

DRAFT (6 July 2026)

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On behalf of the AWGIPC**

Honourable Chair,

1. It is both an honour and a privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on the occasion of the 68th Assembly of the Member States of WIPO.

2. First of all, we would like to express our gratitude and best wishes to the Chair of the 68th Assemblies for the excellent work and arrangements that have gone into these meetings so far. Under your effective stewardship, ASEAN is confident of excellent outcomes and achievements of our series of meetings.

3. To Director General Daren Tang, please allow me to express congratulations on behalf of ASEAN for your reappointment as the Director General of WIPO for a second term. The impact that your leadership has had on the global IP landscape over the past 6 years is clear – driving two historic multilateral treaties and your continued mainstreaming of IP has brought forward IP development many leaps and bounds. We look forward to continuing WIPO's work with ASEAN, for a further 6 years under your dynamic and innovative leadership.

Ladies & Gentlemen, Honourable Chair;

4. ASEAN in 2026 is a region of dynamism, optimism and innovation. We have a median population under the age of 35 and are supported by one of the world's fastest-growing digital economies. Our goals in IP are therefore in support of a young, innovative population and one that is increasingly operating on a digital front.

5. To support this, the ASEAN IPR Action Plan 2026-2030 is currently in full swing towards delivering our goal to “advance an effective, enterprising and inclusive IP ecosystem in the ASEAN region.”

6. I would urge all countries and counterparts to be informed of the goals of the ASEAN IPR Action Plan as we wish to signal that ASEAN is open for cooperation and collaboration. As part of our plan to implement our strategic goals over the next 5 years, we have several organizational milestones to reach we see as being applicable to ASEAN as well as to all multilateral organizations as a whole:

- (i) Defining the role of countries and country champions within the scope of ASEAN's work is vital – in multilateral organizations each country must maintain and take responsibilities to ensure the effectiveness of the work of the organization, and ASEAN continues to strive for operational efficiency;
 - (ii) Improving communication between ASEAN Member States, country champions and potential partners, including WIPO, is of utmost importance. While we are able to stay interconnected in today's digital world, we also see the importance of in-person meetings and maintaining connections with our valued partners to ensure goals are aligned and priorities are met;
 - (iii) ASEAN also wishes to improve our relationship with IP stakeholders in the private sector. Our innovators, R&D institutions and MSMEs must continue to be engaged in our strategic planning to ensure their needs are met; and finally
 - (iv) In a world driven increasingly by data analytics, we wish to modernize our offices and cooperation with great use of data and monitoring tools to measure the impact that our IP policies have on innovation in our respective regions.
7. I share these goals as a reminder that multilateral cooperation is only as effective as the willingness of each Member State to prioritize common goals and participate equitably. I am honoured to say that WIPO has honoured the goals of ASEAN admirably and has always allowed for ASEAN-led IP development to be prioritized.
8. Several WIPO divisions have been involved in this important work, from the Division for Asia-Pacific, the WIPO Singapore Office, the IP Office Business Solutions Division and the IP and Innovation Ecosystems sector, we have a wealth of knowledge and resources that have been shared with us and allowed for us to excel in several key areas:
- (i) The ASEAN IP Register supported by WIPO has become a significantly successful project that grows from strength to strength now containing over 8.6 million IP registrations over 4 IP types;
 - (ii) The first ASEAN Heads of IP Office Retreat was supported by WIPO which provided an opportunity for senior government officials from ASEAN to brainstorm and deliberate on key IP matters; and
 - (iii) WIPO has continued to support ASEAN MSMEs to leverage IP in support of intra and inter-regional trade with its series of IP management clinics which have reached over 20,000 ASEAN stakeholders directly.
9. The ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation (AWGIPC) would like to express our sincerest thanks to all WIPO colleagues that have afforded expertise and technical assistance to ASEAN and we look forward to continuing these strong relationships with WIPO as a whole, as well as our very important focal points from each department.

Ladies & Gentlemen, Honourable Chair;

10. I would also like to use this opportunity to reiterate that WIPO's support to ASEAN will continue to evolve as we have recently agreed upon 7 key new areas of cooperation between our organizations. This reflects the flexibility of WIPO to adapt to ASEAN's emerging needs and the global innovation landscape. I would like to assure you of our utmost commitment to carrying out these activities to the best of our abilities.

11. It is my honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the ASEAN Working Group on IP Cooperation at the 68th General Assemblies on behalf of the 11 ASEAN Member States. I would like to wish the Assembly a successful week of meetings and the highest assurance of the commitment of ASEAN Member States towards these series of meetings.

Thank you, Honourable Chair.