

**ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF
THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
FIFTY SIXTH SERIES OF MEETINGS**

2 October 2017
GENEVA

GENERAL STATEMENT - AUSTRALIA

Australia thanks the Director General and the Secretariat for their excellent work over this year and in preparing for this General Assembly, and offers its support to the Chair and Vice Chairs in making these assemblies a success.

In a world where economies are becoming more knowledge-based, intellectual property and other intangible outputs are increasingly important. Innovation can drive new sources of economic growth and prosperity. WIPO, and we as Member States, have a vital part to play in ensuring that the international IP system can adapt to meet the challenges of today and seize the opportunities of tomorrow.

We encourage Member States to focus on collaboration, including across regions, to progress our shared interests in areas where advancing the normative agenda could really add value to global frameworks to promote trade, investment and technology diffusion. We urge members to take a constructive approach in navigating the differences that remain. We note the improved functioning of meetings at WIPO has led to more efficient meetings with stronger outcomes that benefit all users of the IP system.

Australia welcomes continued constructive engagement from Member States to develop a future work plan and mandate for the Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions. The subjects being discussed are of central importance to Indigenous Peoples, including Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and the maintenance of their

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continuing culture and identity. In recognition of this importance, Australia this year made a further contribution to the WIPO Voluntary Fund to ensure Indigenous Peoples' perspectives are delivered in person and contribute directly to the future discussions in this Committee. Australia is encouraged by the recommendation from the committee that these discussions continue and recognises that real progress is achievable through the continued goodwill and cooperation of Member States.

Australia is also committed to good governance at WIPO including effective oversight and ethics functions. Australia is committed to ensuring that WIPO's policies for the protection against retaliation are effective, efficient and fair and reflect UN best practices.

Australia maintains its strong support for ongoing improvements to the global IP system, particularly to the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid Protocol. We congratulate Jordan for its recent accession to the PCT; and the Australian Patent Office looks forward to acting as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority for nationals and residents of Jordan.

We extend our congratulations to Thailand for its accession to the Madrid Protocol; and we are delighted that the Madrid System will soon reach the milestone of 100 members. Australia also welcomes the accessions to the 'Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization' made this year by the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and welcome them both to the WIPO family.

In our view, administrative cooperation is an excellent platform for delivering a more streamlined and effective global IP system. In this context, Australia has this year made its dossier information available on WIPO CASE. We see the availability of

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such information as important in increasing the transparency of the patent system and helping the capability of other offices in benefiting from each other's search reports. We encourage more offices to make their dossier information available for the benefit of Offices and applicants alike.

We are pleased to report that the second iteration of the Australian WIPO Funds in Trust (FIT 2), operating from 2016, has already begun to record some key achievements. These achievements include: the development of national IP strategies for countries including Laos, Kiribati, Niue and Vietnam; contributing to WIPO's Accessible Books Consortium (ABC); and tackling neglected tropical diseases, by supporting WIPO Re:Search in partnership with the Bio Ventures for Global Health to offer fellowship placements to top scientists in the field. The Australian WIPO FIT is helping to deliver sustainable results for building IP capacity and development needs. A side event showcasing the main themes and positive outcomes of the Australian WIPO FIT will be held during the 2017 general assemblies.

Australia remains committed to working with WIPO member states to ensure the international IP system serves our innovators, creators and businesses and promotes global growth and development.