

STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ARIPO, MR. BEMANYA TWEBAZE, AT THE OPENING OF 62ND SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF WIPO MEMBER STATES

OCTOBER 4TH TO 8TH, 2021

Mr Chairman,

Allow me to express ARIPO's appreciation to the Director General, Mr Daren Tang, for the support we continue to receive from WIPO.

ARIPO also associates itself with the statement made by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the Africa Group.

Among other achievements recorded by ARIPO this year, as earlier indicated by the Delegation of Liberia, we successfully held a Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of a Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights in August. The outcome was the "**Kampala Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights**" that was adopted on 28th August 2021 in Kampala, Uganda. Let me appreciate the Chairperson of the ARIPO Council of Ministers, Honourable Mawine Diggs, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Liberia, for her engagement and contribution to the success of the Conference.

Mr Chairman,

Like other Organizations, ARIPO is still facing challenges linked to the COVID-19 pandemic since early 2020. However, our ICT infrastructure proved to be the pillar of the resilience of the Organization. I wish to appreciate WIPO for the support to improve our ICT system, especially the ARIPO e-services that allowed us to keep our operations almost unaffected by the effects of the pandemic.

During the year 2021, we undertook several other initiatives in collaboration with WIPO, including awareness creation activities on IP, as well as training of SMEs from our Member States in collaboration with WIPO and the IP Office of Singapore.

ARIPO is very grateful, and I reiterate my commitment to the cooperation between WIPO and ARIPO.

Mr Chairperson,

ARIPO continues to grow its membership and accession to its Protocols. Indeed, The Gambia joined the Banjul Protocol on Marks on the 3rd of May 2021.

I am also delighted to inform these Assemblies that from the 1st of October 2021, the Republic of Seychelles became the 21st Member State of ARIPO.

Thank you very much!