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WORLD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
ORGANIZATION

WILD/1/2 PROV.
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH
DATE: MAY 13, 2025

WIPO ICT Leadership Dialogue (WILD)

First Session
Geneva, April 14 to 16, 2025

DRAFT SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

prepared by the Secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. The first session of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) ICT Leadership Dialogue (WILD) was held onsite at WIPO Headquarters in Geneva from April 14 to 16, 2025.

2. The following Member States of WIPO were represented at the session: Albania; Algeria; Australia; Azerbaijan; Brazil; Burkina Faso; Canada; Chile; China; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Ghana; Greece; Guatemala; Hungary; Iceland; India; Indonesia; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Morocco; Norway; Paraguay; Peru; Portugal; Republic of Korea; Republic of Moldova; Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Serbia; Singapore; Spain; Switzerland; Trinidad and Tobago; Uganda; United Kingdom; United States of America; Uzbekistan; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); and Zambia (46).

3. The following intergovernmental organizations also took part in the session: African Intellectual Property Organization; Benelux Organization for Intellectual Property; Eurasian Patent Organization; European Patent Organization; and the European Union (5).

4. The list of participants is available at: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=86271.

Opening of the session

5. The first session was opened by the Director General, Daren Tang, who emphasized the importance of the digital transformation of intellectual property (IP) offices worldwide and addressed the challenges and opportunities relating to the integration of digital tools and emerging technologies to boost efficiency and engagement. He said that the idea behind holding WILD was to promote collaboration and knowledge-sharing among information and communication technology (ICT) leaders and senior professionals, and thereby to foster deeper cohesion in the global IP community.

Officers and presentations

6. Ms. Sian-Nia Davies (United Kingdom) acted as Chair. Mr. Young-Woo Yun (WIPO) acted as Secretary to WILD.

7. The session program, presentations and other related documents are available at: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/details.jsp?meeting_id=86271.

DISCUSSIONS

8. The inaugural session of WILD brought together ICT leaders and senior management officials from around the world to explore the rapidly evolving ICT landscape and its impact on IP business strategies and service delivery.

9. Grouped under 11 themes, 35 presentations were delivered. Topics included digital transformation, data governance, cyber resiliency, harnessing emerging technologies and global digital collaboration. Participants exchanged valuable insights and best practices and discussed next steps for working together to create a digitally empowered, inclusive and resilient IP ecosystem.

Day 1: Setting the stage for digital transformation

10. Discussions were based on 15 presentations on themes 1 to 5.

11. Participants focused on the evolution of the ICT landscape and its impact on the business and service delivery of IP offices. Discussions covered digital strategy, technology trends, emerging technologies, data governance, cyber resiliency and opportunities for working together. The presentations included:

(a) Digitalization journey through automated decision-making using artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and the importance of responsible governance;

(b) Effective adoption of cloud computing and containerization, with emphasis on robust security frameworks (such as zero trust), managing increased costs and security concerns, and the need to consider multi-cloud strategies for mitigating geopolitical risks and to ensure flexibility in cloud services;

(c) Collaboration between business and IT departments to achieve digital transformation;

(d) A hybrid approach for developing countries, combining off-the-shelf products with internal development to improve operational efficiency;

(e) A strategic plan for managing cybersecurity risks through robust architecture, data protection and user awareness, with incident response plans and post-incident assessments;

(f) Comprehensive security architecture audits and continuous improvement through simulation exercises;

(g) A balanced approach to technology adoption, taking small steps and focusing on elementary knowledge before advancing to complex AI models;

(h) Working more closely with businesses to improve innovative services and operational efficiency in IP offices; and

(i) Sharing knowledge and experiences to address common challenges and enhance international cooperation.

12. Participants identified key challenges and opportunities for IP offices in incorporating emerging technologies, particularly AI, to update operations and enhance service delivery. They discussed the importance of a comprehensive digital business strategy, effective data use and governance, and the need for cyber resiliency to safeguard sensitive IP data and maintain operational integrity. Best practices and case studies were shared to illustrate successful digital solutions and strategies worldwide.

