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ZIMBABWE

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY HIS EXCELLENCY  
AMBASSADOR JAMES MANZOU, AMBASSADOR AND  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
ZIMBABWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTY/FIRST  
SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE WIPO ASSEMBLIES: 23  
SEPTEMBER 2013

President of the General Assembly – H.E.

Director-General of WIPO Dr Francis Gurry

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, Zimbabwe wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished delegation of Algeria on behalf of the Africa Group.

We would also like to extend our sincere congratulations to you, Mr President as well as the distinguished members of your Bureau on the occasion of your election to steer the work of the

fifty-first WIPO assemblies. You can certainly count of Zimbabwe's full support and cooperation.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to thank the Director-General of WIPO, Dr Francis Gurry, for his comprehensive report on the activities undertaken by the organisation since our last assemblies meeting in 2012.

Mr President,

Only a few months ago, we met at Marrakesh and concluded a Landmark Treaty to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled. Zimbabwe will during this Assembly join the list of signatories of this important treaty. We congratulate WIPO Member States, the Secretariat and other Stakeholders who made this dream possible.

Mr President

Coming as it did barely a year after the successful conclusion of the Beijing Treaty on Audio Visual Performance of June 2012, the Marrakesh Treaty once again amply demonstrated what, with political will and courage, we together can do for the

betterment of our people, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Mr President,

While we celebrate WIPO's recent achievements, we cannot but express concern over the slow progress and lack of political will on the part of some countries to conclude Treaties of interest to developing countries. These are notably, Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Expressions and those relating to Exceptions and Limitations on Libraries Archives, Museums and Artistic and Literary Works. For many years now we have asked the relevant committees including the IGC to expedite their work. Time is now for member states to marshal the requisite political will in order to bring these negotiations to finality, thereby paving the way for the convening of a Diplomatic Conference within the 2014/2015 biennium . We therefore lend our full support to innovative approaches including the holding of high level cross cutting meetings with the view to accelerating negotiations in this area.

Mr President,

With regard to Programme and Budget issues, Zimbabwe strongly supports the proposal to establish two WIPO External offices in Africa without prejudice. Zimbabwe reaffirms WIPO's central role in ensuring that all countries are able to benefit from the use of IP for economic social and cultural development. The establishment of External Offices in Africa would also contribute to the strengthening of Africa's commitments in the field of IP. Zimbabwe therefore looks forward to the approval of this initiative and the provision of the requisite financial resources.

In the same vain, Zimbabwe wishes to stress the importance of the continued strengthening of already existing ties between WIPO and ARIPO as well as <sup>OAPI</sup> OIP for the benefit of the African continent.

Mr President

Zimbabwe continues to value the technical assistance provided by WIPO to various IP institutions in Zimbabwe under current bilateral programmes. We, in particular, appreciate WIPO's steadfast support for the Regional Masters Programme in

Intellectual Property that Zimbabwe has <sup>the</sup> ~~to~~ honour to host at Africa University. This programme continues to command international respect and demand for it on the entire African continent continues to rise. We therefore count on WIPO's continued support as the programme is pivotal for the advancement of IP education and innovation in Africa. We, in the same vain, call for increased resources to the WIPO Academy to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

President

My delegation looks forward to contributing to upcoming discussions on specific agenda items before the Assembly.

I thank you