



61st Session of the WIPO General Assemblies

21 September – 25 September 2020

Agenda Item 5 – General Statement by the Government of Sri Lanka

Geethanjali R. Ranawaka - Director General of Intellectual Property

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Sri Lanka congratulates you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the 61st series of meetings of the WIPO Assemblies. Our sincere appreciation to you and the Director General and the WIPO Secretariat for organizing the assemblies under these challenging circumstances.

We thank the Director General Dr. Francis Gurry, for your Report which is testimony to your outstanding leadership during your tenure as the Head of this Organization and in developing and positioning WIPO to the current remarkable level. On behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka, I wish to convey our gratitude to the Director General Dr. Gurry for his excellent contribution whilst serving around 35 years at WIPO in different capacities. We wish you good health and a successful new life in your future endeavors.

Mr. Chairman, I now take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the Director General-elect Mr. Daren Tang from Singapore, whom I trust, will continue to further enhance the WIPO's mandate in promoting use of IP effectively towards strengthening the IP ecosystem in the world over.

Sri Lanka wishes to place on record our sincere appreciation to Dr. Gurry and different sectors of WIPO including the Asia Pacific Bureau, Madrid Registry and the Copyright and Creative Industries Division for the valuable cooperation extended to our Government during the past few years. We are pleased to highlight the Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs) Programme, the Enabling IP Environment Project and technical

assistance to strengthen the Collective Management Societies in Sri Lanka as some of those successfully implemented and currently ongoing programs. The Government of Sri Lanka has accessed the Marrakesh Treaty in 2016 and work is ongoing to implement the procedural aspects.

Despite Covid 19 pandemic, due to the timely action taken by the Government of Sri Lanka we have been able to contain the spread of the virus, and the Government offices have been able to work continuously since May 2020 up to now without any serious disruption of services. During the year, we have been able to progress steadily towards two major achievements, namely introduction of a new comprehensive legislation to facilitate registration of Geographical Indications to safeguard the interests of producers and exporters of Ceylon Tea and Ceylon Cinnamon and other products originating from Sri Lanka and work is now in progress to deposit the instrument of accession to join the Madrid Protocol facilitating international registration of marks. We also hope to access the WIPO Internet Treaties and the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances in the next biennium.

Mr. Chairman , the advent of Covid 19 has given more significance to IP as a tool , as the whole world is awaiting to see a successful research outcome in inventing a new vaccine to suppress Covid 19, and we hope that it will be made available to the whole world under Patent flexibilities.

Our sincere appreciations are extended to the WIPO Secretariat for organizing this Assembly facilitating remote accession to those who were unable to travel due to Covid 19 pandemic . In closing, Sri Lanka looks forward to expand on the processes of cooperation with WIPO under the new leadership of Mr. Daren Tang.

Thank you