## ITEM 5 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

# GENERAL STATEMENTS

1. The Delegations and Representatives of the following 111 States, two intergovernmental organizations and 10 non-governmental organizations provided oral or written statements under this agenda item: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (the), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe, African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office), Inter‑American Association of Industrial Property (ASIPI), Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA), Health and Environment Program (HEP), IP Justice, Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), Latin American School of Intellectual Property (ELAPI), League of Arab States (LAS), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and South Centre (SC).
2. Delegations and Representatives congratulated the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the WIPO General Assembly on their election to office, wished them every success in leading the Assemblies and assured them of their full cooperation in that respect. They commended the Director General and the Secretariat for their work over the previous year, including with regard to the preparation of documentation and arrangements for the Assemblies. Delegations speaking in their national capacity generally associated themselves with the statements made on behalf of their respective groups.
3. The Delegation of South Africa, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to disrupt lives and livelihoods around the world, WIPO must play a key role in the response to the pandemic by enhancing capacity building, technology transfers and development partnerships, working towards mainstreaming the global response to current and future pandemics across all of its activities, programs and committees. WIPO should help its Member States to use intellectual property (IP) to stimulate growth potential and build sustainable economies, while paying particular attention to the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), women, young people and local and indigenous communities. To optimize the WIPO contribution to economic and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the WIPO Development Agenda (DA) recommendations must be interpreted in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The African Group welcomed the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23 biennium, in particular its focus on development activities and its support for creativity and innovation for a better and more sustainable world. The commitment to assisting Member States in their efforts to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure vaccine equity was particularly welcome, and should be accompanied by measures to facilitate partnerships for enhancing global vaccination production capacity and providing an enabling environment of innovation and technology transfer, including by encouraging the use of flexibilities provided for in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (the TRIPS Agreement). The ongoing trilateral cooperation between WIPO, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) was commended. The African Group attached great importance to the work of WIPO, in particular its committees and working groups, and welcomed the renewal of the mandate of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC). The Group wished to see the conclusion of the Design Law Treaty (DLT). The principles of equitable geographic representation and proportionality should be upheld in the enlargement and composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the Program and Budget Committee (PBC). The African Group had faith in the potential of the IP ecosystem to transform societies and assist developing countries in the attainment of their development goals. Such potential could only be fulfilled through an effective and inclusive IP system that responded to the specific needs of all stakeholders, and which helped to address challenges in areas including health, education, climate change and food security, taking full advantage of innovation and technological development.
4. The Delegation of Bangladesh, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group (APG), said that the Asia-Pacific region attached great importance to IP and that a fair and balanced IP system was an important tool for economic development. Given the pace at which IP filings and innovation activities were taking place in the region, the APG was greatly underrepresented on the WIPO Coordination Committee. The joint proposal on membership that had been submitted by the Group and the African Group was the most appropriate way to resolve the standstill on the matter. Membership of the PBC should be open to all. Research and development (R&D) on new health technologies, in particular vaccines, was attracting enhanced public spending in many countries. In that light, a balanced IP rights system was needed to ensure equitable access to diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines to combat the coronavirus. There was a need to work together to finalize an international legal instrument or instruments to protect genetic resources (GRs), traditional knowledge (TK) and folklore, and to convene diplomatic conferences to adopt a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations and the DLT. The Group welcomed progress made on the issue of establishing new WIPO External Offices, the increase in the Organization’s net assets for 2020 and its overall healthy financial situation.
5. The Delegation of Belarus, speaking on behalf of the Group of Central Asian, Caucasus and Eastern European Countries (CACEEC), congratulated the Director General on the anniversary of his taking office, and expressed support for his work to strengthen the key role of WIPO as the global IP system regulator. The Delegation noted with satisfaction the contribution of WIPO, under the leadership of the new Director General, to the development of the innovation environment, and acknowledged the support provided to SMEs, and to talented and enterprising young people, thereby enabling them to commercialize the fruits of their intellectual labor. Despite the economic downturn caused by the pandemic, the Organization remained financially stable, which showed the global demand for the services provided by WIPO, the effectiveness of ongoing advocacy work to raise public awareness of IP and how effectively the Organization was being managed in difficult circumstances. The Group noted with satisfaction that, even during times of restricted activity, WIPO maintained a busy agenda, and the productivity of its experts had in fact increased, which underscored the importance of digital reform to the work of WIPO. The Organization had maintained its role as a significant forum for inclusive and transparent dialogue, with the participation of all stakeholders, facilitating the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS). CACEEC hoped for a renewal of the normative aspect of the work of WIPO in the near future. Countries in the Group were active users of the global services provided by WIPO and parties to its multilateral conventions and agreements. The amount of international and national IP registrations was growing. Over the previous 10 years, countries in the region had submitted 30 instruments of ratification and accession to the international agreements of WIPO. At the national level, the constant focus was on supporting innovation and developing an innovative environment. Policy documents had been adopted at the national level, the implementation of which would enable countries to improve their position on the Global Innovation Index (GII). Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs), which currently numbered 250 in the region, were in high demand, and their network was growing continuously. Countries in the region were actively developing their IP infrastructure and strengthening their provision of IP services. The Group noted with satisfaction the revision of the WIPO policy on languages. CACEEC was cooperating closely with China and several Arab States, and was looking forward to making progress on the issue of broadening the language regime of the Madrid and Hague Systems for international registration. The Group was interested in seeking a solution to the matter of including Russian in the official languages of those systems, with a view to increasing access for applicants from CACEEC countries to WIPO services, as well as ensuring the accession of new parties to WIPO agreements. CACEEC was looking forward to further fruitful cooperation with WIPO and the development of traditional and new areas for cooperation. An additional stimulus in that regard would be to increase CACEEC countries’ representation in the WIPO Secretariat, particularly at the management level. The current Series of Meetings of the WIPO Assemblies was in hybrid format, and the duration of the events had been reduced significantly. In that regard, the Group looked forward to prompt decision‑making on issues where consensus could be found, and hoped for productive work in the key WIPO committees and working groups that were due to meet before the end of the year. In the context of the current Series of Meetings of the Assemblies, the Group was keen to solve the matter of appointing the Eurasian Patent Office (EAPO) as an international searching authority and international preliminary examining authority. CACEEC was convinced that that would allow for a broadening of the use of the international patenting system and the development of innovative processes in the Eurasian subregion. The Group stood ready to cooperate constructively on all items on the agenda.
6. The Delegation of Georgia, speaking on behalf of the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS) Group, said that it was pleased that WIPO had ensured stability, positive financial results and the delivery of IP services despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Technology, innovation and creativity had always been crucial to overcoming challenges and they would play an essential role in the post-pandemic recovery. Despite the pandemic, there were opportunities for IP and the CEBS Group was confident that they would be seized. The CEBS Group supported the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23, which reflected the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022–2026. Plans to develop initiatives to help communities, enterprises and individuals were welcomed. Commercialization and IP management could result in economic growth and development. In line with the statement made at the PBC, diversity and inclusivity at WIPO would foster an active global IP ecosystem. Given the Organization’s financial performance, the CEBS Group wished to strengthen the main Unions. Member States had been productive, despite the pandemic, which would help to reach a consensus on core issues. Over the years, the allocation of resources had been effective. The financial stability of the individual Unions and efforts to launch promotional activities and support stakeholders were appreciated. The allocation of seats in the WIPO Coordination Committee was a long-standing issue that had dominated discussions in 2021. The CEBS Group had demonstrated flexibility and it remained optimistic that a satisfactory decision could be reached.
7. The Delegation of China said that the current crisis also presented opportunities. Confronted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and other global challenges, innovation and IP were more important than ever. There was a need to leverage the IP system to further stimulate innovation and allow IP to play an active role in tackling the pandemic and leading the world towards economic recovery, while striking a balance between IP protection and the public interest. Against that backdrop, the Government of China, based on the new development stage, had completed a new round of amendments to the Patent Law, the Trademark Law, the Copyright Law and other IP laws and regulations, and accelerated the drafting of the IP protection and utilization plan for the 14th Five-Year Period. Those moves would provide boost economic growth and sustainable development by promoting high-quality IP, strengthening IP protection and optimizing the innovation and business environment. WIPO had started to implement its new MTSP in 2021. The plan optimized the Organization’s mission, the strategic pillars and internal structure, with the aim of developing a balanced IP ecosystem while strengthening ties with Member States. The Delegation wished to make five points: (i) WIPO should play a more active role in addressing global challenges; (ii) WIPO should pursue norm‑setting for global IP rules and had an important role to play in drafting IP rules in new domains and sectors; China looked forward to a consensus on the early convening of a diplomatic conference on the adoption of the DLT; (iii) WIPO should strive to improve its global IP services, including through the use of Chinese and other relevant United Nations (UN) official languages in the Madrid and Hague Systems, more effectively maintained user data security and better services delivered to global innovation actors; (iv) developing countries’’ concerns should be taken properly into account, their representation in WIPO’’s decision-making bodies should be increased and they should be provided with more technical assistance to facilitate IP capacity-building; (v) the programs, budget and other work of WIPO should be rendered more transparent. Supported by the 14th Five-Year-Plan, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong SAR) of China was forging ahead to become an international innovation and technology hub and a regional IP trading center. To enhance its IP system, the original grant patent (OGP) system had been launched in December 2019. By the end of July 2021, 455 OGP applications had been received. In June 2021, the Patents Registry granted the first patent under the OGP system, marking a milestone in the development of the patent system of the Hong Kong SAR, and reinforced its support for the robust development of the innovation and technology ecosystem. The Hong Kong SAR would also capitalize on its advantages in professional services, make the most of its role as a trading hub and strengthen the connection between mainland and overseas enterprises in a bid to drive high-quality economic development through IP trading and commercialization.
8. The Delegation of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of Group B, said that it wanted the Assemblies to look to the future, steer the work of its subsidiary bodies and resolve stalemates. Evidence showed that IP continued to drive global, economic, social and cultural development. The GII 2021 demonstrated the importance of IP in supporting solutions. Group B was pleased to be part of an organization that supported a well‑functioning, balanced global IP framework, helped grassroots innovators and encouraged collaboration between the public sector, industry and academia by enabling voluntary IP licensing and technology transfer initiatives on mutually agreed terms. IP systems should remain fit for purpose and provide incentives for human ingenuity. Group B supported the COVID-19 package that would improve the Organization’s pandemic response and it was grateful for how WIPO had continued to provide IP services during the pandemic. Group B supported updates to the PCT as well as the Madrid and Hague Systems to facilitate the electronic filing of intellectual property rights (IPRs). It expected that building user‑friendly tools would remain a priority and that the pandemic would provide useful lessons in that regard. Group B praised the Program for Work and Budget for 2022/23 biennium and continued to support the Director General in delivering the MTSP. WIPO played a role in solving global challenges such as climate change, food security and artificial intelligence (AI). Group B recognized the role of WIPO services, such as WIPO GREEN and WIPO Re:Search, in connecting innovators with innovation users for the benefit of all. Group B hoped that the WIPO Assemblies in 2022 would be a forum for the debate on innovation and creativity, which would make IP more relevant to the public at large and cement the role of the international IP framework in driving innovative and creative economies.
9. The Delegation of Paraguay, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), said that it was committed to working with the Chair and Member States to ensure the success of the 62nd session of the WIPO Assemblies. As everyone was aware, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have an impact on everyday life, with the Assemblies again taking place in a hybrid format and many issues yet to be addressed; however, progress had been made and Member States had learned to work under the circumstances and overcome them, demonstrating their resilience and commitment to WIPO and its areas of work. In that regard, GRULAC wished to thank the secretariats of the various Committees, the interpreting services, the audiovisual services and all staff members for their commitment and dedication. It was grateful to the Director General for his comprehensive report on the Organization’s activities in all areas, and particularly appreciated the actions and leadership of WIPO in helping and cooperating with Member States to combat the COVID-19 pandemic through legislative assistance, technical assistance and capacity building, support for innovation and technology transfer, and steps taken in cooperation with other multilateral organizations, including WHO and WTO, under the leadership of the Director General. It welcomed the Director General’s vision of a world where innovation and creativity from anywhere was supported by IP for the good of everyone, as well as his strong focus on development under the WIPODA. GRULAC would like to thank the various departments of WIPO, in particular the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Traditional Knowledge Division, for all their efforts and support, which had enabled Member States to continue to pursue their IP-related activities in spite of the pandemic. GRULAC remained committed to the multilateral system and, in particular, the normative agenda of the Organization, and supported the topics to be discussed under the agenda items “WIPO Committees and International Normative Framework” and “Program, Budget and Oversight Matters”.
10. The Delegation of Qatar, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the welcome ongoing development of the global IP system should reflect the recommendations contained in the WIPO DA and thereby take into account the priorities and needs of developing and least developed countries (LDCs). Achievements in that regard, as set forth in the report of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), were welcome. Efforts should be intensified to complete the process of implementation of those recommendations, which had suffered delays owing, in particular, to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and resulting in non-compliance with the established deadlines. The Group supported the completion of work of the WIPO Assemblies that had been held over from the previous session because of the pandemic and welcomed the MTSP 2022–2026, as well as the decisions taken by the PBC with regard to the Organization’s revised language policies. WIPO played a key role in enhancing the capacity of Member States to benefit from the IP system so as to achieve their development and socio-economic goals. The Group stood ready to engage in constructive and positive discussions in that respect. It also invited Member States to give favorable consideration to the continued calls regarding use of the Arabic language in WIPO systems, in particular the Madrid System and the Hague System. The Group had worked tirelessly in recent times to achieve its SDGs and to build a knowledge-based economy. It supported the ongoing negotiations in the Organization on implementing global protection laws, in particular those being conducted by the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) and the IGC. The Group looked forward to pursuing that approach and achieving the greatest possible consensus among Member States.
11. The Delegation of the Philippines, speaking on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), welcomed the launch of the MTSP 2022–2026, which coincided with the publication of the 2016-2025 ASEAN IP Rights Action Plan Version 2.0. ASEAN welcomed the expression of interest by WIPO in supporting that plan, the support extended by the WIPO Division for Asia and the Pacific to the ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AWGIPC), the success of the eHIPOC meeting, which had been held in April 2021, the successful completion of the ASEAN regional plan and the ongoing consultations ASEAN member States country plans. The WIPO Singapore Office continued to provide valuable support to the region. Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam had performed well in the 2021 GII. Over the previous year, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic had acceded to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, Viet Nam had acceded to the Budapest Treaty and the Philippines had acceded to the Beijing Treaty. Technical support and assistance from WIPO had facilitated the achievement of those milestones. AWGIPC would continue to prioritize the strengthening of IP systems through digital transformation. ASEAN IP offices were working closely together to modernize, increase efficiency and improve the delivery of services to their stakeholders, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
12. The Delegation of Slovenia, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that the value of IP rights had been underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was to be hoped that the new vision and strategic approach adopted by WIPO would foster global innovation and creativity, supported by a balanced and effective IP rights system. Proposals to empower all members of society and to focus on concrete results through horizontal and targeted measures and programs aimed, in particular, at individuals and SMEs were encouraging, as were the efforts made by WIPO to tackle the pandemic. Strong and balanced IP systems could and should contribute to overcoming health crises and ensuring global economic recovery. In reaching out to business, the focus should be on green and digital transitions. Sustainability and continued discussions on IP and AI were priorities for the European Union. Progress needed to be made in negotiations on a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations that would take into account technological developments. The European Union was open to constructive proposals on the DLT. It also supported renewal of the IGC’s mandate.
13. The Delegation of Albania, aligning itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Georgia on behalf of the CEBS Group, said that the General Directorate of Intellectual Property had met its objectives for 2020-2021. From 2016‑2020, the Directorate had collected data from line ministries and central institutions implementing the national IP strategy. In May 2020, it had started to draft the new national strategy for 2021-2025 with the support of WIPO. Through virtual interviews with state institutions and stakeholders, gaps and challenges had been identified. The draft strategy had passed through the public consultation phase and the Council of Ministers was expected to approve it in October 2021. A national workshop would be organized with WIPO to launch the new third strategy, which would unite IP institutions in reaching strategic goals. Albania had approved Law 9947, which was in line with the European Trade Secrets Directive (EC Directive 2016/943). The recommendation of the European Commission had been included in the National Plan for European Integration 2020-2022. There had been other amendments regarding the inspection body, which adopted legal provisions and procedures to provide administrative protection against the infringement of industrial property rights. Albania had continued to promote IP rights and registration to businesses and universities. In the framework of World IP Day (April 26), an IP training center had been set up to organize activities, courses, training sessions and seminars. The WIPO Academy was supporting the center in preparing IP modules for different stakeholders. During April, activities to raise awareness had been organized across Albania. Albania had participated in a series of international copyright education roundtables that had been organized by WIPO in collaboration with the United States Copyright Office, among others, to learn about drafting policies to increase IP knowledge‑sharing. Albania had signed memoranda of understanding with national and international partners and wanted to cooperate more with WIPO to build capacity and receive technical assistance. WIPO had helped Albania to receive German expertise regarding supplementary protection certificates (SPC) and a webinar had been held on September 28, 2021. More attention would be paid to IP outreach campaigns in the upcoming months.
14. The Delegation of Algeria said that an efficient and balanced IP system must respond to the needs and interests of all countries and ensure that the benefits of technical and technological progress were accessible to all, while contributing to stimulating, disseminating and utilizing innovation and creativity for the common good. In that regard, as the leading UN agency in the field of knowledge, WIPO was called on to play a more active role in overcoming major contemporary challenges, in particular by developing mechanisms to promote innovation and technology transfers, as well as by better integrating a development dimension into the policies, programs and activities of the Organization. In that regard, Algeria supported the vision set out by WIPO, which aimed to help States to make the most of the IP system to promote economic growth and sustainable development, paying particular attention to young creatives and SMEs. In addition, the significant support provided to Algeria by WIPO was vital to implementing IP-related projects and activities to the benefit of a broad range of national stakeholders. Algeria, which had initiated local production of the CoronaVac vaccine the previous week, attached great importance to equitable access to medical technologies and innovation to tackle COVID-19. The Delegation welcomed the initiatives undertaken by the Organization to contribute to the global response to COVID-19 and encouraged WIPO to set up the necessary partnerships and collaboration to increase vaccine production and bolster economic recovery at the global level.
15. The Delegation of Argentina, aligning itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC, said that the Assemblies were taking place in unique circumstances and that the COVID-19 pandemic continued to claim lives and hamper the development of many countries. Despite ongoing global efforts to find sustainable, fair and long-term solutions to end the pandemic and promote economic recovery, Argentina was conscious of the need for greater international cooperation and public-private interaction, as well as more robust, results-oriented diplomacy. As a result of COVID-19, over the previous 18 months, the relationship between IP and health care had become a key issue and the subject of intense debate and numerous academic papers and news articles. IP contributed to innovation as well as to the economic, social and cultural development of countries. In the post‑pandemic world, it would be necessary to create a resilient and balanced IP system in which IP rights went hand-in-hand with access to health care, food, knowledge and technology transfer, in line with domestic policies aimed at promoting public interest in sectors of vital national importance. Concessions could be made at the multilateral level without threatening the protection and observance of IP rights, which benefitted everyone. Argentina appreciated WIPO initiatives launched in that spirit, particularly its services and support related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including technical assistance, capacity-building and the strengthening of trilateral cooperation (WIPO, WHO, WTO). Argentina was pleased to note the continued robust financial health of the Organization and held the view that its resource allocation policy should integrate the development dimension and align with the SDGs and the 45 recommendations of the DA, which legitimized the Organization’s work and its status as a UN specialized agency. For that reason, Argentina supported the Director General’s vision and mission to leverage the benefits of innovation and creativity for everyone. When the circumstances allowed, Argentina hoped to resume substantive negotiations within WIPO committees as quickly as possible and to make further progress in the areas of TK, GRs and folklore and the protection of broadcasting organizations. Argentina attributed more importance than ever to the cooperation, technical assistance and capacity-building activities of WIPO, as well as to educational and training activities in developing countries. The Delegation was particularly grateful for the support of the WIPO divisions, especially the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. Despite the setbacks caused by the pandemic, Argentina had maintained an active agenda with WIPO and the headquarters-based Regional Bureau by resorting to innovative methods and using the WIPO tools made available to members. From September 6 to 9, 2021, WIPO and the National Foreign Service Institute of Argentina (ISEN) had organized the first virtual training course for diplomats on negotiations and multilateralism in relation to IP. It was hoped that the activity would become part of the regular syllabus of the Diplomatic Institute and would encourage other Member States to implement similar activities. Argentina had also welcomed students from across Latin America and the Caribbean to its Master’s Degree Program on Intellectual Property and Innovation. It would continue its work with WIPO GREEN, which sought to mobilize new innovative technologies in response to climate challenges by connecting users to technology providers to make agriculture more sustainable and foster cooperation between regional partners. In addition, Argentina had presented yerba mate tea, Patagonian lamb and Uco Valley wine at the WIPO Virtual Exhibition on Geographical Indications. Such initiatives provided a space to promote national products and raise awareness of the importance of using IP tools to protect products that were part of cultural traditions. Argentina noted the Director General’s strong commitment to meeting the needs of developing countries, particularly regarding cooperation and assistance activities and projects that had a real impact and were in line with the Organization’s initiatives. It encouraged the Director General to continue demonstrating that commitment with a view to the promotion and democratization of innovation. Regarding WIPO staff, Argentina welcomed the measures adopted so far and supported the redoubling of efforts to achieve more balanced geographical and gender representation among WIPO senior and professional staff. It encouraged international awareness-raising of the contribution that women made to IP rights and innovation and the use of IP by SMEs.
