

Special Union for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration (Lisbon Union)

Assembly

Forty-Second (26th Ordinary) Session
Geneva, July 8 to 17, 2025

DRAFT REPORT

prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Assembly was concerned with the following items of the Consolidated Agenda (document [A/66/1](#)): 1 to 7, 10(ii), 11, 15, 20, 23 and 24.
2. The reports on the said items, with the exception of item 15, are contained in the General Report (document A/66/11 Prov).
3. The report on item 15 is contained in the present document.
4. Ms. Grace Issahaque (Ghana), Vice-Chair of the Lisbon Union Assembly presided over the meeting, in the absence of Mr. Matúš Medvec (Slovakia), Chair of the Lisbon Union Assembly.

ITEM 15 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

LISBON SYSTEM

5. Discussions were based on documents [LI/A/42/1](#) and [LI/A/42/2](#).

6. The Vice-Chair of the Lisbon Union Assembly presiding over the meeting as Acting Chair (hereinafter referred to as “the Chair”) pointed out that since the previous session of the Lisbon Union Assembly in 2023, eight additional Contracting Parties had deposited their instruments of accession to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications (hereinafter referred to as “the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement”), namely in chronological order, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Portugal, Djibouti, Slovakia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, and earlier that day, Georgia. This brought the total number of countries covered by the Lisbon System to 73.

7. The Chair then turned to the documents under consideration for this agenda item, namely documents LI/A/42/1, entitled “Report on the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System”, and document LI/A/42/2, entitled “Proposed Amendments to the Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement”.

8. Introducing the first document under consideration, the Secretariat recalled that at its sixth session, which took place from March 18 to 20, 2025, the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System (hereinafter referred to as “the Working Group”) adopted the Proposed Special Rules of Procedure governing the election of officers and their terms of office. This followed the adoption of a proposed transitional measure to elect officers to preside over both the sixth and seventh sessions of the Working Group to align the election cycle of its officers with Rule 9 of the General Rules of Procedure of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

9. Introducing the second document under consideration, the Secretariat recalled that the Working Group recommended the adoption of the proposed amendments to Rules 1, 8, 15 and 18 of the Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications (hereinafter referred to as “the Common Regulations”). The Secretariat indicated that the proposed amendments contained in the Annex to document LI/A/42/2 would enter into force on July 1, 2026.

10. The Delegation of Serbia expressed its support for the work of the Lisbon Union and referred to the statement made by the Director General, that geographical indications were not like other Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), a view which the Delegation shared. The Delegation stated that traditional products represented an important part of national identity, comparable to language, alphabet and religion. The Delegation believed that geographical indications should be viewed in this light rather than solely from market and profit perspectives. The Delegation cautioned that financial benefit should not be the only consideration when it came to geographical indication protection, warning that when profit logic infiltrates creative work, it brings along its own set of pressures relentlessly pushing creators toward constant and abundant output, potentially steering them away from what is profound and beautiful toward what is easy, superficial and crude. The Delegation further underlined that geographical indications were always about uniqueness and high quality. While acknowledging that geographical indications were also economic categories and that sales were important, the Delegation noted that many producers were mostly driven by a passion for their work. The Delegation emphasized that geographical indication producers maintained an invisible connection between past and present, sometimes uniting generations through an honorable and meaningful purpose and that it was a collective responsibility to recognize, understand, and

support the work of the producers. Finally, the Delegation welcomed the recent improvements to the Lisbon System, including the new Lisbon IT platform and the growing membership.

11. The Delegation of Estonia speaking on behalf of the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS) Group stated that the CEBS Group was convinced that the Lisbon System for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications provided an extremely valuable framework for ensuring the protection of geographical indications across all member countries of the Lisbon Union. The Group was of the view that the Lisbon System played a key role in preserving traditional knowledge and practices rooted in specific regions, while also protecting genuine producers from misuse or imitation. The Delegation added that the System enhanced transparency and guaranteed quality for consumers. Upon expressing the view that the System had significant potential for growth and expansion, the Delegation underlined the importance of maintaining and further developing the quality of the registration services, building capacity, and raising awareness. The Delegation noted that the progress achieved with the new Lisbon IT platform along with the substantial discussions within the Working Group represented a significant step forward in these endeavors. The Delegation indicated that the CEBS Group was very pleased to note the Union's growing membership and stated that the projections concerning the increase in the number of applications were supported by recent reforms to the geographical indication system at the European Union level, including the adoption of a regulation extending the geographical indication system to craft and industrial products, which would enter into force on December 1, 2025, as well as the latest reforms in the agricultural sector aimed at streamlining and simplifying registration procedures. Upon reiterating that the CEBS Group remained fully committed to future work and discussions on the Lisbon System at the next session of the Working Group, the Delegation said that the Group would warmly welcome new members joining the System.

