

## **GREECE**

### **Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO**

#### **59<sup>th</sup> Series of Meetings**

**Geneva, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019**

#### **General Statement (agenda item 5)**

Chair,  
Director General,  
Distinguished Delegates,

We would like to thank his excellence Ambassador Duong for his dedicated commitment as Chair of the General Assembly in preparing for the current Assemblies. We are confident that under his leadership positive results will be reached. We also like to congratulate the Vice-Chairs on their appointment.

The dedicated commitment of Director General Gurry in the successful accomplishment of WIPO's strategic goals should also be appraised. Under his prudent management, WIPO reached a positive financial result and the global demand for intellectual property continued to increase. We would also like to commend WIPO for its excellent work in relation to the outreach of the Academy and its sustained effort to support the IP judges through the WIPO Judiciary Institute. Finally, we consider that in an era of continuous digitalization and use of AI, the initiatives regarding the introduction of standards for IP information, as well as the entirety of ICT related initiatives (ePCT being the most important of those) contribute to development of a global IP data infrastructure necessary for sustainable and inclusive development. These results could not have been achieved without the support and the tireless efforts of the human capital of the WIPO Secretariat, which we are thankful to.

We would also like to highlight the importance of WIPO being involved in the future in broader multilateral initiatives, such as the UN High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, and explore ways in which WIPO could contribute to the establishment of global and regional help desks to increase digital and innovation capacity.

As a result, we would like to emphasise the need for establishing a WIPO-wide policy for data management and access of WIPO's information and intangible assets that remains transparent and accessible to each Member State.

While aligning with the statements delivered by group B and by the European Union and its member states, we wish to emphasize the role of intellectual property as a driver for economic growth. An effective management of intellectual property rights is a strategic tool for the competitiveness of business entities. It is for this reason, that authorities have to ensure an effective IPR system, responsive to the rapid technological developments and the needs of users.

In the past year the national Patent Office (OBI) has completed an extensive digital transformation of the patent and design application filing procedure, facilitating access to IP protection. A national Council for IP was established to allow for a coherent Industrial Property policy. Furthermore, the network of regional patent libraries was enlarged to reach out to the public and establish links with the local industry and research community. An IP Academy was established to promote IP awareness, increase capacity, share IP knowledge, foster IP research and provide training for patent attorneys. For that purpose the Hellenic Industrial Property Academy (HIPA) has already signed an MoU with the European Public Law Organisation (EPLO), which is also a WIPO observer. In addition, OBI and HIPA will be signing tomorrow an MoU with WIPO with particular emphasis on supporting the transnational flow of IP. The first milestone of our MoU is the establishment of a Summer School on Data Enabled IP and Tech Transfer in Summer 2020.

The quality of services provided to applicants remains a priority. As cooperation among national offices continues for the convergence of practices, technological developments worldwide are monitored to allow for improvements of the infrastructure responsive to the needs of users.

#### Regarding Trademarks:

A draft trademark law is ready and awaiting its vote by the new Parliament before the end of 2019. This law is harmonized by EU Directive (2015/2436) and brings fundamental changes in order to make the system of TM protection in Greece more operational and effective. Currently, the Greek Trade Marks Office, with the support of the EUIPO, is digitizing its registry in order to move from paper to a completely electronic registry which is necessary for the effective operation of the TM system.

On the other hand, Greece recognizes that while sound enforcement of IP rights depends on appropriate laws and regulations, implementation is the key. This finding led to the establishment of the Coordinating Authority for Market Supervision and the Fight Against Illicit Trade (SYKEAAP), a few years ago. This Authority (SYKEAAP) endeavored to create a single response to illicit trade of IP-infringing goods through sharing intelligence and fostering a culture of cooperation amongst all relevant enforcement authorities. Under this augmented joint approach to IP enforcement, the contribution outlines how Greek IP rights enforcement authorities were able to identify and seize an impressive amount of counterfeit goods over the past four years. In 2018, 70,963 controls were carried out, 2,298,271 items of illicit trade were seized by Domestic Market Enforcement Authorities and 23,956,224 counterfeit items were seized by customs. These successful results of the Greek Authorities have been presented to the last

session of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement on 2-4 September 2019. Greece appreciates the work of ACE and will participate actively in its meetings.

This year the number of exports in Greece is increasing, especially in food products and Greek companies are using the Madrid System for the international registration of their trademarks more and more. Promoting the system and keeping it attractive is an important achievement in facilitating international trade. The Greek delegation is committed to this goal.

In relation to the work of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents, the constructive spirit of discussions allowed for significant progress. Although issues of patent law harmonization are not discussed, we hope that consensus will emerge in the future to initiate discussions to the benefit of users.

Significant progress was also realized in the work program of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore. Work should proceed in the future on all topics upon a common understanding of core issues through an evidence-based approach.

In relation to the broader issue of developing evidence-based policy, we hope that our work on Data Enabled IP and the related research conducted in the Academy will contribute to this direction.

In relation to the normative agenda, the convening of a Diplomatic Conference remains regrettably undecided, despite the fact that the draft text could be submitted to a Diplomatic Conference. The harmonization of formalities would benefit users worldwide. We hope that remaining differences will be resolved to allow for the convening of a Diplomatic Conference.

The PCT system remains robust with a continuously growing number of applications. Proposed amendments to the system to the benefit of users are welcomed. Likewise, the consideration of incentives to promote innovative activity of university driven innovation, via reduced filing fees and capacity building through the work of the Hellenic Academy, is encouraged.

We renew our support to the excellent work pursued by the World Intellectual Property Organization and remain committed to contribute to the discussions in a constructive spirit.

Thank you Chair.