16. The Delegation of Armenia said that it had worked on projects and IP events with WIPO and the Department for Transition and Developed Countries during 2021, the result of which was the strong IP legal system in Armenia. The Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia had initiated legal reforms in the IP field, which included three draft laws on patents, industrial designs, and copyright and related rights. The draft laws on patents and industrial designs had entered into force on July 2, 2021, and the draft law on copyright and related rights had been submitted to the Government. It included provisions from the Beijing and Marrakesh Treaties, which the National Assembly for Armenia had recently ratified, and provisions regulating the activities of collective management organizations. The development of a new long-term IP strategy, which would meet modern requirements and benefit Armenian IP development and rights enforcement, was included in the program of the Government of Armenia. Over the years, Armenia had organized joint events with WIPO to identify needs and challenges through discussions with stakeholders. The COVID-19 pandemic had prevented the organization of some events but Armenia hoped that they would take place in future. Armenia remained committed to working with WIPO to further IP development.
17. The Delegation of Australia said that it shared the desire of the Director General of WIPO to simplify the international IP system and make it more accessible to innovators, creators and businesses, particularly SMEs, around the world. Australia would support that vision and the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to devastate communities globally. WIPO and the broader international IP system must continue to play an active role in that response. The development of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in record time was a testament to the IP system, which must continue to support timely, widespread and affordable access to those vaccines. WIPO, together with WTO and WHO, had done crucial work in that regard. Global immunization was the only path out of the pandemic. The Delegation welcomed the holding of hybrid meetings in the current circumstances, improvements to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and to the Madrid Protocol and efforts to work towards a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations. Member States should accede to the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (Marrakesh Treaty) in order to spread its clear humanitarian benefits.
18. The Delegation of Austria aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union and its member states. IP rights and protecting them offered incentives and solutions in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Austria welcomed the healthy state of the Organization’s finances, the way in which WIPO had continued to provide first-class services to the IP community in spite of the pandemic and the proposed Program of Work and Budget for the 2022/23 biennium. The focus on outreach to individuals and SMEs was especially welcome, as was the recommendation by the PBC that WIPO become a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG). The Delegation of Austria supported approval of the memoranda of understanding regulating cooperation between WIPO and the European Patent Office (EPO) and the International Renewable Energy Association (IRENA) and the proposed amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules with regard to maternity and paternity leave. It was keen to have diplomatic conferences convened in order to conclude a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations and adopt the DLT on design application. The Delegation of Austria supported renewal of the mandate of the IGC and welcomed the appointment of the EAPO as an international search and preliminary examination authority under the PCT. The International Bureau of WIPO should continue to monitor the system and a second review should take place no later than 2027. Austria welcomed the proposed amendments to the PCT Regulations and the recommendation to postpone the implementation date of WIPO Standard ST.26 from January 1 to July 1, 2022. It supported the proposed amendments to the Regulations under the Madrid Protocol and to the Schedule of Fees thereunder.
19. The Delegation of Azerbaijan supported the MTSP 2022–2026 of WIPO and had closely cooperated with the Organization on the priority areas of its IP agenda. The country’s aim was to mainstream IP in, *inter alia*, economic reform, while changes to the IP infrastructure had led to the ongoing digitization of rights protection and applications for transparency, improved access to expert databases and support for local IP offices, and the launch of the Center for Commercialization and Technology Transfer. Moreover, amended industrial property laws had been enacted to take into account new IP objects and changes to the legislation on copyright and related rights. As a result, according to the GII, processing times had become shorter and there had been increases in inventive and patenting activity, application figures and the contribution of creative industries to gross domestic product. Particular importance was being paid to promoting innovative changes in the Karabakh region, which had been heavily affected by occupation, and to the “smart village” development project.
20. The Delegation of Bangladesh, speaking in its national capacity, aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the APG. Given the increasing importance of IP in the knowledge and innovation-based global economy, Bangladesh hoped that WIPO would continue to mainstream development in its activities while laying a particular emphasis on developing countries and LDCs. The adverse impact of COVID-19 on economic growth was evident around the world. IP had a vital role to play in facilitating the recovery of national economies and ensuring affordable and equitable access to vaccines for all. Since Bangladesh was expecting to graduate from the LDC category by 2026, integrating innovation and appropriate technology into its development efforts was more crucial than ever. Bangladesh required the Organization’s assistance to help it to identify its challenges and needs and prepare for the post-LDC era.
21. The Delegation of Belarus said that, in the present context, the WIPO Assemblies were of great importance to formulating coordinated approaches to strengthen IP systems. It appreciated WIPO efforts to advance the innovation agenda, support SMEs, and develop and enhance the activities of national patent offices. Belarus was a party to 19 international instruments administered by WIPO and, in 2020-2021, it had acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty and the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement. With the support of WIPO, a draft national IP strategy for the period to 2030 had been developed and was awaiting adoption by the Government. Belarus was a technologically advanced country making great strides in the field of information technology (IT), which was underlined by the country’s rating in the GII where it had been ranked in first place under the “Mobile app creation” indicator. In 2020, Belarus had exported computer services worth more than 2.5 billion United States dollars. The country paid particular attention to building human capacities: globally, it was ranked seventh and eleventh respectively under the “Tertiary education” and “Graduates in science and engineering” GII indicators. According to the GII, Belarus was also a leader in providing employment opportunities for women with advanced degrees. In the context of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Belarus and WIPO, Belarus was working to expand the network of TISCs, of which there were 14 at present, and to participate actively in WIPO research in relation to developing a local innovation ecosystem, for example in the field of autonomous and electric transport. Belarus hoped to broaden its cooperation with WIPO through joint projects intended to build human capacities in IP, raise public awareness of tools to protect the outcomes of intellectual activity and implement the digital technologies of WIPO. With the development of innovative and intellectual potential having been identified as a priority in Government policy, Belarus shared the focus of WIPO on increasing opportunities to integrate IP tools into the activities of high-tech sectors of the economy. In view of the rapid development of digital technology and its widespread application in all fields of activity, including in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, it was essential to consolidate the efforts of the international community to create a stable and balanced IP system that responded to current challenges and societal needs. Belarus was ready to play its part in implementing and testing the outcomes of WIPO pilot projects intended to encourage innovation and creative activity at the national and international levels.
22. The Delegation of Botswana aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group, and commended WIPO for its efforts to adapt to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite setbacks related to the pandemic, the implementation of the IP model office for Africa project was on course and its conclusion was anticipated for August 2022. Botswana welcomed support from WIPO for the development of its national IP policy, which was due to be adopted by Parliament in November 2021. The policy would ensure that Botswana’s IP governance framework fostered and harnessed IP potential for inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development.
23. The Delegation of Brazil said that innovation was key to overcoming the current global health and economic crises. In Brazil, measures to boost incentives for research and the participation of Brazilian companies in global innovation chains had borne fruit: the country’s ranking in that regard had improved in the most recent GII. Brazil had sought to open up its economy because innovation was not a zero-sum game. The success of neighbors also benefited competitors. The importance of collaboration had been underscored by the global vaccination campaign, to the success of which dozens of countries had contributed with innovations developed by them. The multidisciplinary nature of IP was implicitly recognized under the national IP strategy that had been launched in Brazil in 2020. The strategy had been conceived as a modern management tool. The National Institute of Intellectual Property had in recent years been overhauled and made more service-oriented. Accelerating efforts to clear the backlog of patent applications in Brazil had been greatly facilitated by reliance on the steps on their examination already taken by internationally recognized offices. Examinations of other types of asset, such as trademarks and industrial designs, were increasingly aligned with international standards. Accession by Brazil to the Madrid Protocol in 2019 had proven to be a positive step and the National Congress was considering accession to the Budapest Treaty. Consideration was also being given to possible accession to the WIPO Copyright Treaty, the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty and the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement. Aside from involvement in WIPO Lex-Judgments, WIPO Green and WIPO Alert, Brazil was playing an important role in cooperation projects in the context of IP and development. The aim of its pilot project on copyright in the digital environment was to support SMEs when they were granted a geographic indication or collective mark. Brazil was leading the way in the region in terms of encouraging the application of innovation to the market. Unicorn start-ups in the country were valued at more than $1 billion. In all, start-ups in Brazil had raised more than $3.5 billion in investments in 2020 – a figure that would be surpassed in 2021. New investors in start-ups benefitted from a recently introduced legal framework that provided them with legal security and cut down on administrative procedures. Representation in WIPO needed to better reflect the diversity and engagement of its Member States and regions in the Organization’s work.
24. The Delegation of Brunei Darussalam said that IP protection was key to the country’s efforts to achieve its Vision 2035 strategy of social and economic sustainability and to play a bigger role in the global market. To that end, Brunei Darussalam had acceded to a number of international treaties and there had been significant growth in domestic and international IP registration applications by individuals, SMEs and companies from various sectors. The Brunei Intellectual Property Office (BruIPO) needed to ensure its ability to respond to demand and growth in the sector by reviewing its procedures and domestic laws, taking into account the latest developments and international best practices. After a decade of disruption, the transfer of BruIPO back to the administrative control of the Attorney‑General’s Chambers should enable it to promote the IP agenda at the national level. Human resources at the Office had been bolstered and training and educational plans for staff had been put in place, with a view to enabling it to meet growing demand and the increasing volume of IP applications. Ultimately, the intention was to make BruIPO an independent body in the near future. The Office was working to raise awareness of IP by working with government ministries and agencies, as well as other stakeholders, such as higher education institutions, creative industries and relevant private sector actors.
25. The Delegation of Burkina Faso said that IP was essential to the socio-economic and cultural development of States and Burkina Faso had undertaken significant initiatives to create an ecosystem conducive to the strategic use of IP by different economic actors. To that end, with a view to promoting and raising the profile of local products and tackling counterfeiting, the institutional and legal frameworks had been strengthened through the creation of the National Committee for Geographical Indications and Collective Marks, and of the Mobile Economic Monitoring and Fraud Control Force. Given the importance of IP to raising the profile of local products, a pilot project, focusing on four products, had been launched. The project had enabled the creation and promotion of labels under collective marks for “Faso Dan Fani” woven fabric, Burkina shea butter and “Koko Dunda” dyed fabric, as well as the registration of the country’s first protected geographical indication for Saponé hats. With the support of WIPO, Burkina Faso had also adopted a national strategy for the development of IP. Regarding the promotion of copyright, the first training program for the collective management of copyright, organized by the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) in partnership with Thomas Sankara University of Burkina Faso, had been launched. While significant efforts had been made by the Burkina Faso authorities, with the support of various IP partners, a number of challenges remained to be overcome. Burkina Faso therefore sought support from WIPO in implementing the newly adopted national IP development strategy, promoting and raising the profile of local products, and continuing to establish TISCs in the country’s universities and research facilities.
26. The Delegation of Cambodia aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, and by the Delegation of Philippines, on behalf of ASEAN. WIPO had provided continuous support for the national IP system, including through capacity‑building activities and technical assistance in the deployment of the Industrial Property Automation System and the certification of marks. The Delegation welcomed the assistance of the Division for Asia and the Pacific with regard to: country plans for Cambodia; the country’s TISC; the registration and commercialization of products protected by geographical indications and collective marks; the Enabling Innovation Environment Project for IP and Technology; a draft law on trade secrets and undisclosed information; a draft sub-decree on the administrative enforcement of IP; projects on competency-based and individualized training for trademark examiners and a learning management system; and the deployment of the cloud‑based IP Office Business Solutions platform for the IP Department. Cambodia looked forward to receiving further training assistance for IP officials and the general public, in particular MSMEs. Cambodia would deposit its instrument of accession to the Berne Convention in late 2021 and accede to other treaties later with a view to benefitting fully from the IP system. Cambodia attached great importance to the development of a sound IP policy for economic development and poverty reduction. The country would welcome continued assistance from development partners and international organizations, especially WIPO, to support the branding of local products, and to strengthen and improve IP administration, innovation and enforcement to respond to global IP-related developments.
27. The Delegation of Canada said that it had recently collaborated with WIPO on a number of initiatives despite the continued constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) and the WIPO Academy had jointly hosted the Annual CIPO–WIPO Executive Workshop in a virtual format. In addition, Canada had partnered with WIPO to co-host a series of interactive webinars on WIPO services and initiatives. Regarding the work of the committees, Canada welcomed the recent progress in discussions on the draft proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23 and on important issues related to the functioning of WIPO. In May 2021, Canada had been honored to co‑sponsor the proposal on the protection of graphical user interface designs. It had also been pleased to participate in constructive cross-regional engagement with the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) and looked forward to continuing such discussions. Domestically, CIPO was constantly improving its ability to deliver quality and timely IP rights and, in the spring of 2021, had hosted its fourth annual IP Data and Research Conference focused on the integral relationship between IP and economic growth. Furthermore, it had launched an e-grant system and a new online applicant filing service for Canadian patents through the international process under the PCT. Canada continued to support innovation and contribute to a more inclusive IP system. Notably, it had taken steps to better understand and support small and medium‑sized businesses and underrepresented innovators and entrepreneurs such as women and indigenous peoples. Lastly, Canada was proud to announce the establishment in 2021 of the College of Patent Agents and Trademark Agents, which had assumed full responsibility for regulating the activities of such agents in Canada and protecting privileged communications between them and their clients. Canada was committed to working with Member States and the Secretariat to find solutions that best served the interests of the Organization, IP rights holders and other stakeholders.
28. The Delegation of Chile said that it appreciated the work of the Director General and his team, which had swiftly positioned WIPO as a key player in the fight against COVID-19. Chile was grateful for the package of support measures that the Organization had provided to Member States to complement their economic recovery efforts. The pandemic had highlighted the fundamental role that creativity and innovation played in finding solutions to global problems, such as producing vaccines in record time and developing virtual platforms for remote communication. WIPO must continue its mission to develop a balanced and effective international IP system that harnessed innovation and creativity for the benefit of everyone. That meant implementing the DA recommendations and aligning the Organization’s work with the SDGs. Chile supported the Director General’s vision, as reflected in the MTSP 2022–2026, to extend IP benefits to SMEs and women, both of which were target audiences of national initiatives in Chile. Examples of such initiatives included the establishment of an SME support center within the National Institute of Industrial Property (INAPI); the launch of the second version of the INAPI running competition for national projects that helped to combat the effects of the pandemic; the planned launch of the INAPI Más Origen competition for promoting seal‑of-origin products; IP skills and management programs for creative industries and national museums; the official launch of the Latin American Network of Intellectual Property and Gender, led by the IP offices of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru; and the publication of gender data on trademark and patent applicants. In 2021, significant improvements had been made to the protection of IP rights and the functioning of INAPI for the benefit of users. In addition, Chile had recently acceded to the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement, which was shortly due to enter into force in the country. Such advancements demonstrated the importance that Chile attached to the IP system and how an appropriately balanced system could promote innovation and technology transfer in a developing country such as Chile. None of those advancements would have been possible without the Organization’s assistance and Chile hoped that it could continue to count on the support of the Director General and his team. During the darkest moments of the pandemic, humanity’s best qualities had shone through, demonstrating both our ability to solve the great problems of our time together and the role of multilateralism, through WIPO, in coordinating the response to such problems.
29. The Delegation of Colombia said that, with the entire international community continuing to confront and recover from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the efforts made by the Chair, the Director General and the Organization to ensure that the present WIPO Assemblies could be held were much appreciated. As noted by the country’s President Iván Duque Márquez at the launch event for the 2021 GII, the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the country’s economy and underscored the need for further investment in science, technology and innovation. Countries with well-structured innovation ecosystems and more robust institutional capacity had responded better to the crisis. The ‘‘orange economy’’ – one of the pillars of public policy under the Government of President Duque – dovetailed with the goals of WIPO. It promoted better protection for copyright and related rights, which incentivized creators to continue their activities and ensured their economic remuneration and material well-being through the appropriate use of their works. To date, 66,067 individuals had received technical assistance in matters of copyright and related rights and, as at August 31, 2021, 281,379 works had been registered. The Delegation noted with satisfaction the progress made by the National Council for Economic and Social Policy in updating the national IP policy, which would harness IP to boost productivity and competitiveness by promoting innovation, creativity and technology transfer. The Organization’s continued support was crucial to the advancement and implementation of actions enabling the development of the national IP and innovation ecosystem so as to stimulate the country’s economic growth under that policy. In April 2021, under the *pro tempore* Presidency of Colombia, the Andean Community Commission had approved Decision No. 876 establishing the Common Regime for Country Marks, the main aim of which was to provide regional protection for distinctive signs used by countries in the implementation of national policies to promote their image and identity in commercial sectors, such as importation, investment, gastronomy and tourism. That important instrument would hopefully contribute to ongoing discussions within the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT). Colombia supported the prompt convening of a diplomatic conference on the negotiation of a DLT. It was also keen to accede to the Hague Agreement, which was a vital tool for simplifying and internationalizing the registration of industrial designs in the region. Colombia was making progress in that regard and the Organization’s valuable technical and legal assistance would help it to achieve tangible results. The Delegation acknowledged the considerable advancements made in recent years within the SCP. It attached particular importance to discussions on AI, the role of patents with respect to health technologies and the strengthening of initiatives related to publicly accessible databases containing information on the patent status of medicines and vaccines. It also welcomed all actions that the Organization had been taking to increase and improve the inclusion of women in the IP system. The Government’s international agenda prioritized gender equality through the economic empowerment of women, the reduction of educational gaps, the participation of women in sectors typically dominated by men, such as industry, construction and areas related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and the promotion of enterprises led by women. Mr. Tang was to be commended for his hard work in his first year as Director General, as evidenced by the Organization’s continued dynamism in spite of the exceptional circumstances. His leadership would doubtless help to establish consensus, strengthen the multilateral IP system and maintain the Organization’s high standards. Lastly, Colombia welcomed the creation of the IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector under the leadership of Assistant Director General Marco Alemán and was convinced that it would play a crucial role in the economic recovery of Member States and the strengthening of IP as a tool for competitiveness and productivity in the business sector.
30. The Delegation of the Congo said that the Assemblies provided a multilateral setting for Member States to pool their efforts in pursuit of inclusive solutions. As reflected in the MTSP 2022–2026, promoting IP through innovation and creativity helped nations to prosper. In that vein, the Congo intended to develop a fund to promote invention and technological innovation and support creators. In October 2020, in partnership with OAPI, the Congo had organized the eighth edition of the African Invention and Technological Innovation Fair. At the global level, it had contributed to the joint proposal on the resale right of visual artists within the SCCR. The Delegation underscored the importance of the WIPO Re:Search platform for conducting research on neglected tropical diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis. The Congo was pleased to note the contribution made to initiatives on that platform by the Congolese Foundation for Medical Research.
31. The Delegation of Costa Rica said that it was to be celebrated that, despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the WIPO Assemblies had continued to be held regularly and successfully, with the aims of evaluating the Organization’s progress and considering the future directions that should be taken for the benefit of all Member States. In that regard, Costa Rica would support the various initiatives being developed within WIPO committees. The Delegation welcomed the significant efforts that had been made within the SCP with information exchange sessions on the different provisions for granting patent licenses for health-care technologies, as well as discussions on access to medical products and health technologies; such efforts were of great importance to the concrete actions being taken to combat the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Delegation reaffirmed its support for discussions within the SCT on the concept of country brands; the discussions were intended to work towards determining substantive measures that would ensure the adequate regulation and treatment of country brands, the protection and use of which offered an effective opportunity to promote countries and create economies of scale. The Delegation also supported the efforts made to convene a diplomatic conference on the DLT, which would provide an important opportunity to improve international regulation. Regarding the SCCR, Costa Rica remained committed to discussions and continued to support the exchange of information on copyright limitations and exceptions for libraries, archives, museums and educational and research institutions, which was of considerable national importance as the copyright legislation of Costa Rica did not contain limitations or exceptions for those institutions. In addition, it was hoped that a constructive discussion could be had on the copyright-related challenges of the digital environment. IP was a vital instrument for the economic, social and cultural development of countries and Costa Rica would therefore continue to work with WIPO on the projects needed to promote innovation and creativity, with the aim of continuously strengthening a balanced and effective IP system for the benefit of everyone. The Delegation was grateful for the support the country had received from WIPO in implementing systems and technological tools that had brought IP closer to users and facilitated its internal work.
32. The Delegation of Côte d’Ivoire said that it had noted with satisfaction the report of the Director General, as well as the healthy financial situation of WIPO, as reflected in its positive financial statements. The Organization was to be congratulated on its resilience, and encouraged to continue to strive for a global IP system that was increasingly efficient, consensus-based and fair. Côte d’Ivoire remained convinced that the IP system constituted an important vehicle for socio-economic progress and development for all countries. The Government of Côte d’Ivoire had therefore, over several years, been undertaking a range of institutional reforms to better benefit from the opportunities that the system afforded. Of particular importance was the reform of the statutes of the Ivorian Copyright Office, which was aimed at establishing instruments and tools for good governance with a view to broadening the collection base for royalties and improving the standard of living of members. It should be emphasized that those actions would not have been possible without the various types of support provided by WIPO, in particular technical assistance and capacity-building. That support had led to the establishment and development of a network of TISCs. A webinar on the development of the network, organized on July 20, 2021, had provided a context for the presentation of new WIPO tools. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for its assistance during awareness-raising and training activities for universities and higher education institutions, with a view to encouraging them to adopt the IP system for the benefit of research and development, in line with the guidance adopted by WIPO, OAPI and ARIPO in Harare, Zimbabwe, in November 2019.
