



OPENING STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE ON THE OCCASION OF THE 59TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you and your vice Chairs for having been elected to steer our proceedings. We are confident that through your stewardship we shall arrive at positive outcomes at the end of these Assemblies. We also want to express our appreciation to the Director General and his staff for the elaborate preparations for these meetings.

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statement delivered by Uganda, on behalf of the African Group and would like to make additional remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation takes this opportunity to announce to these Assemblies that on the 12th of September 2019, the Government of Zimbabwe joined other progressive member states and deposited with WIPO its instruments of ratification to the **Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual performances** and the accession to the **Marrakesh Treaty to facilitate Access to published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled**. We are currently

engaging WIPO to assist with the review of the Copyright and Neighbouring Rights Act in order to align it with these two treaties.

Over and above this, Zimbabwe is preparing to accede to The Hague Agreement in the coming year as the country continues with its efforts to ratify pertinent WIPO treaties.

Mr. Chairman

We wish to express our gratitude to WIPO for the support to all our capacity building programs, including the recent PCT roving seminars in universities and the very popular Masters in IP Program offered by WIPO in partnership with ARIPO and the Japanese Government at the Africa University in Zimbabwe. We are also pleased with the ongoing digitization of records including data verification that is taking place at Zimbabwe Intellectual Property Office supported by the Japanese Funds in Trust administered by WIPO. We will continue to work closely with the academia, research institutions, innovation hubs and SMEs to promote the appreciation, respect and use of IP.

Mr. Chairman

Zimbabwe is also eagerly looking forward to the visit of Director General Francis Gurry, to Harare, Zimbabwe, on the occasion of the WIPO/ARIPO/OAPI (WAO) Conference on Intellectual Property (IP), Innovation and Value Addition for Business Competitiveness and Sustainable Development in Africa scheduled to take place from 6 to 8 November 2019.

Finally, Mr. Chairman

As a Member State we look forward to fruitful deliberations in these Assemblies and wish to reiterate our continued belief in

multilateralism and call on all Member States to negotiate with a constructive spirit underpinned by the utmost good faith.

I thank you.