13. Participants shared their thoughts on the importance of aligning technology adoption with business needs, building resilience and fostering international collaboration. They underscored the need for strategic planning, continuous learning and improvement, and adaptation to emerging technologies in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of IP operations, all of which would provide material for future discussions and initiatives.

Day 2: Harnessing emerging technologies for IP

14. Discussions were based on 12 presentations on themes 6 to 8.

15. Participants focused on how emerging technologies like AI and blockchain are transforming the global IP landscape and the impact they are having on IP ecosystems. Participants also explored potential areas for collaboration to improve efficiency and foster innovation in IP ecosystems.

16. Speakers shared insights into the impact of emerging technologies on their respective IP offices, including:

(a) The use of AI-powered tools for tasks such as classification, machine translation and search functionalities, although the complete automation of substantive examination remains a future goal;

(b) Emphasis on AI not as a goal but as a supportive tool, which would not be a replacement for human resources, with a focus on quality and efficiency improvements; and

(c) The use of blockchain applications to enhance trust and efficiency in external interactions, particularly in IP rights management.

17. Participants discussed practical strategies for effective AI adoption and associated challenges, with emphasis on the following key points:

(a) Cost and resource management: The high cost of AI implementation and the need for skilled personnel are key challenges. Solutions include leveraging open-source tools, working with the private sector, in particular with startups, and seeking government funding;

(b) Change management: Effective communication and training are crucial to managing the transition and alleviating staff concerns about job displacement;

(c) Data quality and integration: Ensuring high-quality data and seamless integration with existing systems is essential for maximizing AI benefits; and

(d) Cross-functional collaboration: It is important to involve stakeholders from different business units, legal experts and customers in the AI implementation process in order to ensure that solutions are comprehensive and effective.

18. In their discussions, participants underscored the importance of international cooperation in advancing AI technologies in IP offices. Key points included:

(a) Sharing knowledge and resources among IP offices to avoid duplication of effort and to foster collective growth;

(b) Establishing collaborative frameworks to co-develop AI tools and explore new capabilities; and

(c) Leveraging existing AI models and technologies to reduce costs and accelerate implementation.

19. The participating ICT leaders highlighted several areas for future focus:

(a) Promising areas for AI: Continued exploration of large language models (LLMs) and their potential to support substantive examination processes;

(b) Managing expectations: Balancing the promise of AI with realistic goals and maintaining transparency with stakeholders about its capabilities and limitations;

(c) Skills development: Investing in the training and upskilling of staff members to prepare them for new roles and responsibilities in an AI-driven environment; and

(d) Regulatory and ethical considerations: Ensuring that the use of AI is in line with legal standards and ethical guidelines in order to maintain public trust and confidence.

20. Participants agreed on the need for ongoing collaboration, investment in training and a balanced approach to technology adoption in order to harness the full benefits of AI while addressing its challenges.

Day 3: Strengthening global collaboration and digital harmonization

21. Discussions were based on eight presentations on themes 9 to 11.

22. Participants focused on global collaboration to advance IP information systems and digital initiatives. Discussions covered enhanced interoperability with WIPO Standards, global data exchange, bridging the digital divide and actionable steps for sustainable digital transformation.

23. Speakers highlighted the numerous advantages of achieving interoperability and consistency in IP information systems. Key benefits included:

(a) Cost efficiency: A unified system allows for a single support and maintenance team, reducing the duplication and costs associated with managing multiple systems;

(b) Improved user experience: Harmonized systems provide a consistent experience for clients and staff members, fostering a cohesive operational environment;

(c) Enhanced decision-making: High-quality data enable better analysis and informed decisions, promoting efficiency and accuracy in IP management; and

(d) Increased productivity: Streamlined processes minimize redundant work, increasing overall productivity.