33. The Delegation of Croatia said that it was pleased that WIPO had maintained its financial stability in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Delegation supported the financial planning of the upcoming biennium and welcomed the enhancements made to programs and to the financial planning methodology and presentation. The pandemic had demonstrated that modern communications technology allowed work and communication to continue, regardless of physical limits or borders. That technology would, it was hoped, facilitate the preparatory work for evaluating the WIPO external offices. The Copyright and Related Rights Act, which had been passed the previous year as part of a broader process of European Union legal reform, adapted the country’s legal framework to technological developments that had changed how copyright protected works were created, produced, distributed and exploited. The new legal framework also aimed to incentivize creativity by sharing revenue more fairly among stakeholders and providing legal certainty when copyright protected works were legitimately used in digital environments. Despite the swift recovery of the economy, the pandemic had contributed to a decrease in the number of IP filings.
34. The Delegation of Cuba said that knowledge, science, technology and innovation played an important role in implementing national policies and the 2030 National Plan for Economic and Social Development. Accordingly, Cuba was encouraging the establishment of science and technology parks and companies and SMEs, whose development was intrinsically linked with IP management. While the COVID-19 pandemic had tested the mettle of the global scientific community, undeniable progress had been made, particularly in the development of vaccines. Although Cuba faced enormous obstacles due to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America, it had managed to develop three vaccines and two candidate vaccines that were in the clinical development phase. Currently, 44.1 per cent of the population had been fully vaccinated and 80.8 per cent had received their first dose. Initial steps were being taken towards the prequalification of the vaccines with a view to their inclusion in the WHO emergency use list. It was vitally important to renew the mandate of the IGC for 2022–2023 – notwithstanding the progress made in that arena – in order to reach an agreement on international legal instruments for the effective and balanced protection of GRs, TK and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs). The DA was fundamentally important to the Organization and Member States, whose socio-economic development objectives included integrating development into WIPO activities, furthering discussions on IP and development under the third pillar of the mandate of the CDIP and fully implementing the 45 Agenda recommendations. Regarding the future work of the SCP, further research should be conducted on IPR limitations and exceptions, paying particular attention to the challenges that patents posed for technology transfer. In that regard, ongoing research on patents and access to medical products and health technologies was vital for the sharing of criteria and conclusions. Regarding negotiations on a DLT, it was important for the text to accommodate the interests of all Member States, particularly regarding technical assistance and the requirement to disclose the origin of the TK associated with a design. Cuba acknowledged the support provided by WIPO and in particular the Cooperation Bureau for Development of Latin America and the Caribbean in building national capacity with different actors from the national IP system. It also appreciated the support of the Infrastructure and Platforms Sector in implementing the Industrial Property Automation System, including recent developments in the system and its new management support function, which had contributed to improving institutional management and the national IP system. Cuba was grateful for the technical assistance and capacity‑building support received from the PCT Services Department and the Madrid Registry and wished to thank the WIPO Academy for its work in the area of IP training and promotion, particularly its activities at the national level.
35. The Delegation of the Czech Republic aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and the CEBS Group. Measures to strengthen global IP protection systems were welcome, in particular efforts to eliminate the Lisbon Union’s budget deficit and ensure the Union’s financial sustainability through the work of the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System. In that regard, the Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications had afforded an important opportunity to raise awareness of the geographical indications system. On normative issues, the Delegation hoped that a decision to convene a conference of the adoption of the DLT would be forthcoming; the IGC remained the most appropriate forum to discuss the disclosure requirement. The Delegation remained involved in the work of the SCCR and hoped that a consensus would be reached on the Treaty for Protection of Broadcasting Organizations. The artists’’ resale right should become a permanent item on the Standing Committee’s agenda. The Delegation also welcomed the work of the SCP, and hoped for further technical debate on substantive patent law harmonization. The proposed renewal of the mandate of the IGC for the 2022–2023 biennium was welcome. The Delegation commended the work done by WIPO on development and IP, through the provision of technical assistance, as well as its work on enforcement, on AI from an IP perspective, and on teaching and education. With regard to raising awareness of IP rights protection and commercialization, WIPO provided invaluable assistance and services, in particular through its Division for Transition and Developed Countries. Lastly, the Czech Republic had taken measures to support alternative dispute resolution; a WIPO webinar on mediation of IP disputes had been particularly helpful for raising awareness in that regard.
36. The Delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea welcomed the increase over the previous year in the number of parties to a number of international IP instruments and the agreement between WIPO, WHO and WTO to cooperate in helping countries to obtain access to the medical technology needed to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. Science and technology played a decisive part in tackling such challenges as the pandemic, climate change and pollution. The leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Kim Jong Un, had placed the development of science and technology at the heart of the country’s public policy. Access to advanced science and technology, in particular through the Sci-Tech Complex, was open to all. Inventions and innovation were generated not only in research institutes but also by ordinary people, and were applied in sectors across the national economy. The Government had consolidated the legal framework for the protection of IP and apps had been developed to help raise public awareness of IP. Online workshops held by the WIPO Academy during the pandemic had been welcome. WIPO should focus on fostering IP rights in developing countries. The adoption of the DLT had been held up for two decades by the issues of technology transfer to and capacity-building for the developing countries. Resolving those issues was in the best interests of all. The aim of IP protection should not only be to stimulate scientific and technological progress but also to foster economic development and build a civilized culture. WIPO should strive to ensure that scientific, technological and cultural achievements contributed to meeting the SDGs and to facilitating the socio‑economic and cultural development of all Member States.
37. The Delegation of Denmark said that innovation was a key driver of economic growth and that R&D were vital in ensuring sustainable growth and addressing the various global challenges facing society at all levels of development. The COVID-19 pandemic had underscored the need for a strong and balanced IP system. Indeed, public and private parties that relied heavily on IP rights had been able to collaborate and create effective vaccines at an unprecedented pace. In such difficult circumstances, it was particularly important that businesses could count on robust support from IP institutions. WIPO served not only as the global champion of IP rights, but also as a forum for cooperation among States. Continued efforts must be made to ensure that the Organization could deliver cost-efficient IP services that were fit for purpose. The Delegation appreciated the efforts made by WIPO to improve global IP systems such as the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems and supported the continuing development of IT services for the benefit of users and IP offices alike. Turning to domestic developments, in 2021, the Danish Ministry of Industry, Business, and Financial Affairs had launched the country’s first national IP Action Plan. The objectives of the plan included encouraging more investment in R&D and inciting more companies to leverage IP rights to protect their innovations against infringement, with the overarching aim of strengthening Danish companies’’ competitiveness in increasingly competitive global markets. The plan comprised four focus areas and 16 initiatives that strengthened the framework for the use of IP rights to create value, growth and jobs. In 2021, The Danish Patent and Trademark Office had conducted a successful awareness-raising campaign on counterfeiting. The campaign, which had been targeted primarily at young people and launched both in the press and on social media in collaboration with seven influencers, had reached a large share of the Danish population. In addition, the Nordic Patent Institute had continued to deliver high-quality products to its applicants. The Delegation was committed to contributing positively, constructively and pragmatically to the work of WIPO and its various bodies. The efficient functioning of the global services provided by WIPO was vitally important for Danish users.
38. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC. It was grateful to WIPO and in particular the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean for the support that they had provided to its IP office with training, including its IP training program, from September 2020 to May 2021, the second training module on patent rights for the National Judicial College, with judges in the Dominican Republic, and the first training module on trademarks for judges, which was under way. It particularly appreciated the readiness with which WIPO provided its support. The Delegation was committed to making the Assemblies a success.
39. The Delegation of Ecuador said that recognition of global warming had led to discussions of the collective responsibility to protect the environment. Similarly, the discovery that plastic waste was affecting marine life in the oceans and its ecosystems had led people to take responsibility and act; the first step was to stop using plastic straws, and then change ways of life. In a conversation between a little girl and her parents, she could tell them that she would like to dedicate her life to music, to which her parents would respond by asking what she would live on. That was the question presently confronting many creators around the world. Societies must ask themselves how many works had failed to come to fruition not for a lack of talent, but for the absence of industry encouragement and support; action must be taken to change that situation to honor the creators who were unable to dedicate their lives to their ingenuity and had to find other work to survive. It was necessary to take responsibility for those that had fallen by the wayside because of a lack of opportunities; they were part of the creative and cultural wealth of societies and could not be lost. Creators were to be admired for their ability to keep going after every setback and call it a learning experience, in the manner of children who, after falling over and briefly crying, would get up, brush down their scraped knees and carry on playing. They were people who created out of love, listening to their instincts, when they followed a project from an initial idea to a completed creation, reaching out to the world to change it and, in many cases, irreversibly altering the course of history. Creative labor should receive recognition in the same way as any other kind, and the efforts and investments that went into a creating a work or invention should be appreciated. It was essential to turn the intangible, that which could not be seen, into something tangible and concrete. For that reason, and in view of the need to highlight personal responsibility for the actions or omissions affecting the development of the creative and cultural wealth of societies, Ecuador was implementing a public policy of creative and cultural responsibility. WIPO Member States worked to allow IP to change lives and enable individuals, communities, societies and entire regions to make a living from their creations, which could only be achieved through the involvement of all. That was a priority area for Ecuador as IP was an essential tool for the creative and cultural industries, allowing the work of writers, artists, musicians and other Ecuadorian talent to reach the world. At present, it was creators who were generating global solutions, paradigm shifts and technological advances, and traditions, local markets and ancestral heritage were being rediscovered and saved thanks to those who valued them. They were the spark that kindled the flame that set IP alight. The singer Nina Simone defined freedom as the absence of fear. As a society, Member States must guarantee a world that valued creations because every creation had the potential to transform existing realities. A safe space, free from fear and open to all, must be created so that the next time parents asked their daughter, passionate about music, what she would live on, the response, delivered in full confidence, would be: “I am going to live on my creations, I am going to live on my talent, I am going to live on my creativity.”
40. The Delegation of Egypt aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of the regional groups to which it belonged. WIPO had a vital role to play in strengthening the international IP system and supporting Member States in their efforts to encourage innovation and creativity by providing technical assistance, capacity-building and distance learning programs. All of that helped to enable countries, in particular the developing countries, to implement their ambitious development plans and achieve the SDGs. The WIPO Division for Arab Countries was to be commended for its activities in that regard. Progress on pending ambitious international instruments, which would enrich the IP system, was desirable in the near term. The focus of WIPO on new technology was laudable; it should reinforce support to Member States in that rapidly developing area so as to narrow the digital and technological divide between developing and advanced countries. The Delegation welcomed the adoption of the Program of Work and Budget for 2022-2023 and that of the MTSP 2022–2026. It was gratifying to see that spending by the Organization on development activities was rising, which in turn was boosting its developmental role and was consistent with its DA. Moreover, it served the Director General’s ambitious vision of reaching out to stakeholders that had hitherto attracted little attention, such as SMEs, young people and women, so as to increase their awareness of IP and its role in bettering their lives. The COVID-19 pandemic had driven home the importance of international cooperation based on the principles of unity, solidarity and shared responsibility to ensure a balanced and effective response. The aim must be to alleviate its worst aspects and to work to remove any obstacles to the just and equitable provision of vaccines to countries and peoples all over the world. The pandemic has also underlined the vital role of IP and the importance of mobilizing resources to support research, development and innovation across various fields, in particular public health. The Delegation commended the Director General on his efforts to forge trilateral cooperation between WIPO, WTO and WHO, which had culminated in the recent agreement by the three organizations to roll out a technical support package to help Member States to deal with the pandemic and its repercussions, and welcomed the appointment of Sherif Saadallah as the Organization’s focal point on implementation and results monitoring in that regard. Egypt was relying increasingly on IP and scientific research to achieve comprehensive and sustainable development as part of the country’s Vision 2030 and was keen to foster research in order to address urgent challenges such as COVID-19. Egypt had made a quantitative and qualitative leap forward in scientific research, ranking 30th globally (first in Africa and second among the Arab countries) in an international scientific publishing classification. It had also moved up in the latest GII, ranking 94th globally. Egypt had adopted measures and launched several initiatives to boost its system of scientific research and to support and encourage innovators and creators. The budget for higher education and research had been doubled to 65 billion Egyptian pounds. Legislation had been passed to stimulate science, technology and innovation (STI), providing a new springboard for research. The aim was to reap the benefits of research and innovative ideas and transform them into tangible products made in Egypt. The Egyptian Knowledge Bank, which had been launched in partnership with more than 30 international institutions, was the largest digital library in the world. A fund had been set up to finance and back researchers and innovators. The aim of the consolidated national STI strategy for 2030 was to foster and localize technology and thereby contribute to socio‑economic development in various fields. Egypt had launched a reference genome project for Egyptians and the establishment of the Egyptian Genome Center was the greatest scientific project in the country’s modern history. Those developments would allow the country to enter an era of personalized medicine, in which gene therapy would be used in disease diagnostics and to determine the appropriate treatments. Egypt intended to leverage digital transformation and new technology to facilitate its development plans. It had launched a national AI strategy and set up a national AI council to supervise and monitor its implementation and update it in the light of developments around the world in that area. The strategy comprised four pillars: AI for governance (to improve government performance); AI for development (to achieve development goals in vital sectors through the use of apps); capacity‑building (through training for national officials); and the enhancement of international cooperation on AI.
41. The Delegation of El Salvador aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC. El Salvador considered innovation a key factor of sustainable development. Accordingly, it was promoting innovation as a fundamental pillar for economic and productive transformation through inter-institutional initiatives aimed at establishing an innovation ecosystem. All such activities fell within the framework of the 2020‑2030 Digital Agenda, of which IP promotion was a central component. With the support of WIPO, El Salvador was updating its national IP strategy, which would contribute to achieving objectives in the area of innovation while complementing the Cuscatlán Plan drawn up by the Government, the Digital Agenda, the Trade and Investment Policy and related internal guidelines. Achieving such objectives would doubtless promote sustainable development, which was all the more relevant in the context of the ongoing post-pandemic social and economic recovery. Despite the health crisis, the negative impact of which had been felt around the world, there had been positive developments in IP rights protection in El Salvador over the previous eight months, including an increase in the activity of trademark and copyright renewal and registration services. There had also been a rise in the number of applications for the establishment of companies, registration renewals and registrations of security rights. Such developments were a result of the economic regeneration plan of the Ministry of the Economy, which was geared to boosting domestic and foreign investors’’ confidence in the country and, by extension, job creation and preservation and economic growth. WIPO had a key role to play in helping Member States to continue to promote a sustainable economic recovery. El Salvador was grateful to the Organization for collaborating with developing countries and helping them to build their capacities and extend the benefits of IP to SMEs, women and young entrepreneurs. It acknowledged the vital role that WIPO had played in global forums in the quest for a timely and effective solution to the production of vaccines and medical supplies for combating COVID‑19, including its tireless work with other institutions, such as WHO and WTO. The Delegation urged WIPO to continue that work and to redouble its efforts in all areas, including the normative agenda. El Salvador was committed to continuing its active participation in the Organization’s work with a view to achieving tangible results in the different areas of its agenda. The Delegation was convinced that the productive dialogue between Member States in the coming days would make the Assemblies a success.
42. The Delegation of Eswatini aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation thanked WIPO for its continued technical support, in particular in reviewing the national IP regulatory framework, which had been a priority for ensuring robust IP support for innovation and creativity. Eswatini had refined and advanced its IP protection policy to include measures relating to exploitation and commercialization. In that regard, the broadening of the IP and Innovation Ecosystem Sector’s mandate was particularly welcome. SMEs in Eswatini would be encouraged to utilize the IP system and its commercial benefits. Eswatini was making efforts to establish institutions to foster efficient copyright administration. WIPO’s technical assistance had also helped with training to enhance understanding of the impacts and contributions of copyright. Support had also been received for automating the administration of Eswatini’s IP system to improve efficiencies and eliminate bottlenecks that had tended to discourage creativity and innovation. Eswatini had ambitious plans to explore, with the support of WIPO, how IP could be leveraged to bolster innovation and industrialization.
43. The Delegation of Ethiopia aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group and underscored the importance of fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. The Delegation supported the renewal of the mandate of the IGC for the 2022–2023 biennium. The Committee’s work should culminate in the adoption of an international legal instrument. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ethiopia had continued to implement administrative, economic, and institutional reforms in a variety of areas. A 10-year development plan had been adopted, which included enabling areas in which innovation and technology were pivotal. The Plan aimed to enhance growth in all sectors; IP would be an important aspect of its implementation. With a view to strengthening the IP system, legislation had been amended and new laws promulgated. Efforts were being made to improve service quality and build human capital in IP to respond to development needs. The broad and varied support received from WIPO had been crucial and was greatly appreciated. Ethiopia had ratified the Marrakesh Treaty and efforts were being made to incorporate its provisions into national law. The ratification of the Paris Convention and the Madrid Protocol remained under active consideration.
44. The Delegation of Finland aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union and its member States. It considered innovation crucial to sustainable economic growth and was concerned about the considerable challenges facing the IP rights system in the new digital environment and data economy. In that regard, it believed that WIPO could and should play a leading role in discussions on AI and IP. The Frontier Technologies event organized by the IP and Frontier Technologies Division in September 2021 was greatly appreciated and aligned with Finland’s national AI strategy, which aimed to create the conditions for the advancement of digitalization for the benefit of SMEs and digital investment in particular. The Delegation appreciated the efforts made by WIPO to improve global IP services under the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems. It held the view that the IP system should be gradually digitalized so that rights holders and society as a whole continued to benefit from the efficient operation of the IP framework. Digitalization of the IP system was also central to the creation of a new national IP rights strategy in Finland. Among other initiatives, the country was developing digital copyright infrastructure, the first stage of which was to help stakeholders to better understand the benefits of identifying IP assets and rights holders and interoperable standards for data exchange in the digital environment. Finland was taking steps to draw more attention to indigenous peoples’’ rights. For instance, during its presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, it had stressed the need for an exchange of views on the rights of the Sámi people with a view to protecting their TK and TCEs. A conference on the protection of Nordic indigenous TK and IP was due to be held in cooperation with the Sámi Parliament in November 2021. Finland was looking forward to participating in a WIPO practical workshop for the Nordic countries in 2022.
45. The Delegation of France said that it would like to thank the WIPO Director General, Secretariat and staff for their unwavering commitment and investment during the pandemic. The Delegation welcomed the resumption of the Organization’s trilateral cooperation with WHO and WTO and hoped that further workshops would be held to enable the achievement of tangible results in the area of technology transfer for the benefit of developing countries. It was vital that vaccines and treatments could be produced and administered as locally as possible to patients throughout the world. The Delegation fully supported the Director General’s mandate to put innovation and creativity at the heart of IP. Maintaining an effective and balanced relationship between the four Unions that underpinned the IP system was central to the success of that mandate. Each Union contributed in its own way and within its own parameters to protecting and recognizing the work of investors and creators, which was the driving force behind cultural, scientific and technological progress. Since the Unions were specialized, they should be considered both complementary and integral to one another. IP relied on a range of different tools, such as patents, marks, designs, models, copyright and geographical indications. France attached great importance to each, as it had recently demonstrated by acceding the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement. The accession benefited both consumers, by providing them with assurances about the quality of the goods that they consumed, and producers, by protecting the goods that they produced. In so doing, it helped to boost the reputation of the territories concerned and contributed to economic growth. The Delegation looked forward to resuming discussions on a treaty for the protection of broadcasting organizations. In the age of the Internet and social media, it was high time that writers, artists and creators were afforded adequate protection. It should be borne in mind that nobody had a monopoly over the IP system: it was and should continue to be regarded as a tool for the development of all countries, regardless of their level of development, in the spirit of universal progress.
46. The Delegation of Gabon said that the unprecedented health situation, while constituting a challenge for health systems and national economies, also presented a unique opportunity to question the multilateral system and correct errors that had allowed inequalities to emerge on many levels, going against the objectives set in 2015 that were reflected in the SDGs, which were intended to leave no-one behind. Gabon considered that the way out of the crisis called for increased solidarity and cooperation. In that regard, the Delegation welcomed the discussions that had culminated in the adoption of initiatives set out in the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23 under “WIPO’s response to COVID-19”. The collaboration between WIPO, WHO and WTO, and the establishment of a joint technical assistance platform had brought a glimmer of hope in that regard as they provided an opportunity to make available to Member States the medical technologies needed to combat COVID-19. Beyond that particular aim, it should be recalled that the Organization’s discussions had a direct impact on improving living conditions in countries, and thereby on the attainment of the SDGs. It was therefore imperative that the discussions were broadened, for example through a conference on IP and the response to COVID-19. Discussions on patents and health had found real meaning, as had the justification of a suspension of the TRIPS Agreement with a view to facilitating technology transfers and technical assistance. Only by doing so could states’’ resilience to such threats be strengthened. Furthermore, the Delegation expressed its satisfaction regarding the convening of the 41st session of the IGC and the Assembly’s recommendation to renew the Committee’s mandate. Regarding the standard-setting program, the Delegation hoped that outstanding issues could be resolved with a view to convening a diplomatic conference for the adoption of the DLT. At the national level, the new headquarters of the Gabon Industrial Property Office, which had been built with the assistance of OAPI, had been opened and collaboration with OAPI had continued. In that regard, a regional seminar was being organized in Libreville on operationalizing the African Continental Free Trade Area.
47. The Delegation of the Gambia said that despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, WIPO had continued to provide invaluable support and assistance, in particular for the review of the Gambia Intellectual Property Act 2021. Investment in ICT was fundamental to the administration of IP rights. The Industrial Property Automation System was being upgraded to version 4.0, which would be completed early in 2022. Implementation of the Gambia IP Policy and Strategy for 2018–2021 was well under way, in particular thanks to the concerted efforts of Masters in Intellectual Property alumni, who had been sponsored by WIPO and ARIPO. The Gambia had benefitted from numerous webinars organized by the WIPO Academy, Madrid Division and Hague Division, and looked forward to further virtual and in‑person training opportunities. The guidance and support of the WIPO Division for Africa was particularly welcome.