12. The Delegation of the European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member states, welcomed the continued enlargement of the membership of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement since the last session of the Assembly of the Lisbon Union. The Delegation encouraged other WIPO members to join the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, thereby extending the use of this effective legal instrument for registering and protecting appellations of origin and geographical indications at multilateral and international levels. The Delegation reiterated the need to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to the Lisbon Registry to accommodate the needs of a growing membership and the increasing number of registrations, as well as to support new technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives to be provided to WIPO Members in the framework of the promotion of the Lisbon System. Upon stating that the European Union and its member states had continued to make progress in the implementation of their membership in the Lisbon System under the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, the Delegation pointed out that it had filed additional international geographical indication registrations since the last Assembly of the Lisbon Union and will continue to do so in the future. The Delegation reaffirmed that the Lisbon System – and particularly the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement – was a unique and effective system at the multilateral level for all WIPO members to register and protect appellations of origin and geographical indications already registered at national or regional levels. The Delegation was particularly pleased to inform the Assembly about the imminent entry into force on December 1, 2025, of the regulation on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products, namely Regulation EU 2023/24/11. The Delegation underlined that the new regulation would allow craft and industrial products to fully benefit from European Union-wide geographical indication protection, as it would allow producers to prevent the use of protected names for similar products made outside the designated geographical areas helping them fight counterfeits both online and offline. The Delegation also emphasized that the geographical indication scheme not only enabled European Union producers to seek international protection for their geographical indications but also allowed non-European Union producers to apply for protection if they met the same requirements. The Delegation also referred to Regulation (EU) 2024/1143, which updated and better defined the legal framework for wines, spirits, and agricultural products. The

Delegation welcomed the proposed amendments to the Common Regulations as recommended by the Working Group for adoption by the Lisbon Assembly, as the Delegation was of the view that it would increase clarity and legal certainty regarding the procedures under the Lisbon System. The Delegation looked forward to continuing discussions on the proposed amendments to Rules 9 to 12 of the Common Regulations at the next session of the Working Group and stood ready to discuss any other proposal that could be made subsequently. To this effect, the Delegation expressed its support for a document by the Secretariat presenting some elements of reflection and possible options for future work. Finally, the Delegation endorsed the invitation addressed to the Secretariat by the Working Group to prepare a document on the procedures relating to additional requirements under Article 7(4) of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement and Rule 5(3) of the Common Regulations, including background information and possible options. The Delegation emphasized that such a reflection paper would not bind Lisbon members to any specific outcome, especially if modifications of key elements of the Lisbon System were to be considered.

13. The Delegation of Ghana stated that it had been attentively following all matters relating to the Lisbon System and fully supported efforts to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. The Delegation welcomed the amendments adopted by the Working Group and looked forward to further discussions on the remaining proposed amendments to Rules 9 to 12 of the Common Regulations.

14. The Delegation of Switzerland supported modifying Rules 1 and 15 of the Common Regulations. The Delegation also noted the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement and thanked the Secretariat for organizing a side event on July 10, 2025. The Delegation emphasized that the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement was an important instrument that allowed the beneficiaries of appellations of origin and geographical indications to obtain enhanced protection in several Member States through a simplified procedure. The Delegation praised the growing popularity and efficiency of the Lisbon System, particularly due to the development of IT tools.

15. The Delegation of the Russian Federation congratulated WIPO and all Member States on the 10-year anniversary of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, a key milestone in strengthening the protection of geographical indications and appellations of origin. During the celebration of the event on July 10, 2025, the Russian Federation had the opportunity to present national crafts and other products protected by geographical indications and appellations of origin. Visitors had thus been able to familiarize themselves with national crafts such as "GZHEL" (ceramics) and to taste wine from the southern regions of Russia, as well as other geographical indication products such as "RUSSIAN VODKA" and "TULA PRYANIK" (Tula gingerbread). The Delegation thanked the International Bureau, and specifically the Director of the Lisbon Registry, for organizing a training workshop for members of the Lisbon System and other events during the year, and for the consistent support provided to existing and future members of the Lisbon System on any matters pertaining to its functioning. The Delegation was grateful for having had the opportunity to participate in the training workshop organized during the last session of the Working Group and to present the approach of the Federal Service for Intellectual Property (ROSPATENT) when examining and registering applications notified under the Lisbon System, including issues pertaining to administrative fees. Upon underscoring the importance of the future development of the Lisbon System and the expansion of its membership, the Delegation supported the proposed amendments to Rules 8, 15 and 18 of the Common Regulations presented in document LI/A/42/2.

