

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

At the outset, we would like to thank you for your leadership and for preparing the proposed working methodology for this session. We also wish to express our appreciation to the WIPO Secretariat for the excellent organization of the meeting and for the comprehensive documentation prepared for our consideration.

Armenia remains firmly committed to the mandate of the Intergovernmental Committee and supports continued constructive, inclusive and Member State-driven negotiations towards achieving a balanced and effective international legal framework for the protection of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions.

As a country with a history spanning thousands of years, Armenia is the custodian of a rich and diverse cultural and scientific heritage. Over centuries, our people have developed, preserved and transmitted from generation to generation an invaluable body of traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, closely connected with our cultural identity and natural environment.

Armenia's mountainous geography and unique biodiversity, including endemic species, have contributed to the development of traditional knowledge and practices in areas such as traditional medicine, agriculture, winemaking and craftsmanship.

We believe that the rich cultural heritage, traditional knowledge systems and cultural expressions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities deserve appropriate recognition and protection within the intellectual property system. At the same time, it is important for the Committee to continue its work in a pragmatic and balanced manner, focusing on narrowing existing gaps and building common understanding on key issues.

Armenia attaches particular importance to advancing discussions on the objectives and scope of protection, beneficiaries, and the appropriate balance between the protection of Traditional Knowledge and the broader public interest.

Finally, Armenia would also like to emphasize the importance of capacity building and technical assistance, particularly for countries in special situations. Strengthening national capacities in the field of intellectual property is essential to enable developing countries and countries in special situations to effectively protect, preserve and promote their traditional knowledge.

Therefore, we call upon WIPO to continue and further strengthen practical, needs-based capacity-building programmes, including the sharing of expertise, best practices and technical tools, taking into account the specific challenges faced by countries in special situations.

Such support is important not only for effective implementation of international IP standards, but also for enabling communities, creators and SMEs to benefit from intellectual property as a tool for innovation, cultural preservation and sustainable economic development.

We look forward to engaging constructively in the work of this session and contributing to tangible and meaningful progress in the Committee's work.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.