

Check Against Delivery

**63rd Assembly of the Member States of WIPO
General Statement of the Republic of the Philippines**

Madam Chair, Director General Daren Tang, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, on behalf of the Philippine government, we are pleased to join the 63rd WIPO General Assemblies of Member States. After years of hybrid meetings, it is truly auspicious that we come together as one organization to decide significant matters with tremendous global impact.

We share the optimism and resilience of the international community as we individually and collectively rise above the challenges of the pandemic. At a time when innovation is critical not only in the medical field but more so in the survival of small enterprises, our interventions to support our stakeholders yielded positive results as total filings increased from January to June of this year compared to the same period last year with growth in patent and trademark filings.

2022 marks the 25th year of the enactment of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines which created the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL), a testament of the government's enduring commitment to foster innovation and creation by granting exclusive rights to our inventors, entrepreneurs and artists which we marked by the Gawad Yamang Isip awards (IP Award) conferred to Filipinos whose distinct ingenuity and talent made significant impact in their respective fields and society promoting innovation and creativity and IP Champions considered as key pillars in the IP community, among others.

Madam Chair, we all know that IP contributes to national development, thus, we pursued greater inclusivity of women and youth sectors with the launching of the Juana

Invent and Juana Design Programs for inventors and designers on the occasion of the International Women's Month to women-led small and medium enterprises to complement the Juana Make a Mark for MSMEs. These programs waive fees for eligible applicants to ease the financial burden of securing IP encouraging greater women participation in IP. Moreover, we will launch the Youth Inventors, Entrepreneurs and Designers Program next month to increase youth awareness and participation in IP, a critical aspect in building a national innovation culture. Building from the Grand IP Forum during the National IP Month last April where young Filipinos showcased their inventions having meaningful social impacts and the benefits of using the IP system. Likewise, the program will waive fees for youth applicants to reduce the financial cost for seeking IP protection.

The Philippines wishes to increase its presence in the international IP system by commencing the preparations for the accession to the Hague Agreement on the International Registration of Industrial Designs which we hope to complete by 2023.

To contribute to efforts in treating and containing the Covid-19 virus & safeguarding public health, we have uploaded in IPOPHL's website nine (9) Patent Search Reports containing patent data of Covid-19 related drugs and medicines to facilitate the research and development of health agencies, research institutions, and pharmaceutical companies.

Madam Chair, last November we held virtually the 1st Philippine International Copyright Summit (PICS) which generated some 2.5 million in web traffic participated in by leaders from the copyright-based and creative industries, WIPO, experts on copyright and policy makers among others. In addition, we successfully completed the CDIP supported Project on Enhancing the Use of IP in the Software Development Sector last December 2021 where the Philippines was one of the three country pilot beneficiaries.

On IP administration, we completed the automation of core processes with the issuance of electronic certificates for Inventions, Utility Models and Industrial Designs to benefit the applicants. Moreover, IPOPHL was ranked 9th in the 2021 World Trademark Review's (WTR) IP Office Innovation Ranking due to enhanced online capabilities, increased value-added propositions and expanded public outreach. We have modernized adjudication/resolution of IP cases and disputes by transforming manual processes to full end-to-end digitized processes from filing, virtual hearings and mediation, case management and even the appeals systems. In addition, we have been successful in enhancing efficiency in our core process registering the fastest trademark turn-around-time average of 3.8 months complementing the fast-lane processing of Industrial Design in 5 Days and UM in 2 Months. By re-engineering our processes, we drastically reduced to the lowest number the backlog applications for ID, UM and Inventions. Along this line, we hope to continue our partnership with WIPO on the deployment of the IP Automation System version 4 to sustain our gains on office modernization.

We seek to maximize opportunities to benefit our industries by providing the legal framework for Geographical Indications (GI). We hope to issue the Rules and Regulations on GI soon. With 23 initially identified potential GIs some of which already registered as collective marks under the current trademark system, we hope that this will enhance the different industries to gain competitive advantage for these products. We thank the WIPO for supporting the registration of the Bikol Pili collective mark.

On IP education, we are very pleased that we will be signing a tripartite Memorandum of Agreement with WIPO and De La Salle University for the joint offering of the Master's Program in Intellectual Property Management and Innovation in the country. To develop greater IP competence, the learning management system called IPOPHL Learning Activities Workspace (ILAW), the Filipino word for light, the first learning Southeast Asia was launched. The platform offers on-demand / asynchronous learning system which

completes the delivery of an entire suite of IP courses and programs for various groups of learners.

Admittedly, while the digital environment promises new opportunities for commerce, it has presented immense challenges for IPR protection. Led by the Department of Trade and Industry, we issued the Joint Administrative Order for Online Business regulating all forms of eCommerce. We have strengthened IPR violation reporting to use & harness social media and increased partnership with foreign and local stakeholders in the pharmaceutical, motion picture and retail industries on the fight against counterfeiting and piracy. This is in addition to deploying a digitalized piracy monitoring system for top pirated sites to collect pertinent data necessary to fight piracy. In building respect for IP, we continue to raise IP awareness enlisting the support of higher educational institutions and local governments.

Madam Chair, in celebrating the silver anniversary of IPOPHL, we are grateful to WIPO and other IP offices for the partnership and support. Guided by the spirit of multilateralism, the Philippines looks forward to continuing the partnerships in the years ahead as we collectively work to ensure that the IP system serves the greater good.

With your able leadership, Madam Chair, we look forward to a productive and successful General Assemblies.

Thank you! Maraming Salamat!