16. The Delegation of the Czech Republic aligned itself with the statements delivered by the European Union and Estonia on behalf of the CEBS Group. The Delegation welcomed the report of the Working Group that provided valuable insights into the progress made and the direction of future work and supported the proposed amendments to the Common Regulations. The Delegation was convinced that the proposed amendments would simplify procedures,

enhance efficiency, and bring significant benefits to the users. The Delegation looked forward to continuing discussions on the proposed amendments to Rules 9 to 12 of the Common Regulations at the next session of the Working Group and invited the Secretariat to prepare a document providing elements for reflection and possible options for future work. The Delegation of the Czech Republic also underscored the importance of allocating adequate resources, human and financial, to the Lisbon Registry to manage new applications and provide technical assistance and capacity building support to WIPO Members, thereby promoting the Lisbon System and accommodating the needs of a growing membership. The Delegation expressed the view that the Lisbon System held a firm and well-established place among WIPO's IP systems, offering effective protection for products closely linked to specific regions of Member States, while also promoting their unique characteristics and value. In that sense, the Delegation emphasized that the Lisbon System not only contributed to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and traditional crafts, but also supported the development of tourism, strengthened regional identity, and brought economic benefits to local communities.

17. The Delegation of Portugal supported the proposed amendments to the Common Regulations and their entry into force in July 2026. The Delegation also welcomed the increase in Lisbon Union members that reflected the importance of the Lisbon System, making it increasingly relevant that sufficient human and financial resources be allocated to the System to ensure its functioning. The Delegation reiterated its commitment to actively contribute to improving the System and ensure its effective operation.

18. The Delegation of the United States of America raised its long-standing concern with the chronic and increasing deficit of the Lisbon Union as well as the proposed increased budget for the next biennium. The Delegation reiterated that the Lisbon System had significant negative ramifications for businesses worldwide, including small businesses and new market entrants that depended on the use of common names, as well as the integrity of established trademarks to market and sell their products globally. The Delegation stated that, by providing for the protection of geographical indications for a wide range of products without sufficient protection for users of common names or for prior trademark holders, the Lisbon System was hindering market access for stakeholders from the United States of America and other WIPO member countries. The lack of safeguards was diminishing sales opportunities, erecting trade barriers and eroding trademark rights in countries that were blocking the use of common commercial names. The Delegation underscored that the Lisbon System was running a chronic deficit that was expected to grow significantly under the proposed budget for the next biennium. The Delegation was of the view that the continuing deficit was driven and perpetuated by the Lisbon Union members' failure to adhere to their treaty obligations to make the System financially sustainable. Upon recalling that Member States should be held accountable for their treaty obligations, the Delegation reiterated its serious concerns that fees paid to other WIPO Global IP Systems, particularly the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and Madrid Systems, continued to be diverted to subsidize the Lisbon System. The Delegation considered that fairness and user expectation dictated that this should not occur.

19. Following the development of the Lisbon System in terms of both membership and number of transactions, the Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea emphasized the need for timely amendments to the Common Regulations. Referring to the sixth session of the Working Group held in March, the Delegation recalled that a new electronic interface had been made available to the Competent Authorities of the Contracting Parties to the Lisbon System and that the amount of fees to be paid had been increased. The Delegation was of the view that the list of modifications that could be recorded in the International Register would expand and that there was a possibility that Contracting Parties might notify an increasing number of refusals if they were not able to ensure protection following modifications to registered appellations of origin or geographical indications. The Delegation welcomed further discussions to resolve those issues in future meetings of the Working Group.

20. The Delegation of Kazakhstan stressed the importance of having an international system for the protection of geographical indications and appellations of origin. The Delegation also noted the significant progress made in recent years, since the number of applications for the registration of geographical indications had increased from five in 2023 to a significantly higher number, which also showed the growth of the System and more uptake by regional and national producers. The Delegation thanked WIPO for providing advisory support in developing national geographical indication systems and expressed interest in further collaboration and accession to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement.

21. The Delegation of France aligned itself with the declaration made by the European Union and supported the proposed modifications to the Common Regulations proposed by the Working Group. Referring to previous declarations made during the Program and Budget Committee (PBC) and under agenda item 11 of the present WIPO Assemblies, the Delegation recalled that the Assembly of the Lisbon Union was not the proper forum to discuss budget matters. The Delegation expressed the view that geographical indications and appellations of origin supported local and regional development and the preservation of traditional know-how. The Delegation went on to say that it supported the organization of activities related to the Lisbon System, including regular updates on the new IT platform for the Lisbon System and progress reports as that had also facilitated the exchange of information between Lisbon members. Lastly, the Delegation commended the Secretariat for organizing the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement.