24. Despite the clear benefits, several speakers acknowledged that challenges remain for digital harmonization and in implementing WIPO Standards:

(a) Limited resources: Financial and human resources are often constrained, making it difficult to undertake extensive modernization projects;

(b) Legacy systems: Older systems may not be compatible with new WIPO Standards, requiring significant investment and effort to upgrade;

(c) Legal and security barriers: Variances in national laws and security protocols can hinder the adoption of standardized practices; and

(d) Change management: Managing the cultural and operational changes associated with digital transformation can lead to change fatigue among staff members.

25. The discussion also focused on the obstacles to effective global IP data exchange:

(a) Technological incompatibilities: Different countries use varying systems and standards, which complicates data sharing;

(b) Data quality and security: Ensuring the secure transfer of high-quality data is crucial for reliable global cooperation;

(c) Legal frameworks: Differences in legal requirements and data protection laws pose significant challenges; and

(d) Resource limitations: Smaller offices may lack the necessary infrastructure and expertise for digitization and effective data exchange.

26. To bridge the digital gaps and promote cooperation, the following strategies were proposed:

(a) National-level initiatives: Investing in digital infrastructure, aligning regulatory frameworks and fostering public-private partnerships can drive modernization;

(b) International collaboration: the International Bureau of WIPO and advanced IP offices can support less advanced offices with modular tools, training and funding;

(c) Capacity-building: Developing local expertise through targeted training programs and knowledge sharing is essential for sustainable progress; and

(d) Utilizing open-source solutions: Open-source tools and community-driven development can offer flexible, cost-effective solutions for IP offices.

27. Participants underscored the importance of working together and making a joint effort to advance the digital transformation of IP information systems. They concluded that, by addressing the challenges and leveraging the strategies discussed, IP offices could enhance interoperability, data quality and global cooperation, ultimately contributing to a more efficient and integrated IP ecosystem.

Next steps: Key actions to be undertaken by IP offices and WIPO

28. The Secretariat reported on the results of the pre-meeting survey, which was conducted from January 24 to April 4, 2025, to gather insights into the priorities of IP offices, including with regard to the use of emerging technologies, the challenges facing them and perceived opportunities, and digital collaboration among IP offices. Forty-two Member States and three intergovernmental organizations participated in the survey. The report is available at: https://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=644543.

29. In the light of the survey results and the discussions held over the three days of the inaugural session of WILD, participants discussed next steps:

(a) Establishing a network of chief information and chief technology officers (CIO/CTO) among IP offices;

(b) Setting up a forum to share information about ICT services and solution portfolios;

(c) Organizing knowledge-sharing workshops or training sessions to build capacities;

(d) Collaborating on a pilot project(s) to utilize emerging technologies, for instance an event on tools, such as a hackathon or code fest, for IP business and services; and

(e) Establishing a focus group(s) for collaboration on key areas of interest: an AI tools group was suggested as the first such group.

30. Participants noted that active participation would be crucial to the success of those initiatives. They agreed that the Secretariat should circulate the next step actions proposed in paragraph 29 for further consideration and feedback over the two months following the inaugural session of WILD.

31. Many participants acknowledged that WIPO could play a key role in areas of ICT, in particular by:

- Fostering and coordinating digital collaboration among IP offices in order to reduce the duplication of effort in developing and operating IT solutions;
- Match-making in the light of the needs and ICT maturity level of IP offices;
- Providing guidance to IP offices on the digital transformation landscape; and
- Holding knowledge-sharing workshops and training sessions, including on WIPO Standards.

32. Several participants suggested discussion items for the next session of WILD, including:

- ICT maturity index for IP offices;
- Private sector presentations on AI-powered tools; and
- Breakout sessions for more interactive discussions.

33. The meeting concluded with a reminder that digital transformation is an ongoing journey. Participants were encouraged to continue exchanging ideas and forging partnerships to advance the global IP ecosystem.

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