COVID-19, with its heavy human and economic costs, reinforces the centrality of creativity and innovation today. Not only because of the expectation that we place on scientists and researchers for solutions to the present crisis, but also because of the belief that, by guaranteeing to the authors, creators and entrepreneurs the necessary, adequate and opportune incentives to resist the crisis period, we will be creating the conditions for the continuous improvement of the production process and a rapid economic recovery in the post-pandemic period.

In Brazil, the COVID-19 pandemic poses an important domestic challenge, and I would like to highlight the effort of our society as a whole to mitigate the negative impacts caused by the global health crisis. The Brazilian government has been working to mitigate these effects through international cooperation programs and socioeconomic national policies, which seek to preserve the income and employment of Brazilians.

Brazilian cooperation with WIPO is an important pillar of the external face of our intellectual property strategy. The list of joint initiatives is as long as it is fruitful. WIPO Lex Judgements, WIPO Alert and WIPO Green are just recent examples of a broad and multifaceted agenda. I would like to highlight, in particular, the WIPO Development Agenda projects, of which Brazil is a great promoter and enthusiast. The ongoing cooperation between Brazil and WIPO for the development of a collective brand for producers in Tefé, in the heart of the Brazilian state of Amazonas, located 11 hours by boat from the capital of Amazonas, is an example of how the organization's mandate can be used to promote initiatives with a positive social impact in developing countries. It is our vision and expectation that the organization's prosperity will increasingly revert to initiatives that bring intellectual property to life in national economies and in communities like Tefé. We believe that WIPO should serve as a global platform for this type of transformation.

Internally, we continue to move forward in the process of consultation for the creation of the first National Intellectual Property Strategy, which will emphasize all dimensions and strategic axes for the regulatory and operational modernization of the intellectual property and innovation ecosystem in Brazil, including aspects related to enforcement and repression of crimes against intellectual property. In its international axis and particularly in relation to WIPO, this national strategy provides for the progressive alignment of the country with the instruments and programs of this organization, consolidating Brazil's ties with WIPO and guaranteeing international partners a more favorable, balanced, safe and profitable business and investment environment. In this regard, I am pleased to inform that the Budapest Treaty was recently submitted to the National Congress. The Madrid Protocol on the international registration of marks, that has been in effect for Brazil for less than a year, presents consistent results, in spite of the circumstances. Brazil is already the 18th largest recipient of designations in the system, 13% of which refer to Brazilian brands.

The National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI) is making great strides towards providing increasingly efficient services to rights holders and users of the IP system, as shown by the significant advances in meeting the goals of the National Plan to Combat Backlog of Patents, and consolidates itself as a provider of a new range of services focused on promoting business and fostering innovation and international partnerships, as exemplified by the "INPI Negócios" and "Vitrine de PI" initiatives.

Regarding the observance of IP rights, results obtained in border control, such as the National Border Security Program (VIGIA), an unprecedented initiative by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security that aims to incorporate public security agents to combat organized crime along the 15.000 kilometers of the Brazilian land border, and regulatory initiatives, such as the launch of guides of good practices in electronic commerce, means of payment and internet advertising, are recent examples of achievements in this area. These are joint efforts, in which the participation of government bodies takes place in partnership with the private sector and in cooperation with international partners, results recognized, for example, in official publications such as the “Annual IP crime and enforcement report: 2019 to 2020”, from the United Kingdom.

As this was the last General Assembly of DG Francis Gurry, I could not fail to express the Brazilian government's recognition of his undeniable contribution to the current dynamism and prosperity of WIPO.

I would also like to welcome the DG-designate, Daren Tang, and say that he will have a great political and diplomatic partner in Brazil throughout his term. We know that the challenges ahead are many, that it is necessary to revitalize the normative agenda of the organization and ensure that intellectual property is, especially in this moment of significant economic challenges, a catalyst for economic growth and development. Designing customized and pragmatic solutions to these challenges will require sophistication, representativeness and diversity in the Secretariat, especially in its senior management positions.

We believe, as much as the new DG, that WIPO has an even greater contribution to offer to its Members, and that the organization's mandate should be used to promote favorable business environments and investment opportunities, creativity and innovation, especially in developing countries, in addition to the protection and promotion of intellectual property rights.

We stand ready to assist the new DG in his noble and challenging mission in the organization.