

**NIGERIA'S OPENING STATEMENT AT THE 44TH SESSION OF THE
INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON GENETIC RESOURCES,
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, AND FOLKLORE (IGC), SEPTEMBER
12-SEPTEMBER 16, 2022**

Chairperson,

Nigeria aligns with the statement delivered by the delegation of Algeria on behalf of the Africa Group, and welcomes you and the Vice Chairs to IGC 44. This delegation also extends appreciation and courtesies to the Secretariat, especially the WIPO TK Division for their strident effort in preparation for the information sessions, as well as other engagements preceding the formal resumption of negotiations. We are confident in your collective abilities to guide the deliberations of the Committee.

2. Our delegation notes with a sense of optimism the progress at the last General Assembly, during which Member States agreed to hold Diplomatic Conference on the Genetic Resources text, no later than 2024. That marks a breakthrough in over two decades of work at IGC. Committed to the unfolding process toward that Diplomatic Conference, the Nigerian delegation pledges its determination to work with Member States toward narrowing gaps and making similar progress on the texts on Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expression (TCE).

3. Nigeria cannot overemphasize the importance of the voice of demandeurs, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities all over the world, especially in the African region on TK and TCEs. TK and TCEs encompass economic, moral rights and variegated interests of peoples on the margins. Their effective protection enhances cultural integrity, economic prosperity and sanctity of a people's identity and worldviews in furtherance of a fair, inclusive, just and sustainability societies.

4. We note that a lot of progress has been made as evident in **WIPO/GRTKF/IC/44/4** (Protection of Traditional Knowledge: Draft Articles) and **WIPO/GRTKF/IC/44/5** (Protection of Traditional Cultural Expressions: Draft Articles). Our task is clear. We have gathered to offer every positive effort to resolve unresolved and cross-cutting issues and to build on the momentum set at the WIPO July 2022 General Assembly. We look forward to a pragmatic negotiation methodology that would enable us to discharge our mandate collectively and efficiently without deviation or distractions.

5. Chairperson, permit me to reiterate our readiness to collaborate with all delegations and stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for concrete progress on TK and TCEs in the coming days.

I thank you.