

[Agenda item: 5] General Statement

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Bangladesh has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group (APG).

At the outset, let me begin by expressing the APG's sincere appreciation to you for your able stewardship in steering the WIPO Assemblies. We also like to thank Director General Daren Tang for his able and effective leadership to the organisation. The APG appreciates the Director General for his detailed and useful overview of WIPO's work this past year. That said, allow me to highlight a few points in the APG's opening statement.

First, our region gives prime importance to intellectual property as an important contributor to socio-economic growth and technological development. We believe that a fair and balanced IP system is an important tool of economic development.

Second, being the second largest regional group as well as the region with fast increasing IP filings and innovation activities, our Group is significantly underrepresented in the WIPO Coordination Committee (CoCo). We believe that seats for CoCo membership among the regional group should be allocated based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution, as guided by the relevant WIPO Conventions. In this regard, the joint proposal submitted by the APG and the Africa Group would be the most appropriate way to resolve the existing standstill on the matter. As for the membership of the Program and Budget Committee (PBC), our Group requests for a decision to open this Committee for the universal membership.

Third, in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, many governments across the globe are supporting development of new health technologies, in particular vaccines, by supporting research and development through significant and enhanced public spending. In such extraordinary times, there is a need for a balanced IPR system which encourages and ensures the development of and equitable access to the tools – such as diagnostics, therapeutics, treatments,

vaccines – required to fight this health crisis and not become a hindrance to such efforts.

Fourth, we urge the Member States to strengthen the collective efforts in resolving outstanding issues i.e. (i) the finalization of the texts of an international legal instrument or instruments for the effective protection of Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (GRTKF), (ii) moving forward on convening a diplomatic conference for the adoption of a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations and (iii) deciding for the diplomatic conference for the adoption of the Design Law Treaty (DLT).

Fifth, on the issue of new External Offices, the APG is happy to see that there are progresses. We thank and appreciate the Members for their concerted efforts in advancing the preparation of 2021 evaluation of WIPO external offices. We like to note the decision of the 33rd Session of the Program and Budget Committee (PBC) to develop a preliminary draft of the ToR for this purpose and believe that we are moving in the right direction.

Sixth, the APG is delighted to learn that WIPO has continued to deliver a healthy financial performance and an increase in its net assets for 2020. On Audit and Oversight matters, we would like to thank the Independent Audit and Oversight Committee (IAOC), the external auditor, and the Internal Oversight Department (IOD) for their reports.

With this let me conclude here, Mr. Chair, by reaffirming that the APG stands ready to contribute constructively and actively to the successful conclusion of this GA. Thank you.

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