48. The Delegation of Georgia, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation on behalf of the CEBS Group, said that it appreciated the efforts of WIPO to ensure the stability of the Organization and its activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was grateful to the Department for Transition and Developed Countries for its cooperation and to the WIPO Academy for its training and capacity-building activities. The Delegation welcomed initiatives aimed at supporting SMEs in commercialization and IP management with the aim of encouraging national economic growth and development. It was hoped that WIPO would continue to respond to the needs of Member States efficiently and to provide them with the services and resources they needed.
49. The Delegation of Germany said that it fully supported the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, and the Delegation of the European Union and its member States. It shared the Director General’s vision, as recently reflected in the MTSP 2022–2026, that IP should promote innovation and creativity anywhere for the good of everyone. Germany remained committed to helping WIPO to develop a balanced and effective global IP ecosystem to advance innovation and creativity for a brighter and more sustainable future. A strong IP ecosystem was all the more important as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a significant impact on health and the global economy. IP systems could only drive innovation, competitiveness and economic development if they were continuously monitored and, where necessary, adapted to meet new challenges. Having previously encouraged WIPO to engage more closely with WHO and WTO to ensure that IP issues were included in discussions on how to overcome the pandemic, the Delegation welcomed the formal strengthening of trilateral cooperation among those organizations on matters of public health, IP and trade and considered the joint workshop on technology transfer and licensing held in September 2021 as a positive first step towards continuing that cooperation. It also welcomed the rollout of a WIPO package of services and measures to assist Member States in addressing the pandemic and laying the foundations for the post-‑pandemic economic recovery. However, Germany considered that WIPO could play a more active role in the development of IP-based solutions, such as patent pools, pledges and licensing structures, to help to ensure fair global access to vaccines and medicine. For example, the Organization could extend the use of its multistakeholder collaborative platforms to help to forge meaningful partnerships for addressing urgent international needs on the basis of the IP system. It could also provide its knowledge and expertise to help to develop existing licensing platforms. With regard to AI, WIPO should continue to act both as an international observatory for identifying and monitoring trends and developments and as a global forum for exchanging ideas coordinating efforts. The Delegation shared the view that AI was just one of a number of new frontier technologies and looked forward to discussing topics such as big data, blockchain and genetic engineering within the framework of the newly named WIPO Conversation on IP and Frontier Technologies with a view to exploiting the full economic potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Germany considered IP rights an integral part of the legal, economic and cultural framework within which enterprises and society as a whole functioned. WIPO, as the central institution for developing global IP policy and managing global IP infrastructure, should highlight the role of IP in addressing the global challenges of our time, including health crises, economic recovery, climate change and sustainable development. The Delegation encouraged WIPO to contribute actively, within its mandate, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in close cooperation with other Geneva-based institutions. In that context, joining the UNSDG would enable WIPO to improve its multilateral cooperation with other UN entities and partners and to determine how best to include IP in the implementation of the SDGs. Germany supported further international normative development aimed at simplifying and harmonizing the existing international IP framework for the benefit of stakeholders, including IP offices. The Delegation regretted that no progress had been made on the normative agenda at the 2020 Assemblies and stood ready to engage constructively in discussions on normative issues. It also looked forward to resuming substantive discussions within the SCCR – within an appropriate framework and as conditions allowed, given the sensitive nature of such discussions. The traditional consensus on the allocation of time between agenda items within that Committee should be respected. Provided Member States worked together to strike a fair balance between the interests of all stakeholders, positive results could be achieved. Germany remained committed to improving the protection of broadcasting organizations by reaching a consensus on an international treaty to that end. For the treaty to be successful in the long term, its scope of application should reflect the technical developments that had taken place. The Delegation therefore welcomed discussions on further technologies, in particular on deferred transmissions. Once such discussions could be resumed, Germany would continue to actively support the efforts of the SCCR to advance text-based work on an international treaty for the protection of broadcasting organizations. Germany was interested in sharing national experiences of copyright limitations and exceptions for certain organizations and purposes, as well as for people with disabilities other than print disabilities. Although it saw no need for a legally binding international instrument in that area, it wished to learn more about other Member States’’ related legal concepts. It was also interested in sharing views on such issues as resale rights and copyright challenges in the digital environment. With regard to patent law, WIPO and in particular the SCP must heed the calls of users around the world for the further development, harmonization and improvement of the patent system. Germany recognized the ongoing work of the SCP in that area and welcomed the holding of sharing sessions during the thirty-second session, in particular on patentability issues relating to AI. It looked forward to a further sharing session during the thirty-third session on the use of AI in examination procedures. Since AI technology presented a number of opportunities and challenges for patent system administration, the sharing of experiences and information on such topics within the SCP was highly beneficial for all Member States. Germany was particularly eager to continue work on issues of patent quality, including opposition systems, and the confidentiality of communications between patent advisors and their clients. Further work in that area was beneficial to countries of all levels of development, since it would enhance the credibility, reliability and stability of the international IP system. The Delegation would continue to actively contribute to work on patents and health and acknowledged the efforts and activities of WIPO committees and other international organizations in that regard. Since WIPO was the appropriate forum for addressing patent law issues, Germany was pleased to see patents and health on the agenda of the SCP. The latest trends in the number of applications under the PCT underscored the importance of the PCT System for users worldwide. Germany was delighted to note that the number of PCT applications filed worldwide in 2020 had increased by 4 per cent to 275,882, despite the global impact of the pandemic, and by 67 per cent between 2010 and 2020. As a patent-intensive country, both nationally and internationally, Germany was pleased to see the PCT System working so well. In 2020, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA) had processed 7,525 international applications in the national phase, of which approximately 85 per cent had been filed by applicants from outside Germany. The Delegation highly appreciated the numerous improvements made to the PCT System over recent years, particularly to its technical and legal framework, and hoped that the PCT working group’s deliberations would continue in a constructive spirit in the next sessions. It encouraged all WIPO Member States to use the system. The DLT was a pending issue. The Delegation regretted that, at the 2019 Assemblies, the facilitator’s proposed resolution to the problem of the disclosure requirement had been rejected and Member States had once again failed to reach consensus on the convening of a diplomatic conference. Although Germany, like other European Union member States, remained convinced that such a requirement was not relevant to industrial designs and that its inclusion in the Treaty would contradict the aim of simplifying and harmonizing design registration procedures, it was open to considering any reasonable and constructive proposals during the 2021 Assembly meetings or in the future. Turning to the Geneva Act, the accession of the European Union in 2019 marked the entry into force of the Act for all contracting parties to the Lisbon System. Geographical indications were an important instrument for protecting regional TK relating to both agricultural and non-agricultural products. Germany noted the broad consensus reached by Member States to continue work within the IGC and recognized the importance of that work. Since no progress could be made during the current biennium owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, Germany supported the proposal to transfer the 2019 mandate to the 2022–2023 biennium. A great deal of work had still to be done before a consensus could be reached on a *sui generis* instrument that accommodated the interests of holders of TK, GRs and folklore but did not harm the functioning of the international IP system. Germany was willing to continue its constructive participation in that process and remained fully committed to achieving further progress in the field of development, particularly in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also supported the continued implementation of the 45 DA recommendations in a balanced and consensus-driven manner. The Delegation was pleased to note that the CDIP had been able to resume its work in 2020, albeit with a truncated agenda. Despite the challenging conditions, significant progress had been made in the last two sessions (CDIP 25 and 26) on core issues such as technical assistance and the advancement of DA projects. Germany was convinced that the Committee’s constructive and forward‑looking approach would enable it to overcome whatever challenges it faced in the future. The DPMA had continued its successful cooperation with WIPO and other IP organizations and national IP offices. In February 2021, the DPMA and WIPO had successfully staged further roving seminars aimed at informing the public about WIPO services, with a particular emphasis on the PCT procedure. For the first time, the seminars had been supported by colleagues from the IP offices of Austria and Switzerland. In late 2021, the DPMA was due to assist WIPO in the training of examiners from the Albanian office.
50. The Delegation of Ghana aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the African Group and said that remarkable progress had been made in the development, production and roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, with over 6.3 billion doses administered across 184 countries. Disparities in vaccine access persisted, however, raising questions about certain countries’’ commitment to leaving no one behind. Ghana commended the Organization’s advocacy of equity in that regard and welcomed the tripartite cooperation with WHO and WTO to deliver new strategies for vaccine production and distribution. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the Ghana Industrial Property Office of the Registrar General’s Department, Ministry of Justice, was processing Madrid System applications for trademarks and Hague System applications for industrial designs in line with its treaty obligations. The Office had also mapped institutions and was ready to host the TISC Program and sign the respective Service Level Agreement with WIPO. The Organization’s support was invaluable in building the capacity of universities and research institutions to implement institutional IP policies in line with the national IP strategy to promote innovative activities, and its efforts to engage with young people, women and other underrepresented stakeholders were welcome. Ghana thanked Member States that had extended technical cooperation activities for IP, in particular that received from the Government of Switzerland under the Swiss-Ghana IP Project, which was due to close by the end of 2021.
51. The Delegation of Greece, aligning itself with the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, as well as by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union and its member states, said that WIPO resources had been managed prudently and net assets had increased. Facilitating access to the IP system and responding to users’’ needs should remain a priority. Delivering high-quality services and digital transformation would increase trust in the IP ecosystem. Working towards a balanced system would create socio-economic growth. The domestic IP system had continued to support innovation and creativity, which led to development and growth. Trademark filings before the Greek Trademark Office had continued to increase. E-filings had increased by 40 per cent over two and a half years and by September 2021, 5,276 national applications and 767 international applications had been filed. The trademarks registry had become an electronic database. Trademark registrations were transferred to the Hellenic Industrial Property Organization (OBI), which would manage industrial property titles, and a ministerial decree would specify the start date of the new system. Despite the pandemic, patent filings before the OBI had increased by 30 per cent due to a 33 per cent decrease in the search fee. Electronic filing and IT improvements facilitated access to the IP system and improved IP title management. A series of activities had been organized to raise awareness of the importance of buying authentic products. Mykonos had become the second city to join the ‘‘Authenticities’’ network that the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) had launched. During the fourth award ceremony, two Greek universities, two SMEs and two individual inventors received awards. The Interagency for Market Control (DIMEA) had worked with Greek IP enforcement authorities to carry out 23,952 checks from August 2020 to August 2021, seize 82,835 counterfeit items and impose fines worth 1,537,200 euros. A legislative amendment from July 2021 had given the Committee for the Notification of Copyright and Related Rights Infringements on the Internet the power to block access to copyright‑infringing material in the case of large-scale infringements, which was particularly important for live television events. EU Directives 2019/790 and 2019/789 were expected to enter into force. The Hellenic Copyright Organization provided legal access to music, films, television series, videogames, images and books through Agorateka.
52. The Delegation of Guatemala aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC. It appreciated the Director General’s report highlighting the broad range of initiatives that were leveraging IP for economic, cultural and human development and in particular the focus on young people, who were central to the Government’s own agenda. It set great store by the Organization’s normative work and the holding of multilateral negotiations for the creation and implementation of legal instruments that met States’’ needs and it urged Member States to continue their positive work on the various topics under discussion. Guatemala was grateful to WIPO, under the leadership of Director General Daren Tang, for supporting its IP office with technical capacity building, project formulation and continuous training and wished to thank the Sectors for their work in the different areas of IP. Particular thanks were owed to the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean, led by Ms. Beatriz Amorim-Borher and Ms. Lorena Bolaños, Senior Program Officer within the Copyright Development Division. Guatemala remained committed to working constructively towards achieving the Organization’s objectives.
53. The Delegation of Hungary said that it shared the Director General’s vision in which WIPO supported innovation and creativity through IP. The Delegation congratulated the global research and medical communities for producing a vaccine in approximately 12 months. Vaccines were the only solution to the pandemic and it was vital to ensure that there were enough. Hungary was building its own vaccine production center and it hoped that other countries would have the opportunity to do so. Ideological and political issues must not influence vaccine authorization procedures. The Delegation believed that vaccine patents should be respected to encourage researchers to continue their work. Over the previous year, the global economy had suffered, with 114 million people losing their jobs, so it was time to incentivize investments to save and create jobs. The Delegation was in favor of helping SMEs enter foreign markets and deal with IP issues. Hungary had the twelfth most open economy in the world and Hungarian companies could profit from broader geographical coverage of global IP protection services. The Delegation hoped that its ratification of the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement would encourage more countries to do business with it and that geographical indications would benefit from its protection abroad. Hungary was pleased to note that it had increased its rank in the GII 2021 and hoped that it would continue to improve its ranking. It would improve research, development and innovation. The Government of Hungary had started to improve horizontal cooperation within the innovation ecosystem, build institutional R&D capacities, support SMEs in improving their innovation output, increase financial support to the sector, support young scientists and create a better network for researchers and scientists. In addition to meeting climate targets, Hungary was aiming to increase its R&D spending by two to three per cent of GDP by 2030.
54. The Delegation of Iceland said that it appreciated the continuation of WIPO services despite difficult circumstances over the past year. The Icelandic Intellectual Property Office (ISIPO) had actively participated in WIPO events, including working group meetings and seminars relating to the Madrid and Hague Systems and the PCT. It had also followed the sharing sessions on women and IP. In 2020, the number of trademarks and patents filed domestically in Iceland had increased slightly, while international trademark filings had remained relatively stable and PCT filings had increased by 33 per cent compared with the previous year. The situation was less positive for design filings and the Delegation wished to see further progress in discussions on a future DLT. In October 2020, Iceland had become the first Nordic country to introduce [Madrid e-Filing,](https://www.wipo.int/madrid/en/contracting_parties/efiling_info.html) which had helped to reduce application processing times and iron out irregularities. ISIPO was constantly looking for ways to introduce digital and more user-friendly solutions and services. Accordingly, it had updated its strategic policy in May 2021, placing an emphasis on digital transformation for the benefit of both users and ISIPO case handlers. Recent WIPO initiatives on digital services, such as WIPO IP Diagnostics, made it possible to create comprehensive online service platforms for small businesses seeking to identify and protect their IP. In addition, the past year had seen the entry into force of substantive changes to the Icelandic Trademark Act, enabling users to file for all types of trademark, and to the Patent Act, providing for exemption from supplementary protection certificates in line with European Union legislation. The Act on Trade Secrets and the Act on the .is Domain Name had also recently entered into force. Recent ecological developments and the latest assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had underlined that innovation and sustainable solutions were more important now than ever. IP rights were vital in incentivizing the innovations required to overcome the major challenges of our time. Against that backdrop, the theme chosen by WIPO for World IP Day 2022, IP and youth – innovating for a better future, was particularly apt. Iceland was convinced that the focus on IP and young people would help to raise public awareness of the relationships between innovation, IP and sustainability. ISIPO stood ready to cooperate in that regard and had organized a hybrid conference on IP and sustainability, to be held on 4 November 2021.
55. The Delegation of India said that WIPO, as the principal global norm-setting body for IP, had a key role to play in ensuring the effective, balanced and development-oriented implementation of the global IP system. The COVID-19 pandemic had underscored the importance of international institutions’’ support to Member States in tackling global challenges. India therefore welcomed the efforts made by WIPO to strike an appropriate balance between IP rights and development. It held the view that the global IP regime should help, rather than hinder, efforts to address health emergencies. In that regard, it wished to have an early decision on its joint proposal to WTO for the waiving of Member States’ obligations under the TRIPS Agreement in relation to the prevention, containment or treatment of COVID-19. The legislative, administrative and judicial framework of India for safeguarding IP rights was well established and enabled the country’s international obligations to be met while addressing its development priorities. The steps taken by India to promote innovation and entrepreneurship, including the amendment of its IP regime, had seen its ranking in the GII rise by 35 places over the past six years. The country was now home to 66 privately held startups valued at over 1 billion US dollars, three of which were valued at over 10 billion US dollars. With flagship programs such as Make in India and Startup India, the country was poised to become a thriving global hub for manufacturing and innovation. The Delegation regretted that progress on normative issues at WIPO had been limited owing to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It hoped that further progress would be made on substantive issues, including within the IGC and the SCCR. In addition, it urged Member States to work constructively and creatively towards resolving the impasse over the opening of WIPO External Offices, which helped to strengthen the global IP ecosystem. While evaluating the functioning of External Offices was useful, it should not be used as a pretext to prevent or delay the opening of new Offices.
56. The Delegation of Indonesia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG. The MTSP 2022–2026 and the Program and Budget for the next biennium focused on the real impacts of IP on the ground and showcased its benefits for everyone, everywhere. The Delegation supported the Organization’s commitment, as reflected in the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23, to undertake an effective global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It looked forward to continuing its collaboration with WIPO and the Member States in conjunction with various projects in Indonesia, including the Country Plan for technical cooperation between WIPO and Indonesia and other initiatives related to the creative economy, brands and designs, SMEs and start-ups. It also looked forward to cooperating with ARIPO *via* the WIPO Match program. Cognizant of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Delegation reaffirmed its commitment to constructively engaging in all WIPO committees and norm-setting activities. It continued to support all normative work, in particular that of the IGC, and welcomed the extension of that body’s mandate. The Delegation hoped that consensus could be reached soon on the convening of a diplomatic conference for a DLT and stood ready to host such a conference.
57. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) said that a fair, balanced and effective IP system was essential to coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular for equitable and affordable access to the COVID-19 vaccine, including through WIPO cooperation and coordination with other international organizations. It was vital to make development an integral part of WIPO work, in particular through the provision of technical assistance to developing countries in order to accelerate economic, social and cultural development. Despite economic and financial sanctions imposed on the country, it had improved its ranking in the GII 2021 and its performance in WIPO statistics, indicating its resolve to overcome the restrictions by diversifying the economy and expanding the innovative and knowledge-based economy. The Delegation welcomed the recommendation to renew the mandate of the IGC and finalize an agreement on an international legal instrument for the effective testing of GRs, TK and folklore. Regarding the 2021 evaluation of WIPO External Offices, the Delegation welcomed the work of the PBC on a preliminary draft of the Terms of Reference, which should be developed in a Member State-driven process and in full conformity with the relevant guiding principle.
58. The Delegation of Iraq aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, and the Delegation of Qatar, on behalf of the Arab Group. It commended the Director General on the positive initiatives outlined in his report and the standing committees for the progress made in their work, and trusted that all the committees would achieve positive, balanced results in their respective areas. The increased number of members of some of the Organization’s regional groups necessitated the proportionate and geographically equitable allocation of seats in the WIPO Coordination Committee to each group. The Delegation therefore supported the proposal made by the APG, and the African Group on the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the PBC, the aim of which was to address the current imbalance in that regard. The Delegation looked forward to working with WIPO to strengthen the IP legal framework. The Secretariat had provided welcome legal advice to Iraq on bringing its laws and procedures into line with relevant national standards in order to stimulate industry, the sciences, literature and the arts.
59. The Delegation of Israel aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B. In view of the key role of IP in combating and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Delegation welcomed the trilateral cooperation of WIPO with WTO and WHO and the package for COVID-19 Related Services and Support. It also supported the new initiatives to develop tailored assistance for Member States and to assist IP offices in providing broader support for national innovation and promoting the use of IP assets as economic tools. As the Israeli economy was largely based on innovation, notably in the high-tech industry, the Delegation recognized the importance of IP to a well-functioning innovation ecosystem that supported creators and stakeholders in turning ideas into assets. Israel had one of the world’s highest rates of PCT applications per capita, with one of the highest numbers of applications made by women. In 2020, the Israel IP Office had received over 8,000 patent applications, over 85 per cent of which were national phase applications from the PCT System. The commitment of WIPO to constantly improving registry systems, including through the use of advanced technologies, was invaluable in that regard. As an important international player in emerging technologies, Israel expected WIPO to play a leading role in adapting the legal framework to encourage creativity and innovative solutions in that field.
60. The Delegation of Italy aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B. Italy remained committed to developing global IP systems and implementing the WIPO agenda. It attached particular importance to the international registration and protection of appellations of origin and geographical indications through the Lisbon System. Geographical indications in particular had grown in global economic importance and served as a powerful tool for differentiating genuine local products, promoting economic development, protecting the environment and upholding food safety and quality standards while benefiting micro companies and local and rural communities. The Delegation noted with appreciation that the IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector helped Member States to leverage the role of IP in economic growth for the benefit of SMEs in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Director General was to be commended for adopting a market-oriented approach to global IP issues and opening up the Organization to a wider audience, including academia. The Delegation supported the continuation of dialogue on frontier technologies, including AI and blockchain. It also appreciated the intensification of collaboration among WIPO, WHO and WTO with a view to promoting access to medical technologies worldwide and tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.
61. The Delegation of Jamaica said that collaboration among WIPO, WHO and WTO had and would continue to enable the provision of necessary technical assistance to developing countries in particular. The Delegation welcomed the restructuring of WIPO, including the creation of new sectors and divisions such as the IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector. The desire of the Director General to open up IP to a wider audience would doubtless raise public awareness of the critical role of IP in developing solutions to some of the world’s most pressing economic and social problems. Jamaica valued its longstanding relationship with WIPO, which continued to contribute to its national development. The Jamaica Intellectual Property Office continued to receive technical assistance, including legislative support in the areas of patents, industrial designs, trademarks and copyright. Particular thanks were owed to the Madrid Legal Division for assisting Jamaica in the review of its legislation, the Hague Registry for supporting the country’s work towards acceding to the Geneva Act and the Hague Agreement and the IP Office Business Solutions Division. Jamaica appreciated the work of the various WIPO committees and was pleased to have recently been elected as Vice Chair of the IGC. The country took great pride in its rich cultural heritage and was delighted to have participated in a recent WIPO regional seminar on copyright and TCEs. It also valued the work of the SCT and would continue to engage constructively with members on its revised proposal concerning the protection of country names. The Delegation considered that enabling MSMEs to leverage their IP was vital to the success of the post-pandemic recovery. It welcomed the Organization’s focus on young people, including placing them at the heart of IP Day 2022 and taking steps to ensure that their innovative ideas and inventions were harnessed for sustainable economic development. WIPO should continue its outreach and support to developing countries to boost their innovative ecosystems. Jamaica was grateful to the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular the Caribbean Section, for helping it to advance its IP architecture and environment and build capacities. It remained committed to advancing the work of the Organization.
