

Lesotho General Statement

A/68th -Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of Member States of WIPO

Chair,

Lesotho aligns itself with the Statement made by South Africa on behalf of the African Group.

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair and your Vice Chairs on your leadership of these important deliberations. We are confident that under your able stewardship, the Sixty-Eighth Series of Meetings will yield productive outcomes for all Member States. We congratulate the Director General on his re-election for the second term, and we are confident that we will continue benefiting from his outstanding, visionary, inclusive and development oriented leadership. We extend our sincere appreciation to Director General Daren Tang and the entire Secretariat for their dedicated work in advancing the Organization's mandate and for the efficient preparation of this Session.

Mr. Chair, Lesotho warmly congratulates WIPO on its remarkable achievements over the 2024/2025 biennium, which has been a period of significant progress and landmark accomplishments for the Organization. On the normative front, 2024 stands as an historic year for Multilateral Intellectual Property cooperation. Lesotho commends WIPO for the adoption of two groundbreaking Treaties: the WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (GRATK Treaty) adopted in May 2024, and the Riyadh Design Law Treaty, adopted in November 2024. On the financial side, WIPO's financial health remains strong, demonstrating sound stewardship of Member State resources. The 2024 Performance Report shows that WIPO maintained a strong financial position, matched by impressive programmatic results, which reflect effective delivery across all Strategic Pillars.

We commend WIPO for its continued commitment to mainstreaming the Development Agenda across all Sectors, and for its efforts to ensure that the benefits of Intellectual Property System are balanced with equitable access to knowledge, technology transfer, and capacity building. As we approach the twentieth Anniversary of the WIPO Development Agenda, Lesotho welcomes this

as the opportunity for meaningful reflection on the progress achieved since its adoption. We believe that future reporting on the implementation of the Development Agenda will place greater emphasis on tangible and measurable impact on the ground.

Chair, Lesotho wishes to express its profound gratitude to WIPO for the invaluable Technical Assistance provided over the years. We particularly acknowledge the excellent coordination of the Division for Africa in supporting our national efforts in Policy development, Legislative Review, Human Capital and Institutional development. These efforts are crucial for ensuring that Lesotho's Legal and Institutional frameworks align with Lesotho's National priorities and international standards. Lesotho is pleased with the ongoing Project on Technologies for Community Development. This Project represents WIPO's commitment to helping Least Developed Countries to use Intellectual Property for economic and social development. It reflects our shared commitment to leveraging technology and innovation to address poverty, enhance livelihoods, and promote sustainable development. We are pleased that Lesotho is among the first countries to benefit from this newly revised project model, which focuses on community needs and measurable outcomes.

Chair, Lesotho looks forward to a continued collaboration with WIPO in other impactful projects, that harness the potential of Intellectual Property for community development. We are particularly interested in projects that strengthen the capacity of our local artisans, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), Women, Youth and that promote protection of Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Expressions. We are grateful for the commencement of a Branding project for our famous Basotho Hat. This Project has the potential to transform the lives of Basotho by creating sustainable economic opportunities while preserving, promoting, and celebrating our rich cultural identity and heritage.

Chair. Allow me to address the important issue of human resources management at WIPO, which is fundamental to the Organization's ability to deliver on its mandate effectively and inclusively. Lesotho commends WIPO for its continued efforts to transform WIPO's workforce into a more agile, skilled, and representative Organization. We commend WIPO for achieving gender parity at the overall workforce level. While we welcome this progress, we feel that continued action is

still needed to address the longstanding imbalance in geographical representation, particularly the under-representation of African nationals at leadership and senior management positions.

In conclusion, Lesotho remains firmly committed to engaging constructively and in good faith with all delegations, to ensure the successful outcome of these Assemblies.

I thank you, Chair.