

Statement
By Mr. Ermias Yemanebirhan
Director General of EIPO
the Delegation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia at the Sixty-First Series of
Meetings of the General Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO (*on agenda 5*),
21 September 2020

Mr. President;

Director General Francis Gurry,

Excellences and Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, Ethiopia is pleased to see Your Excellency Omar Zniber, the Permanent Representative of the kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, and the vice Chairs, presiding over the General Assemblies. We renew our confidence in your professionalism and enduring dedication to guide our deliberations to achieve positive results.

I would like to thank the Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry, for his comprehensive report and the continued leadership of the Organization. I would also thank the Secretariat for the excellent organization of the Assemblies. We congratulate Director General of WIPO, Francis Gurry, for his achievements during the past 12 years of leadership and wish him all the best in his future endeavors. He has made WIPO stronger and resilient to withstand constant changes in the world economy.

Mr. President,

Allow me also thank outgoing Director General of WIPO, Dr. Francis Gurry, for his achievement accomplished during the past 12 years of leadership and wish him all the best for his future endeavors.

Ethiopia takes this opportunity to welcome Director General Elect, Mr. Daren Tang, from Singapore. We congratulate him on his appointment as Director General to lead this institution and wish him a success in this new undertaking and looks forward to working with him.

Mr. President,

Ethiopia associates itself with the statement made by the delegation of the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation notes that the financial positions of WIPO, the filing of the PCT and trademark registration have not been affected substantially by the covid19 pandemic. We learned once again that WIPO sets on the right position to overcome different challenges like Covid19 pandemic.

Ethiopia welcomes the proposal to convene the extraordinary Session of the General Assemblies of WIPO during the first half of 2021 to cover Agenda items, not included in the present session.

My delegation regrets to note that six years after the Independent review of the DARs, the committee has not agreed on strategies and modalities for implementation of the agreed Recommendations of the Independent Review. We call to all member states to exercise flexibility in the CDIP session to conclude discussions on the strategies and modalities for implementation of the agreed recommendations.

Ethiopia reiterates that the establishments of legally binding instruments are indispensable to protect genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions in a fair and balanced global IP system. In this regard, Ethiopia would like to encourage the IGC to finalize its negotiations and to recommend to WIPO GA to convene a diplomatic conference.

Mr. President,

Ethiopia, as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, highly values the work and appreciates the continued support of WIPO. The home-grown economic reforms we have set out to achieve with the aim to enhance the competitiveness of our economy and linkage to global value chains requires a well-developed IP system that drives innovation and creativity and increase productivity. WIPO's support in this regard has been both critical and timely, and the collaboration has brought significant results in various areas. Just to recount some of the achievements; through the support of the Organization, the preparation of our draft national IP policy and strategy has now reached at its final stage, the implementation of which will strengthen the protection of IPRs.

The setting up of the national IP Academy is now well underway which we believe will commence service in 2021.

We are grateful for the support of WIPO's experts on IP and enforcement, awareness enhancing workshops and trainings, on CMO and developing IP infrastructure. We would like to thank particularly the TK Division for providing training to Ethiopian IP experts and all the technical supports in developing the drafting of the domestic draft TK law and its continuous support in our awareness enhancing activities in this field of great importance to Ethiopia. Despite the challenges posed by the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) to our office's services to our customers, the

office managed to minimize the inconvenience thanks to the business automation system deployed by WIPO's IP Office Business Solutions Division a year ago.

Mr. President,

As part of our major reform measures in all fronts to ensure sustainable growth and economic development, the Government of Ethiopia believes there are areas where we need to scale up our efforts to strengthen the development of IP system, taking into account the specific needs of our country. We need to enhance knowledge about IP, innovation and collaboration, in particular with regard to issues related to the country's rich culture and geographical specific products. we need WIPO's support in these and in other areas.

Mr. President,

My delegation would like to announce that Ethiopia has ratified the Marrakesh Treaty recently and the document of ratification will be deposited to WIPO in the coming week. We are also plan to finalize the ratification process of other WIPO administered treaties.

My delegation would like to reiterate its firm commitment to continue to work closely with WIPO and look forward to engaging constructively on our deliberations during the meetings of the Assemblies.

Finally, Mr. President, allow me to extend our condolences to the families and colleagues of the WIPO staff who passed away due to covid19 pandemic and another staff member due accident.

I Thank you