

**Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO**

**Fifty-eighth Series of Meetings**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

**24 September - 2 October 2018**

**Opening Statement of New Zealand**

Mr Chair, distinguished delegates, it is a pleasure as New Zealand Commissioner of Patents, Trade Marks, Designs and Plant Variety Rights and Registrar of Geographical Indications to offer our support again in making these General Assemblies a success.

Mr Chair, New Zealand continues to recognise the critical role intellectual property plays in driving innovation and ultimately productivity and rising standards of living.

Despite the challenges of economic shocks and growth, New Zealand remains committed to providing quality, client-focused services, and sharing our knowledge and experience with others where we can.

Mr Chair, over the last year the New Zealand Government has:

- Completed Parliamentary examination of the Marrakesh Treaty, and is currently progressing the enactment and implementation of that Treaty through an amendment to our Copyright Act.
- We have just this month begun public consultation on whether we should implement a mandatory “disclosure of origin” requirement in our patents regime.
- Alongside the “disclosure of origin” consultation, we are also consulting on an issues paper for a review of New Zealand’s Plant Variety Rights legislation. In this review, we are looking at whether our PVR regime provides adequate incentives for the development and dissemination of new varieties, and how the regime might recognise the interests of Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, in our native flora.
- We have also progressed a review of our Copyright Act to ensure that it is fit for purpose in a context of rapidly changing technology. We anticipate publicly consulting on this review next month.
- And, we continue to progress minor reforms to our suite of intellectual property legislation to ensure each regime operates efficiently and effectively.

Mr Chair, finding ways for the intellectual property system to protect traditional knowledge and cultural expressions is of particular interest to us. While resourcing pressures have affected our

ability to participate in IGC negotiations this year, we remain very supportive of the IGC's work and look forward to contributing again to progress meaningful and workable solutions in this forum.

Mr Chair, the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ) has been in a period of growth which has seen another record filing year for trade mark applications, with trade mark classes exceeding 50,000 for the first time. In addition, work continues to double the size of its patent examination team.

We have also registered the first geographical indications, giving greater protection of foreign wine and spirit geographical indications in the New Zealand market.

Mr Chair, we wish to express our thanks to WIPO for its continued support and cooperation during 2018.

We are grateful for the opportunity to have you welcome another New Zealander via the Madrid Fellowship Programme, and to contribute to development of ePCT filing and PCT Netting pilot for the improved management of PCT fees.

Finally Mr Chair, New Zealand confirms its willingness to work with WIPO and the Member States to improve the international intellectual property system.

We look forward to being part of productive and fruitful discussions at these General Assemblies.

Thank you.