

DG **Barba** of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines,
further colleagues from IPOPHL,
my colleagues from the International Bureau, and, in particular,
all remotely participating delegates to the 14th session of the PCT WG,

I welcome you to this side event to the WG session and hope that you are safe and healthy in these challenging times of the pandemic, which unfortunately forces us once more to organize the meeting of the WG as a hybrid meeting with mostly remote attendance.

The purpose of this side event is to inform us of the progress made towards the development of tools for the competency-based management and coordination of the training of patent examiners. I am particularly pleased that we shall have, as one item of the agenda, a report from IPOPHL on their development of a local site of a Learning Management System. I would therefore like to give the floor first to DG **Barba** of IPOPHL before I shall add a few further words. His message was recorded because of the time difference to the Philippines.

[recording to be played]

I thank DG Barba for his message.

In addition to what was just said, I am pleased to hear from our colleagues of the ASPAC division that a request by IPOPHL for further technical training on Moodle by a commercial Moodle partner is in the approval process. We trust that this will further enhance the technical skills of IPOPHL to develop and run such LMS. And, of course, we look forward to IPOPHL's future sharing their expertise and experience with other Offices, as DG Barba just indicated.

We share the view of DG Barba that development of training infrastructures owned by the offices themselves will increase the sustainability and quality of training. Proper training management may be perceived as part of quality management, because comprehensive development of search and examination skills is at the core of assuring the quality of patents. We therefore appreciate the technical assistance provided by various major Offices to selected medium size Asian Offices, which commenced with the RPET (Regional Patent Examiner Training) and RPEM (Regional Patent Examiner Mentoring) projects of IP Australia, which, I assume, you are familiar with since they have been presented at an earlier similar side event and a plenary session of the WG.

The developments undertaken by WIPO aimed at supporting those projects, and I am pleased to see that the collaboration of WIPO and IPOPHL in this context eventually catalysed the interest of IPOPHL for developing and maintaining a learning management system configured according to IPOPHL needs.

We note that the development of those training frameworks is still under way and we are sure that they will certainly improve with each new round of new recruits trained by using them. One may wonder, whether other Offices which do not yet deploy such frameworks, should also consider the implementation of similar sustainable training frameworks. There is certainly no one fits all solution because maintaining a framework requires resources. So, there may be space, for example, for sharing experiences, for regional cooperation, or for tailored support for managing the training of examiners. In particular, a sustainable support for smaller offices is not yet in sight; they may not have a similar recurring training need but certainly a similar one for comprehensive capacity building adapted to their examination policy.

The updates on the development of training management tools presented at this side event are meant to inform those discussions of the plenary session of the WG next week. Therefore, the presentations of the side event will be recorded and the recordings will be made available on the respective website of the meeting prior to the meeting to permit their viewing by delegations which cannot attend this side event.