

**AGENDA ITEM: 5**

**GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE GAMBIAN DELEGATION TO THE 51<sup>st</sup>  
ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION-  
GENEVA- 2013.**

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of The Gambia, let me begin by congratulating the chair for your election into office as well as your vice chairs and take this opportunity to wish you all the best in steering the affairs of the Assembly.

I also wish to place on record our heartfelt appreciation for the great work being done by the Director General of WIPO, Francis Gurry and his team in the past year especially in managing the finances of the organization.

The Gambia wishes to align itself with the sentiments expressed by Algeria on behalf of the Africa Group as well as Benin on behalf of the LDC Group.

Let me also join my other delegates who spoke before me to congratulate WIPO`s general membership for the successful adoption of the Marrakech Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities. The efforts that went into conclusion of the Treaty is a testimony of WIPO`s commitment to a balanced and humane global Intellectual Property regime.

It is hoped that with a similar kind of commitment, meaningful progress will be attained in pushing ahead with the agenda of the negotiation and eventual adoption of the long overdue Treaty on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Folklore.

Madam Chair, in the past year, a lot of effort has been put into norm setting, institutional capacity building and awareness creation in in a bid to sustain an Intellectual Property culture in The Gambia-

1. We have set in motion the necessary internal procedures for The Gambia to join the growing number of members of the Madrid System by acceding to the Madrid Protocol. Earlier this year, in collaboration with WIPO, we kick started a stakeholders awareness seminar on the Madrid system and Executive approval has been granted for our accession to the Madrid Protocol. It is hoped that by the first quarter of 2014, The Gambia will complete the cycle to become a member of the Madrid System by getting Parliamentary ratification. In the meantime we are working closely with the International Bureau of the Madrid Union to ensure that our trademark law is compatible with the Madrid legal regime.
2. The Gambia is also a beneficiary of WIPO's IPAS automation project, which is up and running now; thus facilitating access and searches.
3. It goes without saying that an integral element of the development of the Intellectual Property landscape is the development of a critical mass of I.P

practitioners. Thus we have now succeeded in integrating the study of Intellectual Property law into the University syllabuses. WIPO has also offered tremendous support in this regard in collaboration with the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) by sponsoring young Gambian graduates to undertake the masters program in Intellectual Property law.

4. In April 2012, WIPO responded positively to a proposal from The Gambia Government to assist in formulating an Intellectual Property policy and strategy. Despite some delays in the copyright component of the needs assessment mission commissioned by WIPO, I am happy to report that the process is on course.

Let me conclude by commending the Secretariat for the excellent documentation and preparations for this 51<sup>st</sup> Assemblies and we look forward to fruitful deliberations in the course of the week.

Thank you.