

ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO
Fifty-Fourth Series of Meetings
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Agenda item 5: GENERAL STATEMENTS

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

The Delegation of Croatia notes with appreciation WIPO's efforts and activities in strengthening the global system of intellectual property legal protection and in providing the forum for an in-depth dialog regarding the development of various fields of intellectual property system. This delegation welcomes significant efforts the WIPO is undertaking in providing effective functioning of the international IP registration and filing systems operated by the International Bureau with the continuously growing numbers of filings.

Croatia would also like to take this opportunity to convey our congratulations to Dr. Francis Gurry on his re-election and appointment to the second term as Director General of WIPO. Croatia is looking forward to cooperating effectively with the WIPO under Dr. Gurry's renewed leadership in the coming six years. We see this new term as a new opportunity to further develop models of cooperation between the WIPO and its Members States, having in mind particularities of different countries in diverse regions the world. Various modalities and diverse approach of promotion of different aspects of the WIPO activities might be considered in the light of specific requirements of a Member State.

In this context Croatia urges WIPO to update and modernize its current approach of cooperation with countries such as Croatia that have finalized the process of transition but are still experiencing certain problems and gaps in achieving a fully developed system of intellectual property protection. In fulfilling these gaps with the goal to reach the highest standards of intellectual property protection a "one-size-fits-all" model might not be the best choice. We believe that particularities of each system should be taken into account in planning and implementing cooperation activities between WIPO and its Members States, which will result in more efficient performance of rightly targeted and therefore fully successful activities. Furthermore, we consider that WIPO as an organization of all of its Member States should not limit cooperation activities with the Member States only to providing technical assistance in pursuing specific developmental goals, but should have a more open and flexible approach in promoting global intellectual property system.

Croatia considers WIPO's norm setting role a very important one. It is therefore that our delegation was very pleased to see the progress made in the last years, with the successful outcome of first the Beijing and then the Marrakech diplomatic conference, that resulted not only with the adoption of two significant international treaties but also showing collaboration and mutual understanding between the Member States in creating and maintaining a balanced and effective international intellectual property system. It is our great regret that this path of success was not followed in regard to the adoption of the treaty on industrial designs, for which we were hoping to be finalized this year. The regret is even stronger since the SCT has nearly completed its work on this treaty at its last session, and the outcome is more than mature enough for a diplomatic conference to be convened for the adoption of the treaty. We are yet hoping that the single outstanding issue for only a few delegations still remaining to be resolved will, in the spirit of multilateralism, find its way toward a compromise in the days ahead of us, so we can finally take the decision to convene the Diplomatic Conference for the

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adoption of the Design Law Treaty. We hope to see such constructive approach and are committed to accomplish the progress in the work of all WIPO Committees.

Since delivering training and education on different aspects of intellectual property system is in our delegation's view an important segment of strengthening intellectual property system, we would like to highlight importance of appropriate programs and activities of the WIPO Academy. While we support setting the appropriate standards in this respect, we urge for cautious approach in discontinuing certain activities that have proven to be a success. In this line we would like to see continuation of work of the WIPO IP Summer School in Croatia, in the well-known city of Dubrovnik, in cooperation with the WIPO, although through an improved and more efficient model of cooperation.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that our delegation believes that proper enforcement of intellectual property rights and success in combating the problem of counterfeiting and piracy considerably depends on the level of public awareness on the protection of IPR. Croatia therefore continuously undertakes raising awareness activities regarding the recognition of and respect for intellectual property rights, and has a positive record of cooperation among the enforcement bodies and other stakeholders, particularly the ones from the private sector, through the established coordination mechanism at the national level. We are therefore ready to share our experiences not only with the countries in the region but also globally.

At the outset of this year's series of the WIPO Assemblies, the Delegation of Croatia would like to wish to all Members States to endorse a spirit of constructive cooperation and to conduct a productive meeting.