62. The Delegation of Japan supported the MTSP 2022–2026, which shared the same views as Japan’s recently updated mission, vision and values, as released by the Japan Patent Office (JPO), being designed to promote innovation based on cooperation between all stakeholders involved in the IP ecosystem. Japan attached great importance to WIPO’’s activities for developing IP infrastructure and would therefore continue to provide voluntary contributions as it had done for the past 30 years. The Delegation hoped that the promotion of innovation based on technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and AI, would help build a prosperous future for all. WIPO must lead international initiatives to ensure that IP systems were appropriately responsive to technological advances, and create a landscape to ensure the appropriate protection and use of IP, so that everyone in all Member States could enjoy the benefits of innovations. User convenience must be enhanced to develop the IP ecosystem. Communication with those using WIPO services should be deepened to ensure that their opinions were reflected in WIPO initiatives. Since the world’s leading IP applicants were in Japan, they could provide their input to WIPO initiatives through the WIPO Japan office. Todevelop the IP ecosystem, the user base should be broadened by supporting SMEs and startups. Japan was ready to share its experiences in that regard. Innovation also had a key role in responding to the transformations in economy and lifestyle brought about by the COVID‑19 pandemic. WIPO must be actively engaged in global discussions to promote innovation for new businesses, and, together with WTO and WHO, support IP system users through the pandemic. IP had a role in meeting other contemporary challenges, such as climate change; Japan had high expectations for WIPO GREEN, uptake of which should be encouraged. As a WIPO GREEN partner, the JPO had broadened the WIPO GREEN network in Japan. The JPO had implemented accelerated and super-accelerated examination systems to achieve the world’s fastest examinations, and had continued to promote quality assurance in examinations and high-quality rights. It had responded to changes required by the pandemic by setting up online interviews and teleworking for examiners and administrative judges. Information about IP would be disseminated at Expo 2025 in Osaka.
63. The Delegation of Jordan said that the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic had shown how important it was to maximize the role of IP in the international multilateral system and further underlined how important it was for WIPO to support research in areas of development, especially health care, that would be of benefit to all countries. The growing importance of the role of WIPO had become crystal clear recently with regard to the issue of access to medicines and the attendant constraints, which required international organizations, especially WIPO, to work with one another, as well as with national governments, in order to surmount technical difficulties and overcome the current crisis. The extent of the economic damage inflicted by the pandemic on societies was not lost on anyone. More than ever, there was a need to foster the innovation sector in order to ensure sustainable economic growth through a range of initiatives and projects. Jordan, in cooperation with WIPO, was showing the way in that respect. It had become one of the first countries to benefit from the IPAS 4.0 industrial property management system, spurred on by the country’s keen interest in applying new technology and AI in the areas of patents, trademarks and designs. WIPO had provided much valued technical support in the education sector as Jordan implemented its IP policies project for national universities. Eleven universities had therefore been able to introduce or update their IP policies. The Delegation shared the astute view held by the Director General and his team that, in order to meet the Organization’s objectives and the challenges facing the world in a timely and agile fashion, its message must reach a wide and diverse audience directly, with the broad participation of all partners. In that way, not only would their voices be heard, they would also be an integral part of our common planning to advance and grow.
64. The Delegation of Kenya, aligning itself with the statement delivered by South Africa on behalf of the African Group, said that it appreciated WIPO support for capacity-building and information infrastructure and systems, and collaboration on IP policies and innovations. It looked forward to advancing the country’s partnership with WIPO to enhance the economic contribution of innovation and IP. IP remained essential to socio‑economic development, the advancement of MSMEs and youth entrepreneurs and their integration into regional and global value chains. Kenya would welcome efforts to raise the awareness of the importance of IP protection among young people in developing countries, and to simplify IP registration procedures to inspire young people and MSMEs to embrace IP as a commercial asset. It would continue to work with WIPO to provide support to national IP offices and other stakeholders, and called for the streamlining of the WIPO DA to increase the relevance of IP to developing countries and create a more inclusive IP system. It was hoped that work on TK, TCEs and GRs would continue in order to create balanced and effective protection. The Delegation also supported the advancement and conclusion of deliberations on the DLT.
65. The Delegation of Kazakhstan said that the COVID-19 pandemic had shown that an effective public health-care system was essential for society, the economy and the well-being of every individual. Kazakhstan was therefore taking measures to ensure social protection, access to medical services and health system strengthening. Steps were being taken to register the locally produced COVID-19 vaccine, QazVac, and a meeting had been held with the Director‑General of WHO to discuss the inclusion of the vaccine on the WHO list of authorized vaccines. IP was a priority area for Kazakhstan; legislation to protect IP rights was being strengthened. Support from WIPO was greatly appreciated, in particular with regard to raising awareness of IP-related issues among entrepreneurs, users and copyright holders. Legislation was being amended to provide for automating registration and the issue of protection documents. A system for verifying IP registration was in place, and steps had been taken to regulate unregistered industrial designs protection in line with the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Kazakhstan and the European Union. Kazakhstan participated in five international IP registration systems, and most recently had signed the Protocol on the Protection of Industrial Designs to the Eurasian Patent Convention and the Agreement on trademarks, service marks and appellations of origin of goods of the Eurasian Economic Union. In the context of international cooperation, Kazakhstan intended to accede to the Hague Agreement and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement. Recommendations and guidance provided by WIPO in that regard were appreciated.
66. The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan said that the aim of the current meeting was to comprehensively and thoroughly discuss global issues to do with the development and strengthening of the IP system in general, and some aspects in particular. In that regard, delegations should exercise flexibility, tolerance and solidarity to ensure considered, measured and balanced decisions for the benefit of all WIPO Member States. It was unfortunate that not all delegations were present in the conference room, since it was necessary to conduct the Assemblies in hybrid format owing to the current epidemiological situation. The Delegation aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of its regional group. Since the national office of Kyrgyzstan was responsible not only for IP but also for innovation, the Delegation welcomed the fact that WIPO was broadening its activities with regard to invention, innovation and creativity. The Delegation hoped that under Daren Tang’s able leadership, new projects would be initiated to further develop IP systems, innovation and digital services and build the capacity of Member States. With regard to the Assemblies, Kyrgyzstan continued to believe that the aim should remain to develop and strengthen a balanced, effective and mutually beneficial global IP architecture, giving due consideration to the specificities and composition of Member States’’ national IP and innovation systems. The following year, the work of the national office would focus on boosting and supporting creativity, invention and innovation, across the various regions of the country. The Delegation commended WIPO for its continued support in the development of national IP system and innovation ecosystem of Kyrgyzstan. The Division for Transition and Developed Countries continued to do exceptional work. Its activities had contributed to the implementation of WIPO projects and programs in the region, as well as to raising awareness of IP in Kyrgyzstan. In conclusion, the Delegation underscored the importance of ensuring that WIPO activities balanced respect for the principles of equitable geographic representation and gender equality, with achievements in the development of the IP and innovation ecosystems.
67. The Delegation of Lebanon aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of those regional groups to which it belonged. The Assemblies were being held against the backdrop of a serious global health crisis, which had ceased to be merely a public health matter and had come to affect all areas of life – socio‑economic, professional and educational. The crisis in all its complexity had seriously curtailed development efforts, especially given that, in addition to its direct adverse consequences, it had aggravated pre-existing structural problems. The crisis had, for example, exacerbated the digital divide, preventing many countries from grasping the promise held out by the digital economy and commerce. The IT revolution played an increasingly dominant role in the economy. It also presented countries that wished to stay abreast of it with myriad challenges in terms of fully comprehending it and updating the legal, regulatory and education frameworks that were supposed to foster it. Given the challenges at such a critical juncture in human history, WIPO had a clear role to play in ensuring a balanced and effective international IP system. Equally clear was the need to help developing countries to benefit from that system in a way that served development goals and enhanced equality among countries. Lebanon was currently caught up in a stifling crisis, marked above all by appalling economic and financial indicators that reflected an unprecedented decline in the living standards of the bulk of the Lebanese people. The situation had been made worse by the impact of COVID-19, the explosion of the port of Beirut and the general state of crisis in the region around Lebanon. A new reformist Government had been formed and it counted on international cooperation to help it to tackle the country’s critical problems. Recovery would depend on its capacity to reignite the economy and development, and that could happen only through innovation and progress in the area of IP and by weaving the concepts of the latter into a broad range of fields in line with the transformations of the global economy. The Delegation fervently wished to strengthen the bonds of cooperation between WIPO and the new Government of Lebanon with a view to enacting reforms and pursuing its development goals, all the while taking into account the unique situation in which the country found itself.
68. The Delegation of Lesotho aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation welcomed the extension of the mandate of the IGC, and looked forward to the adoption of the DLT. Several technical assistance programs for developing countries had not been implemented owing to the COVID-19 pandemic; WIPO should take that into consideration when making future work plans and increase the resources allocated to activities in developing countries. Developing countries should be supported in their efforts to use IP as a key tool for growth and sustainable economic recovery following the pandemic, paying particular attention to the needs of SMEs, women, young people and local and indigenous communities. Lesotho was pleased that WIPO planned to extend its activities to a wider audience, including women, universities and research institutions, young people and SMEs, which could contribute to job creation. Lesotho benefitted from assistance provided by WIPO for the modernization of the IP system and upgrading the industrial property automation system, addressing the data capture backlog, processing applications filed under the Madrid System, establishing TISCs, and developing a modern legislative framework that took account of the treaty obligations of Lesotho. Assistance from WIPO would be appreciated in the development and adoption of a national IP strategy and policy, and in strengthening the newly established collective management organization.
69. The Delegation of Liberia associated itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group. While the COVID-19 pandemic had adversely affected all Member States’’ economies, regardless of development status, trade volume or economic ranking, African countries in particular were struggling to adjust to the post-pandemic reality. Liberia currently lacked the infrastructure to reach its true potential. Its IP development plan, drafted with the Organization’s valuable technical assistance, aimed to bolster the knowledge-based economy and foster sustainable, socio-economic development for the benefit of all Liberians. However, the implementation of that plan was contingent on the support of other Member States, groups and organizations. Over the previous two years, Liberia had chaired both the Administrative Council and the Council of Ministers of ARIPO. The country’s IP legislation provided a comprehensive framework for the protection of trademarks, designs, patents, copyright and related works. Moreover, the Government had provided support for the establishment of the country’s first ever collective management organization (CMO) to enable the collection and distribution of royalties for rights holders. Liberia would appreciate the Organization’s support in strengthening its CMO and conducting its first economic impact study on creativity to measure the true potential and value of its creative industry. The Delegation wished to thank ARIPO for organizing the Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of the Draft Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights, held in August 2021. Liberia had adopted the draft protocol and looked forward to its ratification by the Legislature.
70. The Delegation of Lithuania, aligning itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member states and the CEBS Group, said that IP was a driver of economic development, competitiveness and innovation as well as a tool to tackle global challenges. Given the strong leadership of WIPO and its willingness to cooperate with Member States and other stakeholders, Lithuania was confident in the guidance WIPO had provided on post-pandemic recovery. Innovation, development and promotion were essential to the new direction of the Lithuanian economy, as demonstrated in the new national development strategy for the upcoming decade. Following the recommendations of WIPO experts, Lithuania had introduced measures to create, use, commercialize and protect IP as well as encourage knowledge sharing and collaborations between academic institutions and businesses. The Delegation commended WIPO for its strategic vision, which focused on IP commercialization, as well as the Organization’s support for SMEs, start-ups, innovators, creators, enterprises, research institutions and communities. The Delegation appreciated the work WIPO had carried out with regard to knowledge transfers between academic institutions and industry, as well as the contributions WIPO had made to pilot projects to establish a network for regional technology transfers between Baltic States. Lithuania remained committed to cooperating with WIPO to promote creativity, innovation and economic growth.
71. The Delegation of Madagascar said that the continuity of industrial property administration relied heavily on the automation of procedures through Industrial Property Administration System software and the digitization of the archives of the Malagasy Industrial Property Office (OMAPI). That had been confirmed by the imposition of health measures in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had included remote working and the closure of OMAPI premises. The remote management of the national registry and the processing of applications using digitized documents had benefitted OMAPI, which had made stakeholder satisfaction central to its policy on quality. The digitization of the OMAPI archive had been successfully carried out over 24 months. The project, which had been split into two parts, had been completed in March 2021, despite the various disruptions caused by the health emergency declared in Madagascar in March 2020. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO, and its Regional Bureau for Africa in particular, for that significant achievement, as well as for having provided the funding needed to enact the second phase of the project despite the challenging circumstances. Moreover, the Delegation supported and encouraged the work done by WIPO on IP and AI, largely related to sharing of good practices and technology transfer. Activities related to industrial property administration and the promotion of inventive activity had been adapted to the national and international contexts, and OMAPI had updated its contingency plan, enabling it to overcome numerous obstacles and ensure the continuity of its services, including collaboration with other public and private entities in the field of industrial property. Lastly, the Delegation appreciated the binational seminar for judges on the application of IP law, an event from which Madagascar had benefited.
72. The Delegation of Malawi aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group and commended WIPO for the COVID-19 response measures taken and the efforts to support Member States in their post-pandemic recovery. The Delegation was particularly grateful for the support received for its efforts to promote TK and TCEs, and for the digitization of IP files and for setting up the industrial property automatization system, which would facilitate the effective management of author’s rights. Malawi had been in constant contact with the TISC team at WIPO to ensure that training for TISCs continued throughout the pandemic. The Delegation supported the MTSP 2022–2026, which sought to inspire innovation and creativity for inclusive and sustainable development, and looked forward to the proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23. The Government of Malawi had launched a strategic vision, one of the pillars of which was industrialization; given the importance of industrialization and innovation for development, an effective and robust IP system was being developed. WIPO had before it a very busy agenda to build an IP ecosystem that inspired creativity and innovation for the development of all Member States. The extension of the mandate of the IGC was welcome. Its work would contribute to making the global IP system balanced and inclusive.
73. The Delegation of Malaysia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, and by the Delegation of the Philippines, on behalf of ASEAN. Malaysia appreciated the Director General’s detailed report on the performance of the Organization and was encouraged to see that WIPO continued to perform exceptionally well under his leadership, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It also noted the Organization’s strong financial performance and the increase in its net assets for 2020. Malaysia looked forward to the implementation of the MTSP 2022–2026, which aimed to ensure that IP acted as a powerful catalyst for jobs, investment, economic development and social vibrancy. It hoped that the MTSP 2022–2026 would help Member States to rebuild their economies as borders reopened. In Malaysia, SMEs formed the backbone of the economy, representing 97 per cent of businesses. Some 85 per cent of the country’s SMEs operated in the service sectors. Therefore, Malaysia prioritized helping SMEs to leverage IP in their efforts to strengthen and expand their operations. The Delegation welcomed trilateral cooperation among WIPO, WHO and WTO with a view to tackling the pandemic and rebuilding the economy. It supported the Organization’s stance on vaccine equity and hoped that the trilateral arrangement would enhance cooperation and practical coordination among those bodies, particularly on issues related to public health, IP and trade, both during and after the pandemic. The Delegation noted the work of the SCCR and encouraged it to continue focusing on limitations and exceptions, the protection of broadcasting organizations and the analysis of copyright related to the digital environment. The Delegation supported the proposal to renew the mandate of the IGC for the 2022–2023 biennium. It also called for the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the work of that Committee to ensure a constructive discussion and facilitate the reaching of concrete conclusions by the Member States. Malaysia looked forward to continuing its effective cooperation with WIPO in the future.
74. The Delegation of Mexico said that technological developments had enabled the continuation of day-to-day life during months-long periods of lockdown. IP had been key to the development of vaccines and would doubtless play a fundamental role in economic recovery. Mexico considered IP a lever for economic development and societal welfare. Over the previous year, it had harnessed IP for the benefit of SMEs and women and for the protection of TK and TCEs. Two initiatives in particular, developed with the assistance of WIPO, demonstrated the positive impact of international cooperation. The first was the Network for Innovative Women and Industrial Property, which promoted women’s advancement in the area of IP by raising their profile and providing them with one-to-one mentoring and advice on trademark and patent protection. The network had huge potential. Every woman who joined it came with her own ambitions and achievements and the role of her country was to assist her in protecting her inventions, goods or services. The second initiative was to leverage IP for SMEs. Assessing SMEs’’ knowledge and use of IP would provide a basis for the development and implementation of policies for their benefit. A course on IP and exportation – a joint initiative of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico devised with the cooperation and guidance of the WIPO Academy – was due to be launched imminently. The Government considered IP a tool for the development and well-being of traditional communities and was thus grateful for the Organization’s support with the Virtual Regional Seminar on Copyright and Traditional Cultural Expressions, held from September 22 to 24, 2021, which had provided a platform for sharing experiences of relevance to both Mexico and other WIPO Member States. Mexico had taken initial steps towards ratifying the Lisbon Agreement. Once it had done so, it would be a member of the four IP protection systems administered by WIPO, namely the Hague, Lisbon and Madrid Systems and the PCT, reaffirming the country’s commitment to international cooperation and IP protection. The Delegation attached great importance to IP and would continue to work with WIPO to promote it as a tool for development.
75. The Delegation of Mongolia, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, said that the COVID-19 pandemic had illustrated the importance of IP and innovation to economic development, and that the engagement of WIPO with other multilateral organizations on common efforts to combat the pandemic was very welcome. The Delegation greatly appreciated WIPO cooperation in supporting creative sector stakeholders, and the work of the IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector to improve the use of the IP system by businesses and SMEs by creating a global network of SME intermediaries. Mongolia had greatly benefited from WIPO technical assistance; it had implemented the Technology and Innovation Support Center program and the Enabling Innovation Environment project, and had received technical assistance to strengthen collective management organizations and improve IP office diagnostics. At the national level, Mongolia had performed above expectations for its level of development in the GII. The Government had continued to upgrade its IP legislation framework with laws on copyright and related rights, patents, trademarks and geographical indications, taking into account the provisions of relevant international treaties, including the PCT, the Paris Convention and the Hague Agreement. Work on regulations to implement those instruments was also underway.
76. The Delegation of Montenegro said that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, WIPO had demonstrated its ability to adapt and respond to the crisis by introducing new work methods and measures to support Member States. The Delegation welcomed that approach and the WIPO Secretariat and Member States should consider how to improve WIPO services further. Having worked with WIPO intensively and without interruption during the pandemic, Montenegro was committed to future cooperation and expected visible and sustainable results. In order to emulate the IPRs protection that the European Union provided, Montenegro amended legislation regularly and implemented it efficiently. A Coordination Team for the Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights, composed of the representatives of IPR enforcement authorities, detected and prevented counterfeiting and piracy. Montenegro raised awareness and kept the public informed about IPR events and achievements through announcements in the news, print media, visual media, web pages and interviews. Over the previous year, the IP staff of the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) had attended webinars, seminars, meetings and a conference organized by WIPO. WIPO had provided advice about collective management organizations and other copyright related issues. The MED was receiving WIPO support to develop its IP strategy for 2022-2025, which was a priority activity. A domestic working group, composed of representatives of IPR authorities, had provided the necessary inputs for the local and international WIPO experts who had drafted the document, and the relevant WIPO staff were reviewing the document. Once finalized and adopted, the MED would work alongside WIPO to organize an event to promote its strategy and cooperation with WIPO and remind the public of the importance of WIPO as a global forum for IP services, policy, information and cooperation. The Marrakesh Treaty was undergoing parliamentary procedure. In the context of the pandemic and local issues that hindered actions in the area of IP, Montenegro would rely on WIPO support to protect creators and innovators as well as encourage citizens to use IPR protection.
77. The Delegation of Morocco said that WIPO had a key role to play in the economic recovery from COVID-19, given the need to stimulate innovation at the global level in particular in the health sector. Only through developing relevant IP systems that encouraged creativity and innovation would it be possible to promote economic and social development for the benefit of all, particularly at a time when innovation had become essential for the economy and for society’s ability to face new challenges. Morocco had always prioritized IP and welcomed its excellent cooperation with WIPO. In line with its conviction that South–South cooperation was a key to development, Morocco reiterated its willingness to share its expertise to promote an effective and productive IP system. To that end, IP systems should be balanced, target SMEs and promote the involvement of young people and women in economic life, in line with the vision of the WIPO Director General. The Delegation underscored that, despite complex times, the Organization, under the Moroccan presidency of the WIPO General Assembly, had made significant steps, particularly with the launch of the MTSP 2022–2026, which set out the activities of WIPO for the coming five years. The Delegation also welcomed in particular the inclusion of a development aspect in all the Organization’s structures. With regard to norm‑setting, WIPO should ensure that any instruments adopted took due account of the SDGs. The Delegation hoped that an agreement could be reached on the convening of a diplomatic conference for the adoption of the DLT, which would strengthen the system’s transparency and effectiveness and encourage research and innovation while contributing to the fair and equitable distribution of its benefits. In conclusion, the Delegation underscored Morocco’s strong faith in multilateralism as a catalyst for the development of international relations, and in the role of WIPO.