22. The Delegation of Côte d'Ivoire reaffirmed its full support to the Lisbon Union for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration. The Delegation expressed its appreciation to the Director of the Lisbon Registry for her continued efforts to ensure the effective functioning of the Lisbon System. The Delegation emphasized that since its entry into force, the Lisbon System had played a key role in promoting traditional knowledge and ancestral know-how, strengthening consumer confidence, and contributing to the economic development of production regions, particularly in developing countries and small economies. Recognizing the importance of preserving cultural heritage, fostering rural development, and combating counterfeiting, the Delegation encouraged Member States to consider acceding to the Lisbon Union. The Delegation also welcomed the ongoing efforts to harmonize formal requirements and simplify application procedures, while ensuring the quality of substantive examination within the Lisbon System. In conclusion, the Delegation expressed its support for statements calling for the reinforcement of human and financial resources allocated to the Lisbon System, with a view to enhancing its overall efficiency and impact.

23. The Assembly of the Lisbon Union:

(i) took note of the "Report on the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System" (document LI/A/42/1), and

(ii) adopted the amendments to the Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications, as set out in the Annex to document LI/A/42/2, with July 1, 2026, as their date of entry into force.

24. For ease of reference, the Annex to this report contains the amendments to the Common Regulations and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, as adopted by the decision set out in paragraph 23(ii) above.

[Annex follows]

Common Regulations under the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and Their International Registration and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications

as in force on July 1, 2026

[...]

Chapter I Introductory and General Provisions

Rule 1 Definitions

(1) *[Abbreviated Expressions]* For the purposes of these Regulations, unless expressly stated otherwise:

[...]

- (vi) “Official Form” means a form drawn up by the International Bureau or an electronic interface made available by the International Bureau on the website of the Organization;

[...]

Chapter II Application and International Registration

[...]

Rule 8 Fees

[...]

(9) *[Change in the Amount of the Fees]*

- (a) Where the amount of the fees payable in respect of an application referred to in Rule 5(2)(c) is changed between the date of filing the application and the date of payment, the fee that was valid on the first date shall be applicable.
- (b) Where the amount of the fees payable in respect of a request for entry of a modification referred to in Rule 15(2)(a) is changed between the date on which the request was presented and the date of payment, the fee that was valid on the first date shall be applicable.
- (c) Where the amount of the fees to be paid in relation to a modification or as an individual fee, in the case referred to in Rule 7(4)(a) and (d), is changed between the date of entry into force of the Geneva Act with respect to a State that is party to the 1967 Act and the date of payment, the fee that was valid on the first date shall be applicable.

- (d) Where the amount of any fee other than the fees referred to in subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) is changed, the amount valid on the date on which the fee was received by the International Bureau shall be applicable.

[...]

Rule 15

Modifications

- (1) *[Permissible Modifications]* The following modifications may be recorded in the International Register:

[...]

- (vii) a modification relating to the appellation of origin or the geographical indication;
- (viii) a modification relating to the good or goods to which the appellation of origin or the geographical indication applies;
- (ix) a modification relating to the particulars as referred to in Rule 5(3)(a) or the information referred to in Rule 5(6)(a)(vi).

[...]

- (5) *[Application of Rules 9 to 12]*

- (a) Where the modification concerns the appellation of origin or the geographical indication, or the good or goods to which the appellation of origin or the geographical indication applies, the Competent Authority of a Contracting Party has the right to declare that it cannot ensure the protection of the appellation of origin or geographical indication because of the modification. The declaration shall be addressed to the International Bureau by such Competent Authority within a period of one year from the date of receipt of the notification by the International Bureau of the modification. Rules 9 to 12 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
- (b) Where the modification concerns the particulars as referred to in Rule 5(3)(a), the Competent Authority of a Contracting Party that has made the notification under Rule 5(3), has the right to declare that it cannot ensure the protection of the appellation of origin or geographical indication because of the modification. The declaration shall be addressed to the International Bureau by such Competent Authority within a period of one year from the date of receipt of the notification by the International Bureau of the modification. Rules 9 to 12 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

[...]

Rule 18

Corrections Made to the International Register

[...]

- (4) *[Application of Rules 9 to 12]* Where the correction of an error concerns the appellation of origin or the geographical indication, or the good or goods to which the appellation of origin or the geographical indication applies, the Competent Authority of a Contracting Party has the right to declare that it cannot ensure the protection of the appellation of origin or geographical

indication because of the correction. The declaration shall be addressed to the International Bureau by such Competent Authority within a period of one year from the date of receipt of the notification by the International Bureau of the correction. Rules 9 to 12 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

[...]

[End of Annex and of document]