



## **COUNTRY STATEMENT OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA**

At the 64<sup>th</sup> Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of  
WIPO

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**STATEMENT OF MS. MAUREEN HYMAN, MINISTRY OF  
LEGAL AFFAIRS OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA AT THE  
SIXTY FOURTH SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF  
MEMBER STATES OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
ORGANIZATION**

Antigua & Barbuda is pleased to contribute to the discussions and work performed within the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) General Assemblies. I am Maureen Hyman Payne, from the Ministry of Legal Affairs and with me is Ms. Ricki Camacho, Registrar, of the Antigua and Barbuda Intellectual Property and Commerce Office (ABIPCO).

Madam President, Antigua & Barbuda thanks you for your work as Chair. We wish to thank the Director General and the Secretariat for their work done for these General Assemblies. We look forward to fruitful discussions and beneficial outcomes. We would also like to express support to the statement made by GRULAC on behalf of Latin American and the Caribbean States.

Antigua and Barbuda remains unwavering in our aspirations and commitment to create a modern Intellectual Property regime. In this regard, our delegation expresses appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Darren Tang, for the administrative and technical support for ensuring success at all levels. Antigua & Barbuda pledges to continue to collaborate with WIPO on issues and platforms of common interests and anticipate continued support from WIPO's various sectors in our country's ongoing endeavours.

Antigua & Barbuda remains cognizant of the importance of Intellectual Property (IP) to our national development plans and goals. In this regard,

our Government has embarked on a legislative and administrative agenda designed to ensure that our laws governing IP keep abreast with ongoing global developments in the sector. As a result, we have commenced the process of reviewing and reforming our Trade Marks Act, Copyright Act, Geographical Indications Act and The Protection of New Plant Varieties' Bill. In the realm of Copyright, we hope to reform legislation in 2023 that will improve areas identified in our current Act, improve our collective management system and institute regulations of use. In this endeavour, we thank WIPO for its continued and palpable support. In addition, we wish to thank the Madrid Legal Division for its assistance as we work to improve our services.

Moreover, in tandem with our review and reform process, we are committed and supportive of the work being done at WIPO's Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional knowledge, and Folklore. We look forward to the successful conclusion of a Treaty on Genetic Resources and the continuation of work on Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions leading to a successful international instrument on those subjects.

As a small island developing state, we continue to explore how our Creative Industries can better contribute to our Gross Domestic Product. Our ongoing public awareness campaign has resulted in our people's

heightened interest in, increased knowledge of and their desire to benefit from IP rights. This has been gradually realized through undertaking national initiatives such as trainings, seminars, and competitions that emphasize the impact of IPRs on innovation and creativity.

A national initiative to note, is our ongoing Collective Trademark project in partnership with WIPO for the enhancement of Antigua and Barbuda's local apiary industry. A first of its kind in our twin island state, this project seeks to protect honey producers of authentic Barbuda Logwood Honey and the Antigua Mutli-floral honey. Through this, we hope to not only enhance the degree of protection for our local honey producers but to initiate the work of creating a more robust Geographical Indications system that will rebound in tangible benefits for the industry as a whole. We are grateful for WIPO's support, particularly that of the Department for Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications, Brands and Designs Sector within this endeavour.

Moreover, ABIPCO's IP Informational Open Day, the Office's Primary and Secondary School Art Competition and our most recent training hosted by WIPO, entitled the "Online Webinar on Trademark Examination Training" are notable initiatives that have enhanced the knowledge and understanding of IPRs within our office and among the public.

In addition to the Office's public awareness campaign, we have maintained regional partnerships that have yielded many operational benefits to the People of Antigua and Barbuda. By this, we are grateful for the horizontal cooperation maintained with the Trinidad and Tobago Intellectual Property Office in patent examination.

As our twin-island state continues to champion IP, we remain consistent in working with many governmental entities to ensure a greater appreciation and understanding of IP throughout all sectors. Through these means, we have fostered a dynamic relationship with the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Creative Industries in the work of informing the Antigua and Barbuda Cultural Information System. The information system, which is a first of its kind for the Department of Culture, is a portal that aims to centralise and improve the efficacy of information sharing and exchange between cultural and creative actors, stakeholders, and the general population. The Antigua & Barbuda Cultural Information System was created as an output of the country's inaugural national cultural/creative industries mapping project to which was heavily supported by UNESCO's International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD).

In the realm of technological development, our government has also embarked on the re-design of the Office's website, which will be launched shortly. This re-design seeks to ensure current information and user-

friendly applications for the public's awareness of IPRs. As electronic filing constitutes an important factor in the Ease of Doing Business, we are actively improving our access to online registrations in our twin-island state. To this end, we hope to move to a cloud solution to offer electronic services, especially as we note the advancement of technology. This is particularly important as Generative Artificial Intelligence tools highlight our changing times and the need for institutions to harness its benefits while implementing policy in protection of the public.

Furthermore, the Antigua and Barbuda Intellectual Property and Commerce Office, fully endorsed and supported the World Intellectual Property Day 2023 theme: Women and IP: Accelerating Innovation and Creativity. The Office hosted an exciting online campaign highlighting the innovative and creative spirit of our people. This included features from our World IP Day, Women's Gallery nominees, our staff, and prominent women within the intellectual property sphere. Our Office greatly supports gender parity in all areas including the work being done within WIPO.

The Office has recently begun to publish our third video series entitled "Conversations on Intellectual Property" which provides an avenue for local entrepreneurs to share about their business and their use of IPRs. Eight extra-ordinary women were interviewed representing a wide range

of areas such as visual arts, plant protection, business consulting services and fashion.

In May 2022, the Office in partnership with Splash Robo Club organized a robotics and programming exercise for children between the ages of 9-11. This exercise proved to be an immense success to which exposed the demand among children to engage in innovative activities within the areas of Science, Technology, Arts, Engineering and Mathematics. In meeting this demand, we have initiated a partnership with the United States Embassy in Barbados for the execution of a 2024 summer programme.

Given the range of national initiatives, varying stages of IP development, and the growth and interest in IP generally in Antigua and Barbuda as well as the wider Caribbean, we wish to thank the LAC Bureau and Caribbean Section for all the continued support and the work that they do for us in the region. We congratulate the Unit for the Memoranda of Understanding signed with our two regional Secretariats and we believe the expansion of the Unit, to clarify and further meet the growing needs and expectations of the collective region would be beneficial. We look forward to the upcoming meeting of the Ministers from our region so that they can provide policy guidance for our collaboration with WIPO over the next few years.

Finally, Antigua and Barbuda commends the work of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights, the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents as well as the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Madrid, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications and the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

Thank you.