78. The Delegation of Mozambique aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group and expressed satisfaction with the efforts made by WIPO over the previous year to implement its action plan and meet its strategic objectives in the face of the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and with its work in support of IP in developing countries through the DA. The Organization had assisted Mozambique with its IP modernization plan and the registration of its first ever geographical indication, for *cabrito de Tete* goat meat. Mozambique had also benefited from technical training imparted to its industrial property officials and assistance with the country’s technology for development project. WIPO had helped Mozambique to launch its first national IP strategy in 2008 and was contributing to the review of a new strategy and to the drafting of a parallel IP policy. IP would play a key role in the country’s recently launched national industrialization program, which was a part of the Government’s five-year plan for the country’s socio‑economic development.
79. The Delegation of Namibia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the African Group. As creativity and innovation flourished during trying times, intellectual products would be vital to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, with IP vital to driving such solutions. However, human ingenuity would not be enough without international cooperation and the Delegation welcomed the efforts of multilateral organizations, including WIPO, to advance a collective approach to the fair and equitable worldwide distribution of vaccines. Namibia continued to prioritize the implementation of strategic projects, as defined in its National IP Development Plan, within the framework of the MoU between Namibia and WIPO. Namibia was implementing its IP policy, finalizing its copyright legal framework, pursuing stakeholder engagement with law makers, aiming to create efficient innovation ecosystems for African countries and providing community-based entrepreneurs with support in using IP systems, in particular with trademarks for business growth. When implementing such projects, Namibia embraced the targeted technical assistance and capacity-building support of WIPO, in particular in using the flexibilities of the IP system to achieve key public policy goals, such as access to health and education. The Delegation supported the drive towards achieving gender parity within WIPO, and called for the same effort to be directed towards equitable geographical representation among the staff of the Organization and its governing bodies.
80. The Delegation of Nepal aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG. It noted the new strategic direction of WIPO as set out in the MTSP 2022–2026. The COVID-19 pandemic had reversed hard-won gains and threatened the timely achievement of the SDGs. International collaboration was crucial in bridging technology gaps, supporting innovation and capacity-building and ensuring equitable access to vaccines as a global public good for combatting the pandemic together. Extra support was required to help developing countries, and in particular the LDCs, to meet global objectives. The Delegation noted with appreciation the formalization of trilateral cooperation among WIPO, WHO and WTO with a view to reaching sustainable and integrated solutions to public health challenges, including commitments on universal, equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and other health technologies. The Delegation hoped that resolutions could be found for longstanding issues such as global norm-setting in the area of GRs, TK and folklore and the broadcasting and design law treaties.
81. The Delegation of New Zealand commended the Director General for the Organization’s new vision, which was based on implementing outreach activities, bringing people and stakeholders together, providing high-quality IP services and supporting governments. The sound initiatives and broad, inclusive goals would leverage IP to encourage post-pandemic recovery. The Organization’s new vision resonated with the purpose of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to “grow New Zealand for all”. Its goal was to improve the wellbeing of New Zealanders today and in future by focusing on wellbeing and productive, sustainable, inclusive growth. The previous year, New Zealand had reached new audiences with its IP message. It had launched new case studies in its ‘‘Dream It, Do It, Own It’’ campaign, which had targeted people with little IP experience. It had highlighted the impressive innovation of SMEs in New Zealand during a successful World IP Day event. It had delivered new tools for IP system users, such as a classification tool to facilitate the use of the trademark system. The value of WIPO global IP systems was clear and use of the Madrid and PCT Systems equaled and exceeded pre-pandemic levels respectively, demonstrating the importance that New Zealand businesses attributed to protecting their brands and innovations globally. New Zealand appreciated the work of the IGC and it looked forward to contributing to IGC deliberations. It hoped that, during its mandate period, the IGC would continue developing international instruments to protect IP, GRs, TK and TCEs. The Government of New Zealand had started to develop *sui generis* systems and legal frameworks to protect Māori traditional knowledge and TCEs and explore how they would work alongside existing IP protection. Those developments included modernizing plant variety rights. The new Plant Variety Rights Bill, which the Parliament of New Zealand was considering, would enable the Māori to participate in the granting of plant rights in the case of new plant varieties developed from indigenous plant species.
82. The Delegation of Nigeria aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group. Nigeria continued to attach importance to promoting and protecting IP rights as a tool for socio‑economic development and, in particular, building young people’s capacity for innovation. It was committed to helping the Organization to meet the objectives of the MTSP 2022–2026. Despite numerous setbacks due to the COVID‑19 pandemic, the Trademarks, Patents and Designs Registry of Nigeria had continued to work assiduously with longstanding partners to enhance the country’s IP capacities. With the valuable assistance of WIPO, it was currently reviewing the national law on geographical indications and continuing to license trademark records and had signed an agreement with the Organization on the introduction of an alternative resolution system for IP disputes. It was also finalizing the construction of a fully digitalized space to serve as a trademark opposition tribunal. The country’s patent laws had been significantly expanded to include utility models and business method patents to further stimulate innovation in the country. Moreover, the Nigerian Copyright Commission had continued to collaborate with WIPO and domestic stakeholders to strengthen the collective management system by creating toolkits for the training of collective management licensing offices. It had also concluded an MoU with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center to promote the use of mediation for dispute settlement in the country’s entertainment industry and had engaged in educational and advocacy work on copyright and building respect for IP. Lastly, the WIPO Nigeria Office had made remarkable progress in its first year of operation and the Delegation looked forward to the further strengthening of the Office to improve its engagement with factories.
83. The Delegation of Norway welcomed the work done to improve Member States’’ ability to monitor the finances and administration of WIPO. It noted with appreciation the continued efforts of the International Bureau to ensure the provision of unparalleled global services under the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems. The smooth operation, simplification and cost efficiency of such systems benefited users and helped to increase their adoption globally. Moreover, the working groups for those systems continued to make pleasing progress towards improving regulations, guidelines and practices. Norway was committed to enhancing global services in the interest of existing and future users. It supported the renewal of the mandate for the IGC. In addition, it continued to support work within the SCCR on a treaty for the protection of broadcasting organizations. Turning to domestic developments, the Delegation wished to highlight the entry into force of amendments to the Norwegian Copyright Act allowing for the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty (and Directive 2017/1564/EU) and the submission on August 31, 2021 of related necessary documents to WIPO; a new act on collective management of copyright and related rights (Directive 2014/26/EU); and amendments to the Norwegian Dispute Act and Criminal Procedure Act prohibiting the taking of evidence from patent advisors that appeared on the list of professional representatives provided for in article 134 of the Convention on the Grant of European Patents.
84. The Delegation of Oman supported the new directions taken in IP matters by the Director General of WIPO, the aim of which was to involve a broad range of stakeholders in the Organization’s work. Oman was sparing no efforts in raising awareness of the importance of IP and its significant contribution to adding economic value and in working with universities, students, judges, women inventors, SMEs and non‑governmental organizations to build the necessary capacity. While the Delegation supported the Organization’s project-based approach, one-off capacity-building and awareness-raising exercises remained essential in Oman. WIPO should focus on the bearing IP had on health care when addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies of developing countries and, in that way, leverage IP to boost economic growth and encourage investment. Technical and other cooperation assistance provided down the years by the Secretariat and the Division for Arab Countries had fostered a better understanding of IP in Oman and led to the improvement of related services. Oman was a party to many international IP agreements and had most recently acceded to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement with a view to protecting its registered geographical indications. In 2021, the country’s IP Department had been renamed as the National Intellectual Property Office, which now had four departments for: trademarks and geographical indications; patents and industrial designs; copyright and related rights; and IP rights enforcement. Key cooperation projects with WIPO under way in Oman included work on the country’s national IP strategy and a project to establish a technology and innovation support center, for which it was hoped that an MoU would be signed with WIPO during the current Assemblies. Oman had become the first Arab country to take part in the Development Agenda Project on Increasing the Role of Women in Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Encouraging Women in Developing Countries to Use the Intellectual Property System. The country also held its own version of the Assemblies on IP. The Arab region faced numerous challenges in following up on the work of WIPO, including one of language. Although an official language of the UN, the Arabic language was not widely employed in the Organization. Certain documents were not translated immediately into Arabic and interpretation into Arabic was not always available for online activities, in particular for training. Services in Arabic should be provided for the sake of inclusiveness and in order to broaden access to WIPO services. Efforts to encourage multilingualism and the goal of translating major publications into all six languages of the UN were laudable. It was to be hoped that the Secretariat would review its language policies in order to reflect those goals.
85. The Delegation of Pakistan said that it wished to thank the WIPO Director General for his capable leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent IP developments in Pakistan included the country’s accession to the Madrid Protocol in February 2021 and the enactment of the Geographical Indications Act in 2020. The Delegation looked forward to building on its collaboration with the Secretariat to enhance the development and commercialization of geographical indications in the country. It also looked forward to the development by WIPO Academy of training modules on capacity building for developing countries in particular. Pakistan held the view that WIPO should play a leading role in balancing IP rights related to medical technologies for combatting COVID-19 to ensure timely and affordable access to vaccines by everyone, everywhere. In addition, there was a need for greater transparency and broader consultation with Member States in relation to the GII, especially its ranking methodology and criteria. The Delegation deemed that steps should be taken to ensure the proper application of the principle of equitable geographical representation in the WIPO workforce and key decision-making bodies. Moreover, there was an urgent need to further align organizational structures to the key function of advancing development cooperation. Pakistan had proposed the establishment of a single-window system, particularly in the area of legislative advice. Lastly, a serious review was required to determine the rationality of establishing new External Offices. If they truly added value, efficiency and effectiveness to the delivery of WIPO programs in a way that headquarters could not, then they should be established in all WIPO Member States.
86. The Delegation of Paraguay aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC. Over the previous year, the National Directorate of Intellectual Property had spared no effort in maintaining its full range of services for system users and had continued to improve its technological infrastructure. It was currently finalizing the implementation of the Industrial Property Administration System, which marked an important step in the optimization of its processes and would facilitate connectivity with other IP offices around the world. In that connection, the goal of having a paperless system was gradually becoming a reality. Progress had been made under the National IP Plan 2020-2030, drafted with the assistance of WIPO. With regard to enforcement, the National Coordination Center for Intellectual Property Rights had been formed to coordinate IP protection activities. With regard to industrial property and copyright, the update of the regulatory system was under way and the draft laws on trademarks, industrial designs and copyright had been finalized and submitted to WIPO for comments and suggestions. The Law on Geographical Indications and Appellations of Origin had been established and, in the area of TK, the formation of a task force comprising indigenous peoples and civil organizations for the development of a draft law on the protection of ancestral assets represented a significant step forward. With regard to international regulation, Paraguay had acceded to the Nice and Locarno Agreements, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening the international IP system. The Delegation considered the Assemblies a valuable opportunity to conclude agreements for the global advancement of IP protection.
87. The Delegation of Peru, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC, said that the present Assemblies were a much-needed forum for dialogue between Member States to strengthen and improve the IP system. Peru was convinced of the positive economic, social and cultural impact that the system had on countries and would continue to work on bringing the IP system closer to users, in particular to SMEs, a fundamental driver of the economy, and to the rural sector. Several months previously, the IP Pathways program had been launched; it was a free service offering personalized and specialized guidance that was intended to help SMEs to protect and monetize their creations, innovations and developments, while also improving the competitiveness of those businesses through strategic use of the IP system. In the specific case of distinctive signs, Peru continued to strengthen its collective mark program, which, in addition to its economic benefits, had a social element of great value to the peoples and communities that used it to preserve the traditional customs, practices and knowledge of Peru. Regarding inventions and new technologies, of particular importance had been the establishment of TISCs, of which there were 43 across 18 of the country’s 25 regions, and the work of the Inventor Assistance Program, in which 15 lawyers were participating pro bono. In regard to copyright and related rights, INDECOPI, the Peruvian IP authority, had been promoting a series of high-impact actions to combat online piracy, in addition to a related set of legislative reforms. Lastly, it should be recalled that one of the most significant IP achievements of recent times had been the creation of the Latin American IP Network. The Network, a unique endeavor, was formed exclusively of Latin American and Caribbean IP offices and was the product of a joint initiative of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru; it had received continuous support and encouragement from WIPO, which was an honorary founder member of the Network, and aimed to strengthen the position of women by harnessing IP. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for working with INDECOPI to ensure that IP could play a truly decisive role in the development and general well-being of Peru and the world.
88. The Delegation of the Philippines said that it had recorded an improved performance in the 2021 GII report, and that the number of filings received by the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOPHL) and the Innovation and Technology Support Office in the first half of 2021 had represented a significant increase on 2020. Recognizing the urgency of treating and containing COVID-19, IPOPHL was making patent data accessible to relevant sectors and the public, and had prepared nine patent search reports containing the patent data of relevant drugs and medicines to facilitate research and development. In 2021, the Philippines had deposited its instrument of accession to the Beijing Treaty and was finalizing the implementing rules and regulations. Moreover, IPOPHL continued to comply fully with its obligations as an International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority for the PCT, and had marked the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of that Treaty with webinars for users, patent agents and academia. The Philippines had implemented an incentive package to help eligible MSMEs to register their trademarks abroad through the Madrid System, in addition to the Juana Make A Mark program, under which 4,000 free registrations had been awarded to women-led MSMEs. Regarding the protection and enforcement of IP rights, the IPOPHL Alternative Dispute Resolution program had been accredited by the Department of Justice and its implementing rules and regulations had been revised. IPOPHL had fully digitized its services with the adoption of the electronic filing of pleas, online payment for cases, the electronic service of orders and notices for cases, and automation of the appeals process. It had also intensified its partnership with the private sector to adopt a code of conduct to improve notice-and-take-down procedures for online sites and to strengthen preventive measures to address repeat infringements of IP rights. IPOPHL had offered online IP courses at various levels for learners and professional groups, including the joint WIPO-IPOPHL Summer School, and would continue to enhance and expand its IP education programs to suit the demands of learners.
89. The Delegation of Poland aligned itself with the statements made by the CEBS Group, and the European Union. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, WIPO had continued to make valuable progress. The Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23 was welcome, as were the impressive number of new initiatives and programs aimed at raising awareness about IP, especially among SMEs. WIPO must continue to serve as the global lead for exchanging ideas and knowledge on technological innovation. The technical support provided by WIPO to Poland was much appreciated. The Delegation stood ready to strengthen its cooperation with WIPO, in particular on the development of the international IP system, to ensure that innovation and creativity were to the economic, social and cultural benefit of all.
90. The Delegation of Portugal aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of the European Union and its member States, and by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of Group B. It underscored the significance of discussions that had been held on patent quality and, under the PCT, the introduction of safeguards for applicants in exceptional situations such as those that had arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic. Progress had been made on the protection of appellations of origin and geographical indications, in particular under the Lisbon System, including the accession of the European Union to the system. The process to ratify the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement in Portugal would begin shortly. The Council of the European Union had recently adopted conclusions on IP as a driver of innovation, competitiveness, economic growth and sustainable development, as a key to knowledge and technology transfer and as a tool for combatting the pandemic, and on its importance for SMEs and economic recovery. In its conclusions, the Council had also stressed the need to introduce a *sui generis* system of protection for non-agricultural products in the European Union, to harmonize its system of supplementary protection certificates and to tackle counterfeiting. Portugal had received welcome support in joining WIPO Green and had subsequently held a webinar on “The future of Earth as industrial property of all” to mark World IP Day in April 2021.
91. The Delegation of Qatar, noting that the report of the Director General touched on the latest developments in global IP policy, commended the WIPO Secretariat for the spirit of cooperation it had shown in its dealings with Qatar over the previous year. Since the previous session, Qatar had worked to develop its IP policies and systems, in particular its national IP strategy, the aim of which was to focus on the development and commercial application of IP by means of a strategic partnership with WIPO and the promotion of a knowledge-based economy. Qatar was finalizing the procedures for accession to several WIPO agreements, including the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks, the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks and its Protocol and the Brussels Convention Relating to the Distribution of Programme-Carrying Signals Transmitted by Satellite. Qatar appreciated the efforts made by the Secretariat in negotiations on the final texts of a range of bilateral MoUs, in particular a memorandum of cooperation and understanding between the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Hamad Bin Khalifa University and WIPO on developing IP human resources and an MoU between WIPO and the Ministry of Trade and Industry on alternative means of resolving IP disputes. Qatar remained committed to the WIPO DA and supported the efforts of Member States to ensure that development issues were included in the Organization’s work program and to narrow the international IP system knowledge gap between developed and developing countries. Qatar was working with other Member States to collectively address the main challenges facing WIPO, which included the pressures of rapid technological change, globalization and increasing demand. The COVID-19 pandemic had had a significant impact on the work of the Assemblies, leading to a truncated agenda the previous year, and was yet to be overcome. Nonetheless, the international cooperation displayed thus far in efforts to combat the pandemic gave grounds for optimism. A significant amount of work postponed from the previous year’s Assemblies lay ahead and would require a high degree of flexibility and cooperation on the part of Member States in order to get through it. The Delegation supported ongoing negotiations on global protection laws, in particular those being conducted by the SCCR with a view to agreeing terms for a multilateral treaty for the international protection of the rights of broadcasting organizations. It was hoped that Member States would achieve consensus on the outstanding issues in that regard. The Delegation encouraged the Organization to continue fostering cooperation between Member States, maintain the quality of its services and to keep leading the way in the development of an effective and comprehensive international IP system that would promote the innovation and creativity that underpinned sustainable development.
92. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea said that efforts to encourage creative and innovative activities in that country had led to more than 20,000 patent applications being filed in 2020, the fourth highest number in the world. The Republic of Korea was growing as a copyright powerhouse and had ranked fifth in the 2021 GII. The growing pace of technological change, such as in the fields of AI and big data, made it imperative for the international community to discuss how to improve the IP system. The Republic of Korea had recently amended its Design Act to better protect new digital products, such as graphic user interfaces, and established separate patent examination guidelines on emerging technologies, including AI and (IoT). The Copyright Act would be amended to reflect environmental changes in the creation and use of works. The Delegation would work closely with WIPO to facilitate discussion on IP and frontier technologies. It had carried out projects through the Funds‑In‑Trust to bridge the IP knowledge gap between developed and developing countries. A recently published white paper on blockchain would help developing countries to better understand frontier technologies and a new podcast program containing easy-to-understand content would be launched to raise awareness of copyright protection worldwide.
93. The Delegation of the Republic of Moldova aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Georgia on behalf of the CEBS Group. As the new Government of the Republic of Moldova had prioritized efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, ensure public access to health care and provide a secure social environment, it welcomed the efforts of WIPO and other organizations to ensure inclusive access to medicines and health care. As IP could and should be used to support companies and individuals to grow their revenues, the Delegation supported the commitment of WIPO to concentrate on expanding the use of IP as a tool for job creation, investment, business growth, economic development and social vibrancy, with a focus on women and young people. As much remained to be done to make IP a part of Moldovan culture and daily life, the Government aimed to improve access to knowledge and education through digitalization and AI, as reflected in the strategic development plan of the national IP Office. The Government was keen to preserve cultural heritage and TK; it supported regional development by promoting traditional products and welcomed the assistance of WIPO in consolidating the national geographical indications system. In addition, the Government’s short‑term priorities included the national implementation of an efficient compulsory licensing regime.
94. The Delegation of Romania said that it appreciated the comprehensive report that the Director General had presented and the work of the Director General and his team on the MTSP 2022–2026, which would help WIPO to deal with challenges such as the COVID‑19 pandemic. Romania was pleased that matters on the public agenda, which covered the proposed amendments to the PCT, Madrid, Hague and Lisbon Systems, included the convening of a diplomatic conference for the adoption of a DLT. The Treaty would establish working relations with other intergovernmental organizations, such as the recent cooperation between WIPO, WHO and WTO. Those matters, in addition to the achievements in the report, reflected the strength of WIPO. It was important to share information and raise awareness of IP at the national level and Romania had participated in the WIPO exercise on patent mapping and landscaping to review the services that national IP offices provided to SMEs. The Delegation wished to thank WIPO for its support in organizing joint events to promote IP rights. WIPO worked with the Romanian copyright office and the State Office for Inventions and Trademarks to organize the Fourth Regional Conference on Intellectual Property in the Digital Economy for SMEs. The event, which had taken place in Bucharest in September 2021, had attracted 200 participants online and in person and had addressed topics relating to video games. An online webinar had covered topics relating to industrial designs and another would address ePCT. WIPO, in cooperation with the State Office for Inventions and Trademarks and the European Union Intellectual Property Office, would organize a training program on IP developments for magistrates. The Delegation wished to reiterate its readiness to host a WIPO external office in Bucharest to boost the development of the IP system in the sub-region and promote WIPO services and values.
95. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, aligning itself with the statement of CACEEC, said that IP services remained important, despite the uncertainty of the present economic situation and enforced changes to working habits. The Russian Federation had recorded a steady growth in the number of registration applications for trademarks (up 13 per cent), industrial designs (up 5 per cent) and computer programs (up 36 per cent). The emphasis within WIPO on building IP ecosystems was becoming ever more vital. In the Russian Federation, there were plans to use a digital platform that would include patent analytical support and enable progress to be made in complex research projects that had significant technological and commercial potential. A special mechanism had been approved for COVID‑19-related applications: ROSPATENT had introduced an accelerated system for the consideration of applications for inventions related to combating the virus and associated illnesses. To date, more than 870 patent applications had been received, with more than 350 patents issued for vaccines, antiviral therapies, diagnostic testing systems and disinfectant technologies. The first patent for a vaccine protecting against COVID-19 infection had been registered in the Russian Federation, and the processing time from filing the application to granting the patent had been three weeks. It was important to reduce the timeframe as overcoming the pandemic would require innovative decision-making that would be impossible without the rapid exchange of information between developers. The Delegation called on other WIPO Member States to adopt similar measures. The patented Chinese vaccine was well‑known and, in August 2021, the patent application of another key vaccine manufacturer had been published, although most vaccine manufacturers were not patenting their inventions. The patenting of vaccines was essential for everyone to be able to use new technologies and information, and a failure to patent could have negative consequences for the legal protection of vaccines. The Russian Federation was making significant efforts to create a national IP ecosystem in response to the demands of the business community: a law had entered into force in January 2021 that would allow three-dimensional (3D) models of IP objects to be included in applications. They would be reviewed using algorithms based on AI. The Delegation hoped that a WIPO Standard on 3D models would be adopted in the near future. As was known, the work of the Task Force of the Committee on WIPO Standards had been broadened to further explore opportunities to compare and search across arrays of 3D images. The Delegation expressed the hope that progress would be made on that task, which would improve the quality of expertise in 3D modelling. Work was continuing on the creation of a single Eurasian space for the registration and protection of IP objects, which would offer the benefits that regional systems enjoyed in comparison to national ones. In June 2021, the Eurasian system for the legal protection of industrial designs had become operational. Ratification had been completed and preparations were underway for the launch of the registration system for trademarks and appellations of origin for goods from the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). Work was also ongoing to create a single jurisdiction and EAEU countries were ready to develop a single space for information and expertise using new computer systems. As the use of the Russian language was undoubtedly one of the factors contributing to harmonization, the Russian Federation considered it a priority to expand the languages used in the WIPO registration systems, the Madrid and Hague Systems. In 2021, ROSPATENT had introduced 15 new digital products. An online service for the registration of computer programs was already operational and more than 200 applications had been filed. The new services covered AI technologies, machine learning, 3D and Big Data. Focusing on platform-based solutions made it possible to digitally transform the way information was handled. Such a step must form the basis for accelerating the completion of work and significantly improving its quality, and for creating a user-friendly information environment for online registration applications. The Russian Federation expected further dialogue with WIPO and Member States on the Digital Agenda.
96. The Delegation of Rwanda aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation welcomed the MTSP 2022–2026 and appreciated its vision for strengthening IP globally and at the national level. The Delegation also appreciated the work done by the Director General through trilateral workshops with WHO and WTO to seek common ground on substantive IP issues related to COVID-19 vaccine equity. The Government of Rwanda was creating the necessary environment to ensure that the national IP regime provided good incentives for innovators and creators to develop new technologies to help fulfil the national economic development agenda. Significant progress had been made in streamlining WIPO partnerships with Member States in Africa for strengthening national IP ecosystems. Rwanda had made progress in implementing three key industrial property treaties. Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of notifications from the International Bureau of WIPO had increased. The Parliament of Rwanda had recently ratified the Marrakech Treaty; the instrument of ratification would be deposited imminently. The Government of Rwanda appreciated the support it had received for improving its GII ranking; much still remained to be done and every effort would be made to improve further.
97. The Delegation of San Marino said that it remained committed to supporting WIPO in all its activities. Companies increasingly used IP to develop and grow. As drivers of economic activity, they needed support from national and international institutions during the COVID‑19 pandemic. The pandemic had advanced technological solutions and digital transformation and the Delegation hoped that the hardest part of the pandemic was over. Research in AI, machine learning, blockchains and biotechnology would continue to produce new challenges and needs, such as protecting IP. San Marino planned to develop the sector by implementing legal instruments that balanced IP protection with the circulation of ideas. San Marino had recently signed an agreement to develop IP office business solutions, including a cloud hosting service, to provide applicants with more efficient IP services and to complete its digitalization process at national level. It was committed to implementing that agreement with the cooperation of WIPO. Having signed several fundamental WIPO treaties, San Marino was also committed to completing and implementing domestic legislation on copyright.
98. The Delegation of Saudi Arabia aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, and by the Delegation of Qatar, on behalf of the Arab Group. Saudi Arabia was keen to become a member of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the PBC and take an active part in their work. The efforts made and negotiations held thus far with a view to convening a diplomatic conference to adopt the DLT were welcome. Saudi Arabia was ready to host that conference. Since the previous session of the Assemblies, Saudi Arabia had acceded to the Budapest Treaty, the Nice Agreement and the Strasbourg Agreement. It intended to deposit the instruments of accession to a number of other WIPO treaties by the end of 2021. Saudi Arabia supported international efforts to facilitate access to COVID-19 vaccines while upholding IP rights and the provisions of the related international treaties. The Director General’s efforts in that regard were welcome. In Saudi Arabia, work was being done to draft a national IP strategy and to launch a project to include IP in education curricula. As part of the country’s IP awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts, preparations were under way to host a WIPO Summer School in partnership with the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, which would be attended by 55 participants from nine countries. Some 35 IP support centers had been opened in universities and research centers. Under a unique new initiative to improve public sector compliance with IP laws and regulations, officials from 76 government agencies had been trained as IP respect officers. The Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property conducted periodic site inspections and monitoring exercises, as well as blocking websites that violated IP rights. The Delegation appreciated the technical assistance provided by WIPO and looked forward to it publishing IP dictionaries in all six official languages. In that vein, the Authority had issued the first version of its Arabic IP dictionary, which was available on its website.
99. The Delegation of Serbia, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Georgia on behalf of the CEBS Group, said that it supported the MTSP 2022–2026. The plan could be a tool for combatting inequality. An appeal to the President of the United States of America by 175 formers heads of State, government leaders and scientists to suspend IP rights for COVID-19 vaccines underscored the global importance of IP. The Delegation welcomed the assistance it had received from WIPO with a project designed to help the country gain a deeper understanding of its own innovation system. The Council for Encouraging the Development of Digital Economy, Innovation, High-Tech Entrepreneurship and Digitalization had been set up to stimulate business-based on innovation. The Council would evaluate a project led by the Intellectual Property Office of Serbia, alongside WIPO, which, it was hoped, would help to improve the country’s GII ranking. The Delegation welcomed support by WIPO for a WIPO awards program in Serbia and the organization of the Tesla Fest in Novi Sad. In spite of the pandemic, the number of domestic trademark applications had increased by 12.2 per cent in 2020 over the previous year. The Office had also provided information to 27 per cent more customers than in the previous year, indicating that interest in IP rights was growing. Nonetheless, the number of patent applications had fallen slightly. The electronic application service was proving successful: more than 73 per cent of applications and 57 per cent of files had been received online. Serbia had taken part in the Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications in 2021 and the Delegation commended WIPO on its Virtual Exhibition. Assisted by Switzerland, Serbia had gone to great lengths over the previous five years to market Serbian products protected by a geographical indication. The Original Serbia association had been established to promote traditional products protected by geographical indications. The market value of some products had increased significantly as a result of a geographical indication protection.
100. The Delegation of Singapore said that IP and innovation had a vital role to play in the global economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Singapore had continued to take steps to adapt to an increasingly digital environment and to transform IP into commercially valuable assets. It had launched the Singapore IP Strategy 2030 (SIPS 2030), which aimed to leverage the benefits of IP, innovation and intangible assets (IA) for businesses and individuals and to establish Singapore as an IP and IA hub to continue to attract innovators and future-proof jobs and skills. In September 2021, the Parliament of Singapore had passed a bill to strengthen the national copyright regime with due regard for the new ways in which content was being created, distributed and used. Noting the clear synergies between SIPS 2030 and the MTSP 2022–2026, Singapore looked forward to working with the Organization to pursue shared objectives, including in the area of dispute resolution. In particular, it planned to enhance its alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and intensify its collaboration with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center to help businesses to negotiate complex legal challenges related to IP. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO and the Member States for their collaboration in various activities, including joint programs with the Singapore IP office and the publication of the first ever Singapore country report on IP-backed financing. It looked forward to continuing that collaboration and its active and constructive role in the global IP community.
101. The Delegation of Slovakia, aligning itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union and its member states and by Georgia on behalf of the CEBS Group, said that it appreciated the WIPO activities outlined in the Director General’s report to the Assemblies, particularly those that provided technical assistance and information about adhering to WIPO treaties and about the increasing use of international IP systems. The Delegation noted efforts to improve the ability of Member States to monitor WIPO affairs. Slovakia acknowledged the focus that WIPO had on securing the best available global services under the PCT as well as within the Madrid and Hague Systems. The annual financial report outlined the Organization’s strong performance despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The working groups under the systems continued to improve rules, guidelines and practices. Slovakia was committed to working on global services in the interest of existing and future users of the systems. WIPO had effectively and efficiently responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and Slovakia supported the efforts WIPO had made to encourage economic recovery. Regarding the normative agenda, the Delegation hoped that there would be a diplomatic conference to adopt the DLT. The ongoing efforts of Lisbon Union members to eliminate the budget deficit were appreciated and Slovakia was involved in discussions held by the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Union. The work carried out by the SCP in that area was satisfactory. Slovakia recognized the importance of the technical assistance that WIPO provided and the activities that the CDIP carried out. The WIPO Secretariat, WIPO Academy and the Department for Transition and Developed Countries had provided excellent cooperation and assistance during the previous period. In February 2021, there had been an online seminar on WIPO databases and online tools for universities. Slovakia was considering how to develop its automotive industry and preparations for the December 2021 Hydrogen Technologies in Transport international conference were underway.
102. The Delegation of South Africa aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group. The world was facing an unprecedented health, social and economic crisis as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Only through multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity could countries “build back better” after the pandemic. As a specialized agency and key member of the UN family, WIPO had an important role to play in that regard; the pandemic had brought to the fore the important crossover between IP and public health, in particular the extent to which IP could become a barrier to access to essential medicines. In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, WIPO had a responsibility to contribute to the development of a more inclusive and development-oriented global IP regime that ensured that patent laws in particular did not restrict access to public health goods. The need for an economically and socially responsible IP ecosystem was the reason why South Africa, with others, had spearheaded the move to encourage a temporary waiver of the TRIPS Agreement, to counter growing vaccine nationalism. The Delegation was encouraged by the cooperation between WIPO, WTO and WHO, and hoped action would be taken to support developing countries in their efforts to develop their manufacturing capabilities, tackle the current pandemic and prepare for future health emergencies. The IP system was an important enabler for innovation, technology transfer, research and development, industrial development, and more broadly economic growth. It was crucial to find common ground and long-standing issues, including the conclusion of a DLT which recognized the contribution of TK, TCEs and GRs to many of the designs registered across the world. South Africa remained committed to the key principles of equitable geographical representation and proportionality, as well as fairness, inclusiveness and universality, in WIPO’’s key governing bodies.
103. The Delegation of Spain said that IP was an important driver of economic growth. It commended the WIPO Director General for capably implementing his mandate, pursuing the Organization’s mission and raising awareness of IP as a tool for inclusive economic growth during a difficult period. It underscored the importance of best practices aimed at promoting the participation of women in the IP ecosystem, as well as its commitment to gender equality and its readiness to continue supporting such actions. The Delegation welcomed the Organization’s ambition to develop IP ecosystems that helped innovators and creators to bring their ideas to market. It considered IP vital to the success of start-ups and SMEs and had full faith in WIPO to continue adapting to users’’ needs while maintaining the highest management standards. It supported the work of the SCCR and was committed to reaching a consensus in the near future on the convening of a diplomatic conference for the adoption of a broadcasting treaty that reflected recent technological developments and the current needs of broadcasters. It considered resale rights a pertinent issue that should permanently be included on the SCCR agenda. The Delegation underlined the need to continue supporting the work of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement, particularly with respect to IP infringements on the Internet. Spain had been among the first countries to join WIPO ALERT in a bid to prevent cultural piracy and protect IP. It welcomed initiatives aimed at strengthening collaboration with UN agencies, international organizations and other parties interested in discussing IP rights in the context of global challenges such as COVID-19, food security and climate change. Multilingualism was vital and the use of Spanish within the Organization was central to achieving its objectives and reaching a wider audience. Lastly, the Delegation called for cooperation among States to enable the conclusion of agreements that improved how the Organization worked. It praised the Member States and the Secretariat for their successful drafting of the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23.
104. The Delegation of the Sudan aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of South Africa, on behalf of the African Group, and by the Delegation of Qatar, on behalf of the Arab Group. The Division for Arab Countries and Division for Least Developed Countries of WIPO had provided unstinting support to the Sudan National Office and assistance with IP capacity-building and awareness-raising. Cooperation between the Sudan and WIPO was ongoing, in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of in-person meetings and online workshops had been held in 2021. The most important of the meetings had taken place in May 2021 between the Minister of Justice, Nasr al-Din Abd al-Bari and the Director General of the Organization, who reviewed aspects of bilateral cooperation between the two sides. A national meeting had been held online on 29 June, 2021, on TK and geographical indications. The meeting, which had been attended by representatives of a broad range of institutions, had highlighted the importance of GRs and geographical indications. Discussions had taken place on how to protect them and thereby ensure that they contributed to boosting the economy and development, and on how the Sudan could reap the economic benefits of its rich cultural and geographical diversity. The Sudan was one of the least well represented countries in the Organization and, with a view to boosting its presence, an online seminar had been held in March 2021 on employment in the Organization. It had been attended by civil servants from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, along with professors of Sudanese universities and think tanks. The aim of the seminar had been to raise awareness of the Organization, make known the kind of employment opportunities that it offered and provide technical support for applicants. The Sudan had participated in a WIPO IP training program for the LDCs, which had been held as usual in 2020. Projects presented by participants from the Sudan had focused on raising awareness of IP among young people and government institutions, especially women employees thereof. The program, conducted in cooperation with the Division for Least Developed Countries, had led to the holding of a national workshop in September 2021 on IP for trademarks and product development, the main target audience being women entrepreneurs. The Sudan had an interest in public-private partnerships and a desire to strengthen its partnership with WIPO, stimulate research and broaden access to information for researchers. In February 2021, therefore, the Sudan had joined the WIPO Research Initiative through the Institute of Public Health in Khartoum. The Institute acted as a health sector think tank, engaging in policy analysis, evidence-based research and advocacy for health-care reform. It sought to promote the development of public health systems in the Sudan in general. Joining the initiative would enable the Institute to develop partnerships with research centers in 150 countries. Convinced that databases could facilitate access to IP information, the Sudan had announced its desire to join WIPO Lex-Judgments, through which it would be able to disseminate its IP jurisprudence, in 2021.
105. The Delegation of Sweden said that it fully supported the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of Slovenia, on behalf of the European Union and its member States. It wished to thank the WIPO Director General, Secretariat and staff for their efforts to facilitate the ongoing development of the IP law system against the difficult backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Delegation attached great importance to the work of the WIPO committees. With regard to the SCCR, the Delegation was following with interest the ongoing efforts to update the international legal framework for the effective protection of broadcasting organizations and was committed to constructively participating in the Committee’s future deliberations. The WIPO IP diagnostics tool would help small enterprises and business intermediaries to manage intangible assets when engaging in new business opportunities. The Delegation welcomed such support, particularly given the important role of SMEs in the economic growth of the Member States and the development of green and sustainable technologies. It also welcomed the update to the WIPO Good Practice Toolkit for Collective Management Organizations, which was all the more important since the creative and cultural sectors had struggled to maintain revenue during lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With regard to AI and IP, the Delegation encouraged WIPO to continue to facilitate discussions in a multistakeholder forum. The Delegation was particularly grateful for the excellent cooperation between WIPO and the Swedish IP office in relation to the advanced international training programs financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Sweden had rolled out IP programs for LDCs in collaboration with the Least Developed Countries Division and a program on the role of IP and GRs in innovation in collaboration with the Traditional Knowledge Division. Special thanks were owed to the former Director of the Least Developed Countries Division, Kifle Shenkoru, who had played an important role in establishing those programs in 2004 and fostering their development over the years. Sweden looked forward to continuing its successful cooperation with WIPO in the development of the international IP system for the economic, social and cultural benefit of all.
106. The Delegation of Switzerland said that it wished to highlight two main points in line with the statement made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B. Firstly, it was necessary to bear in mind that standard-setting work was central to the mandate of WIPO. Despite the ongoing international situation, Switzerland called for a return to the normative work underway, which would have a direct impact on the users of IP systems. In that regard, the Delegation welcomed the key role played by WIPO during the COVID-19 pandemic by continuing to support innovation and its dissemination. At the international level, WIPO had to fully assume its role as the leading body on IP issues in cooperation with relevant UN institutions and other international organizations. Membership of the UNSDG would offer WIPO an opportunity to further promote IP for sustainable development. Secondly, the appeal of WIPO systems to users depended on short processing times, reliable titles of protection, and tools and computing solutions tailored to their needs. The enhancement and balanced development of the international IP framework was a main objective of the Organization, which could be achieved by paying particular attention to all WIPO registration and classification systems to ensure their proper functioning and continue to encourage their growth. In addition, on August 31, 2021, Switzerland had acceded to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, which would enter into force on December 1, 2021. Switzerland looked forward to joining and playing an active role in the Lisbon Union.
107. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG. It welcomed the focus of WIPO on the needs of developing countries and strengthening their capacities through technical cooperation. The Syrian Arab Republic was continuing, in spite of the challenges arising from the unilateral coercive measures imposed on it and the devastating repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, to develop national legislation, stimulate creativity and invention, support SMEs and harness them to serve sustainable development. WIPO had made an invaluable contribution to the country’s efforts to leverage IP as a tool for development and capacity-building and as a means of supporting creators and inventors. In particular, the Organization’s support had ensured success for the Al-Basel Creativity and Invention Exhibition and contributed to implementation of a project to create TISCs, for which an MoU had been signed recently, and of a project to establish a national IP training center. The Organization was working with a broad range of actors and stakeholders to draft a national IP strategy that would help to enhance the impact of IP on economic growth and comprehensive development. In the light of the deepening challenges arising from the spread of COVID-19, the Syrian Arab Republic was keen to launch a development action plan for a health sector IP system that would facilitate fair and equitable access to diagnostics, medication and vaccines in the face of the pandemic. The Delegation was in favor of broadening membership of the WIPO Coordination Committee and opening membership of the PBC to all Member States.
108. The Delegation of Thailand set great store by IP as a driver of economic development. Thailand continued to strengthen its IP ecosystem and provide effective and responsive services for all stakeholders as it recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Intellectual Property had taken steps towards becoming a smart IP institution and provided fully integrated and efficient online services, including e-Filing and fast-track trademark registration. It had reduced the processing times for trademark renewals from 60 days to one hour and for copyright notifications from 30 to three days. Other services available to innovators included an online IP dispute resolution service and an early warning system for patent expirations. Turning to IP rights enforcement, the Government had signed an MoU with e-commerce platforms to improve the protection of IP rights on the Internet. The Delegation supported the continuation of negotiations within the IGC and welcomed the extension of that body’s mandate to the 2022‑23 biennium. The Delegation appreciated the continued support of WIPO and would continue to work constructively on the Organization’s initiatives.
109. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago supported the statement made by the Delegation of Paraguay, on behalf of GRULAC. The Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement had entered into force in Trinidad and Tobago in January 2021 and the first domestic application for the registration of a mark under the Madrid System had been filed in June of the same year. Amendments to the Copyright Act of Trinidad and Tobago providing for the implementation of the Beijing Treaty and the Marrakesh Treaty had also entered into force. An MoU between the National Library and Information System Authority and the WIPO‑led Accessible Books Consortium, aimed at facilitating access to published works in accessible formats for blind and visually impaired people in Trinidad and Tobago, was due to be signed in the near future. Moreover, the Government was preparing draft amendments to its legislation with a view to the country’s accession to the Patent Law Treaty and the Geneva Act. The WIPO File portal, launched with the Organization’s assistance, continued to be a success. On May 17, 2021, the Government had established the Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force to coordinate the efforts of eleven different public and private agencies, including the national IP office, to combat illicit trade. Trinidad and Tobago was on course to launch a national IP training institution, with the trainers due to complete their training by the end of 2021. It had also taken further steps towards establishing a technology and innovation support center, which was eagerly anticipated by stakeholders and partners. The country had continued to collaborate with its Latin American and Caribbean neighbors to improve IP services in the region. It also looked forward to concluding MoUs with Singapore and Canada in the next few months to further strengthen its national IP office. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO and in particular the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean for their continued collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago IP office. It looked forward to helping the Director General to realize his vision for the Organization and the global IP system. Trinidad and Tobago wished to see the successful conclusion of discussions on a broadcasting treaty, particularly given the rapid increase of commercial activity in that area. In addition, it looked forward to continuing discussions on an instrument for the protection of TK and TCEs and the convening of a diplomatic conference regarding the DLT. The Delegation remained committed to advancing discussions and working together towards mutually beneficial goals while ensuring the sustainability of the Organization.
110. The Delegation of Tunisia said that it was glad that the present meeting of the Assemblies was taking place despite the unprecedented global health situation, and commended the efforts of the Director General to ensure continuity in the services provided by WIPO and the implementation of the Organization’s program of work. The launch of the GII on September 20, 2021 had once again showed the Organization’s commitment to fulfilling its mandate for the promotion of IP and innovation throughout the world. WIPO had the necessary tools and leadership to play a greater role in helping countries to address the effects of the pandemic, and the Organization should be at the center of worldwide efforts to deal with the global crisis. The Delegation underscored the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and cooperation between international organizations, as well as the need to find the necessary synergies between policies on health, trade and innovation. The Delegation stood ready to cooperate on the fundamental aspects of the MTSP 2022–2026, which would enable WIPO to play a critical role in the development of a balanced and inclusive global IP ecosystem. Tunisia had recently proposed an ambitious program to WIPO, introducing the concept of value chains for the development of an ecosystem of innovation, creativity and technology transfer. The Delegation also underscored Tunisia’s interest in the convocation of a diplomatic conference to adopt the DLT. In that regard, Tunisia had, for the previous three years, been hosting IP Olympiads with a view to disseminating IP culture among young people. The Delegation noted with interest the reports presented to the Assemblies describing WIPO efforts to assist Member States in using IP for job creation, in particular for young people, as well as for investment, business growth and economic development. Lastly, it remained vital to foster gender equality and women’s autonomy in the context of the WIPO mandate, both in the Organization’s policies and program activities, and in the management of its human resources. In that regard, Tunisia was proud of the encouragement it had received from WIPO at the launch of the “IP needs women” association, which was aimed at encouraging women’s participation in IP and innovation.
