

**55th Assembly of the Member States of WIPO
General Statement of the Republic of the Philippines**

(Mr.) Chair, Director General Francis Gurry, Distinguished Delegates, on behalf of the Philippine government, we are pleased to join the 55th Assembly of the WIPO Member States, and we look forward to a productive gathering this year.

As the Philippines continues its vigorous and steady journey toward economic recovery, our focus on innovation as a driver of inclusive and sustainable economic growth has also intensified. To sustain this culture of innovation, the Philippines has done its share in scaling up the capacity needed to launch the country as the next innovation hub in the region.

We are pleased to inform this august assembly that the Philippines now has 85 strong and active members of the Innovation and Technology Support Offices (ITSO) network, and we are on track in giving assistance to them in the areas of IP creation, IP protection and IP utilization. In fact, many universities are now reaping tangible benefits as a result of this pioneering program.

For a developing country like the Philippines, we believe that we can explore innovation through the IP system by sustaining the capacity of these ITSO members and help them commercialize their intellectual properties by providing platforms and institutional infrastructure for IP commercialization and international cooperation.

We have several success stories to share on this program but what we would like to highlight is that through the IP system not only can we bring forth financial benefits for the inventors but we can also change people's lives through the employment that IP commercialization generates and the dignity it gives to the people benefited by said employment.

To complement our initiative on this area, we launched this year the IP Depot, our online marketplace and business-matching tool for homegrown IP assets, and in cooperation with our partners we also held last month our first Philippine Innovation Summit, an event intended to forge continuous partnership between the government, the academe and the industry. This initiative became more encouraging as the country moved up by 17 notches in the 2015 Global Innovation Index. Indeed, with the market and trade shifting now to Asia and the Pacific, the prospect of the Philippines becomes more promising.

In the field of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), we are delighted to share the positive results it has brought in the resolution of many IP disputes in the country. With a high acceptance rate of 62% and success rate of 43%, we can submit that this can be one good mechanism to address the challenges of IP enforcement in the 21st century.

On Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expression (GRTKTCE), we would like to report that we have made a positive development in the crafting of the joint administrative order with the National Committee on Indigenous People (NCIP) on the rules and regulations on IPR application and registration to ensure the protection of the Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices of our Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Communities, and accordingly prevent their misappropriation. We expect to finalize the same before the year ends, and we hope that in the international arena we can also positively move forward in ensuring protection of GRTKTCE.

On enforcement, we continue to blaze a trail in combatting counterfeiting and piracy. We have maintained a holistic approach in enforcement including the active participation of our judiciary. But more than the intensified IP enforcement operations, the Philippines has embarked on a strong education campaign to instill in the minds of the public, particularly the youth, the value and importance of IP. We believe that the ultimate form of

enforcement is education, as enforcement is education and education is enforcement.

Finally, we would like to extend our utmost gratitude to WIPO for its continuous support to the Philippines. More than the technical assistance, your guidance and the spirit of international cooperation sets the momentum and progress of our endeavour.

Thank you.