111. The Delegation of Turkey aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B, and, noting the impact of the COVID‑19 pandemic on business, welcomed the MTSP 2022–2026 and underscored the importance of innovation and collaboration on the path to recovery. The Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23 biennium would pave the way for important achievements by WIPO. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, patent, trademark and design applications in Turkey had increased, placing the country among the top 10 IP countries globally in terms of national applications. Patent, trademark and design applications had grown by 1 per cent, 31 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. TURKPATENT, as an international search authority, had taken its place among the leading 10 PCT authorities in the prepared reports. Copyright policy in Turkey had been shaped to develop copyright and creative industries, a key growth area for the country. A copyright specialization library had been established in the General Directorate of Copyright and cooperation arrangements on copyright had been put in place between universities and creative industries. Turkey had ratified the Marrakesh Treaty. The Intellectual Property Academy provided training in all aspects of IP for professionals from all segments of society. The Turkish IP Valuation Company had been set up to boost IP valuation capacity and facilitate IP commercialization in Turkey.
112. The Delegation of Uganda aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, WIPO must continue to deliver its services; thanks to technological innovations, the Assemblies could still be held. The national IP office of Uganda had adapted its services to the “new normal” and the number of applications received had increased during the pandemic. Such challenging times brought to mind the spirit of the TRIPS Agreement; The Delegation applauded the extension of the TRIPS transition period to July 1, 2034. Uganda had made significant progress in the development, protection, generation, management, utilization and enforcement of IP. Under the aegis of the ARIPO, representatives of African countries had met in Kampala in August 2021 to adopt a protocol on voluntary registration of copyright and related rights. The Delegation was committed to cementing and promoting relations with other national and international IP offices. An online trademark filing system was being launched with the support of the European Union Intellectual Property Office; more online services would be developed in future. While strengthening the IP regime, Uganda had amended trademark regulations to provide for the registration of trademarks or trademark agents. Uganda was also in the process of ratifying all WIPO corporate treaties, the Berne Convention and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty. WIPO support for those legal and administrative reforms, in particular for the protection of TK and TCEs and the promotion of the geographical indications landscape was appreciated, as was its support for technology and innovation-related projects and the establishment of TISCs. The Delegation also appreciated the support for its project on women in innovation. Workshops and training programs conducted virtually since the beginning of the pandemic had also been particularly welcome.
113. The Delegation of Ukraine, aligning itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Georgia on behalf of the CEBS group and by the Delegation of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union, said that its Government continued to prioritize IP and had included it in its strategic plan. Institutional reform in the field of IP had been successfully completed with the establishment of the National IP Authority under the Ukrainian IP Institute. Under the framework of the joint cooperation program for 2020-2021, the Ukrainian National IP Training Center had been established with the support of the WIPO Academy, 17 TISCs had been in operation, Ukraine had become a member of the WIPO ALERT platform and, in cooperation with the WIPO Academy, an online summer school on IP had been held with more than 120 students from 30 countries. Furthermore, the Ministry of the Economy and the National IP Authority, in cooperation with WIPO, had regularly held joint awareness‑raising and capacity-building activities. Following the path of European and Euro‑Atlantic integration, Ukraine aimed to join the CEBS Group, which would reflect the country’s geographical and historical realities. The Delegation invited all CEBS countries to support the aspirations of Ukraine. It also wished to draw attention to UN General Assembly resolution 68/262 on the territorial integrity of Ukraine; WIPO, as one of the specialized agencies of the UN, should share its views and adhere to its principles. The Delegation looked forward to engaging with WIPO with respect to the Madrid and PCT Systems to develop a legal mechanism that would allow the effective refusal of registration under certain circumstances.
114. The Delegation of the United Arab Emirates aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Bangladesh, on behalf of the APG, and by the Delegation of Qatar, on behalf of the Arab Group. The Delegation welcomed the Organization’s outstanding financial performance over the previous year, achieved in spite of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the slogan, “Connecting Minds and Creating the Future”, countries from around the world were coming together in the United Arab Emirates to show off the very best in their products, services, technology and their latest inventions. The country had recently launched its “50 Projects”, a roadmap for sustainable socio‑economic development over the coming five decades guided by the standards of knowledge, innovation, technology, talent and entrepreneurship. The United Arab Emirates had acceded to the Madrid Protocol with the aim of supporting trademark owners. It had earlier acceded to the Budapest Treaty and the Strasbourg Agreement in order to foster an environment conducive to innovation, R&D as firmly established drivers of the future economy. Key among the country’s ongoing efforts in that regard was the recent overhaul of industrial property law, undertaken in order to bring patent systems fully up to date. Copyright and trademark law would also be amended shortly. The country’s efforts had been rewarded with its improved position on the 2021 GII, in which it had ranked first in the Arab world for the sixth year running and had risen a place in the global ranking. Member States should weigh up the importance of multilingualism for all WIPO systems, including the Madrid System, in order to break down language barriers and improve the Organization’s services. There was a need to identify ways to help inventors to get back on their feet and the Delegation was eager to see the project approved by the CDIP in that regard implemented. The Delegation encouraged delegates to attend the Second World Conference on the Creative Economy, which would be hosted by Dubai in December 2021. It also called for flexibility in discussions at the current session on issues such as the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the PBC.
115. The Delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania associated itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the African Group. It congratulated the Director General for ably steering WIPO through the COVID-19 pandemic and was optimistic that under his leadership the Organization would achieve its strategic objectives and overcome whatever challenges lay ahead. The WIPO committees were to be commended for continuing to implement their programs in line with their respective mandates and the DA. The Delegation hoped that consensus could finally be reached on certain longstanding issues. WIPO had continued to provide valuable technical assistance and support to the United Republic of Tanzania with a number of programs, including in the area of training and capacity building. Recently, WIPO and the judiciary of the United Republic of Tanzania had signed an MoU to strengthen the judicial system and the protection of IP services in the country. Other ongoing projects and activities included the distance-learning access platform for students enrolling in the Master’s Program for IP at the University of Dar es Salaam and the training of trainers on IP teaching methodologies with the WIPO Academy. In addition, WIPO had supported the United Republic of Tanzania with the establishment of alternative dispute resolutions, the review of the Copyright and Neighboring Rights Act and the preparation of other regulations. Such support helped to create the conditions for the development of the innovation- and knowledge‑based economy in the country. The United Republic of Tanzania was taking steps towards ratifying the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances, the Kampala Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights and the Madrid Protocol and sought the Organization’s support in that endeavor. Lastly, the Delegation urged WIPO and all Member States to take measures to ensure equitable access to affordable, safe and effective treatments and therapeutics for COVID-19. As the global custodian of all manner of IP rights, WIPO had an important role to play in responding to the calls of WHO and the UN General Assembly for solidarity and cooperation in combatting the pandemic.
116. The Delegation of the United States of America endorsed the statement delivered by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, on behalf of Group B. The concept of the Strategy House introduced in the MTSP 2022–2026 was especially important and welcome. The Delegation considered the shift in focus from programs to sectors logical and was confident that it would result in more transparency and accountability throughout the Organization. Since the last Assembly meetings, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) had adopted policies and programs aimed at increasing access to IP systems with due regard for diversity and inclusiveness, enhancing pro bono services and expanding its outreach and assistance programs for inventors and entrepreneurs. It had included a new category in its Patents for Humanity program with a view to accelerating the deployment of COVID-19 technologies for tracking, diagnosing, preventing and treating the disease. Patents for Humanity was an awards program for patent holders, licensees and applicants whose groundbreaking innovations addressed longstanding global development challenges. The deadline for submitting applications under the COVID-19 category had closed recently and the winners were due to be announced soon. The success stories from the program would doubtless inspire others to harness innovation for human progress. Now, more than ever, all WIPO Member States must work harder to empower more people to engage in innovation. Many more people were needed to invent and commercialize the solutions required to keep society moving forward. The Delegation stood ready to collaborate with the Organization over the coming year.
117. The Delegation of Uruguay said that it attached the utmost importance to technological innovation and development as tools for the economic, social and cultural advancement of societies and as drivers for the prosperity of its citizens – objectives whose attainment went hand in hand with intellectual and industrial property. The COVID‑19 pandemic had underscored the need for the wider use of modern technology in IP offices, not only to ensure business continuity in the event of emergencies, but also to facilitate the use of IP system tools by end users, in particular SMEs, which were the lifeblood of the economy. The Delegation supported the Director General’s initiatives that focused on specific products and thus made the Organization’s work more relatable to entrepreneurs seeking real and tangible benefits. With that in mind, it was essential to strengthen ties and cooperation between WIPO and the IP offices of all Member States to enable the sharing of knowledge and experiences and the harmonization of practices with a view to establishing a predictable framework and clear rules of play.
118. The Delegation of Uzbekistan said that its Government paid particular attention to the development of IP. In 2021, a resolution on measures to improve the protection of IP assets had been adopted, entrusting the National IP Agency with ensuring the legal protection of IP and coordinating the relevant activities of other State bodies. Work was underway to implement national IP legislation, taking into account the requirements of recognized international standards, including the TRIPS Agreement. A bill on geographical indications had been drafted with the assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Under another bill, criminal liability for counterfeiters and fines for legal entities engaged in the production and sale of counterfeit goods had been introduced. The number of court cases relating to counterfeiting had risen sevenfold in 2020 compared with the previous year and the Agency was taking concerted action to counter the phenomenon. A number of national laws had been amended to establish the amount of compensation for damages in the field of copyright and related rights and to extend the term of copyright from 50 to 70 years. In addition, the Agency had been involved in implementing pretrial measures, including issuing warnings and reports on administrative offenses. IP application filings had continued to rise in Uzbekistan in 2020, regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of WIPO, Uzbekistan was working on a national IP strategy for the period 2022-2025 and particular importance was attached to raising public IP awareness. It was expected that Uzbekistan would ratify the Marrakesh Treaty, the Singapore Treaty, the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement and the Rome Convention in 2022.
119. The Delegation of Viet Nam supported the MTSP 2022–2026 and particularly appreciated the intention to build a balanced and efficient global IP ecosystem, with the priority of supporting developing countries, and LDCs in particular. Continued assistance from WIPO for the implementation of Viet Nam’s national IP strategy and in support of its efforts to implement international treaties on matters related to IP was particularly appreciated. Technical assistance to support the digital transformation of Viet Nam’s IP office, and in particular for the completion of the industrial property administration system (WIPO-IPAS) had been crucial. Efforts were being made to promote gender and youth engagement in IP at the national level. Viet Nam remained committed to engaging with WIPO and its Member States.
120. The Delegation of Zimbabwe, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the African Group, said that its national development strategy continued to embrace the IP ecosystem. The Government had prioritized the establishment of six innovation hubs at the country’s five state universities to drive technological advances in the industrial sector, and legislation enabling research, innovation and development had been enacted. The Delegation appreciated WIPO support for capacity‑building and would continue to rely on the Organization for funding for IP studies, including the Masters’’ degree in IP jointly offered by WIPO, ARIPO and Africa University. Zimbabwe prioritized the implementation of the recommendations in the WIPO DA and urged the Secretariat to mainstream the Agenda in all its work. Regarding the convening of a diplomatic conference on the DLT, a workable solution should be found that addressed concerns on disclosure and technical capacity-building assistance. The Delegation appreciated the intersectional work on the expansion of the governing bodies, which must be in line with geographical equity and balance. The Delegation called on the Assemblies to expedite the work of the IGC and looked forward to cooperating with WIPO in relation to the newly established IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector. Finally, it was hoped that Member States would use the Assemblies to reach a consensus on IP-related solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic.
121. The Representative of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), associating itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of South Africa, on behalf of the African Group, said that it had held a diplomatic conference in August 2021 to adopt the Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights. The outcome had been the Kampala Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright Related Rights, which had been adopted on August 28, 2021 in Kampala, Uganda. The Representative noted the importance of IT infrastructure and appreciated the support that WIPO had provided to improve ARIPO e‑services, which had allowed operations to continue despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Activities to raise awareness about IP had been organized in 2021 through the MoU between WIPO, ARIPO and OAPI, in particular to celebrate World IP Day. SMEs from ARIPO member states had benefited from a workshop that WIPO and the IP Office of Singapore had organized. On May 3, 2021, the Gambia had joined the Banjul Protocol on Marks and on October 1, 2021, the Seychelles had become the 21st ARIPO member state.
122. The Representative of the Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office) said that the extraordinary circumstances in which the Assemblies were being held underlined the fact that new types of challenges were coming into view with the emergence of technology based on AI. The IP system and the international agreements underpinning it played a pivotal role in encouraging research centers and development and innovation institutes worldwide to discover vaccines and treatments for new epidemics, and to develop medical devices, tools and smart phone apps that contributed to monitoring of those epidemics, limiting their spread and reducing their impact on public health. The system also had a role to play in terms of regulating IP rights in emergency situations, such as pandemics, and, of particular importance, making use of the flexibility built into international agreements for such situations. The economies of most countries were showing signs of recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had had a major impact on public health and the economy, including through disruption of the movement of goods, most of which benefited from IP rights, and supply chains around the world. Going forward, there was a need for an approach that tackled the impact of COVID-19 and the challenges that had arisen therefrom and to find effective solutions. Growing interest in a comprehensive IP and innovation system and the protection of related rights had stimulated pioneering work and high-quality output at the national and international levels. The Council trusted that the role of the Organization in building a balanced and effective international IP system that fostered innovation and creativity and took into account the various levels of development would continue to grow.
123. The Representative of the Inter-American Association of Intellectual Property (ASIPI) said that ASIPI was a non-profit organization founded 57 years ago to promote and protect the collective interests of its active members through the study and dissemination of IP, encourage regulatory development, protect IP in the Americas and improve the knowledge and professional practices of its members. It was considered the most important and well‑established IP organization in Latin America. Throughout its history, ASIPI had assumed a leadership role on the international stage, forging strong relationships and productive partnerships with sister organizations and associations and reaching out to local authorities in countries of the region, and it had a long tradition of promoting the harmonization and uniform management of IP in the Americas. It was committed to improving knowledge of IP rights in the region and, in that vein, took measures to promote and raise awareness of IP protection. While the Americas had a vast working population, workers were generally unaware of the potential benefits of IP in establishing and developing businesses of all kinds and of its impact on future generations through innovation and education. Therefore, ASIPI had rolled out a number of educational projects to increase knowledge and promote the use of IP, namely ASIPI Emprende, ASIPI Pro Bono and ASIPI Academia. ASIPI Emprende taught creators and inventors about IP, including its various forms of protection, and how it could be harnessed to transform their activities into businesses for their prosperity and development. ASIPI Pro Bono concerned the provision of pro bono IP services in the Americas. It aimed to support entrepreneurs and MSMEs, benefit people and communities with limited resources and access to IP systems and raise awareness of IP issues in the Americas. Given the scale and importance of the WIPO Inventor Assistance Program (IAP) and the support provided by ASIPI since its global launch in October 2016, the partnership between IAP and ASIPI Pro Bono would facilitate the pursuit of the common objective to promote progress and innovation. The aim of ASIPI Academia was to train the legal community through courses on IP and related topics. Noting the high quality of the courses offered by the WIPO Academy, ASIPI was keen to conclude a cooperation agreement that would enable ASIPI Academia and the WIPO Academy to work on projects of mutual interest that had an impact on the community and strengthened IP. The Representative appreciated its close and productive cooperation with WIPO over recent years and acknowledged the Organization’s excellent work and tireless efforts to leverage the benefits of IP for all stakeholders.
124. The Representative of the Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA) said that His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, had launched the “50 Projects” in the United Arab Emirates, which encapsulated the future‑oriented thinking of the country’s leaders, envisaging the United Arab Emirates as a leading economic player by 2071. EIPA was focusing on fostering a culture of respect for IP rights and was keen to maintain 100 per cent business continuity through cooperation with its strategic partners. It also intended to continue working with WIPO in order to advance its goals with regard to fostering an IP culture. The Representative extended an invitation to attend Expo 2020, a major global event being held in the United Arab Emirates that constituted a hub for intercultural exchange and the promotion of cooperation, embodied by the slogan “Connecting Minds and Creating the Future”.
125. The Representative of the Health and Environment Program (HEP) said that, during the pandemic, a focus on environment and health was more essential than ever. From the perspective of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attaining the SDGs, non-governmental organizations should be guaranteed optimal and equitable participation in the work of the various WIPO committees to find solutions to urgent matters and seek compromise in the interest of everyone. HEP had been participating in the work of WIPO and in the development of IP for 20 years, and therefore had robust experience in that regard.
126. The Representative of IP Justice urged delegates to reject a WIPO broadcasting treaty. Access to knowledge had become more critical than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic, with educational materials increasingly reliant on the transmissions of broadcasting companies, and the companies and countries that monopolized broadcasting materials were trying to take advantage of that need. A broadcasting treaty would create new economic rights that would enable broadcasting companies to control the public’s access to knowledge, and limitations and exceptions provisions should be adopted to grant exceptions to libraries, museums, and schools. The Representative urged WIPO not to consider any more broadcast treaties in order to focus on increasing Internet coverage and access to information instead.
127. The Representative of the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA) said that JIPA supported the vision in the MTSP 2022–2026 of a world where IP was used to support creativity and innovation for the common good. In June 2021, with the support of WIPO, JIPA had held the JIPA GREEN Symposium online to provide information about the role of IP in environmental issues and the use of WIPO GREEN. As a non-governmental organization, JIPA had a unique a role to play in the development of a balanced and inclusive global IP ecosystem and was committed to moving forward together with WIPO.
128. The Representative of Knowledge Ecology International (KEI) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had exposed flaws in the IP system. In a public health crisis, no single company should have a monopoly over essential inventions, data, biological resources or manufacturing knowledge required for countermeasures. Access to manufacturing knowledge was particularly important, given the shocking inequality of access to vaccines and drugs. WIPO needed to explore how inventions, data, biological resources and manufacturing knowledge could be treated as global public goods while providing worthwhile incentives and rewards to developers for new products and recognizing the significant role of governments in funding research and development. To that end, the SCP and the CDIP should discuss Alternatives to the Patent System that are used to Support R&D Efforts, Including both Push and Pull Mechanisms, with a Special Focus on Innovation-Inducement Prizes and Open Source Development Models (CDIP/14/INF/12) and other works relating to the supply of public goods. The Representative opposed any further work on a broadcasting treaty, given the evident confusion over the objectives of such a treaty, as well as any proposals to provide effective perpetual rights to broadcasters for content that they did not create, own or license. The SCCR should publish a report on the ownership, concentration of ownership and nationality of ownership of new streaming services that were rapidly replacing traditional broadcasting in many markets. The work of the SCCR on broadcasting hardly took account of the exploding role of encrypted, subscription-based online streaming services, the most significant of which were controlled by large multinationals such as Google, Netflix, Spotify and Amazon rather than locally owned broadcasting entities. Such companies should not have IP rights over others’’ creative works, which was the logical conclusion of any new IP rights for broadcasters that included deferred transmissions. On limitations and exceptions, norm-setting for archives and preservation was an achievable near‑term objective. In that context, global and social issues were important, while harmonization was less of a challenge and conflicts with rights owners were insignificant. The report of the SCCR to the WIPO General Assembly omitted any reference to the Friends of the Chair process in relation to the broadcasting treaty. The Representative urged the Secretariat to shed more light on that process. As regards education and other exceptions, the Representative would like the SCCR to review the exceptions in the 1976 Tunis Model Law on Copyright for Developing Countries, as well as the bases for the development of that law. The Representative supported the work of the SCCR on artists’ resale rights for physical works of art; however, any treaty in that regard should not extend copies of works.
129. The Representative of the Latin American School of Intellectual Property (ELAPI) said that it was grateful to have been an observer at the 2020 WIPO Assemblies and was committed to bringing a fresh perspective from Latin America to the proceedings of the 2021 Assemblies and its work with the committees. The mission of ELAPI was to develop IP in Latin America in concert with newcomers to the IP sector and to encourage university students to consider IP in their professional and academic development through a newsletter, masterclasses, webinars, conferences and the implementation of a gender equality policy. Since its creation in 2019, ELAPI had staged different IP events and cooperated with WIPO and the IP offices of Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and other Latin American countries. Based on that cooperation, it had set a number of goals for the coming days, such as strengthening diplomatic relations with GRULAC and other groups of countries to discuss issues that affected Latin America. Since becoming an observer, ELAPI had actively participated in committees to protect, promote and strengthen IP. During the 2021 Assemblies, it aimed to raise matters relating to copyright, patents, designs and mechanisms for the extrajudicial settlement of disputes.
130. The Representative of the League of Arab States (LAS) said that it aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Qatar, on behalf of the Arab Group, and with all the statements made by Arab States in the morning meeting. WIPO had provided valuable technical support to the Arab region. The appointment of the Organization’s new Director General would no doubt be accompanied by a new vision and direction for WIPO in its efforts to make IP more tangibly relevant in people’s everyday lives. The Representative was keen to continue its coordination and close, constructive and fruitful cooperation with WIPO, which had worked in the region’s interest since the two bodies had signed their MoU in 2000. The Arab region had benefited from the smart partnership between the two bodies through capacity‑building and technical assistance, which had improved the performance of IP offices throughout the region, and from the commitment by Arab Governments to build effective and balanced IP systems in their countries. The Standing IP Technical Committee, which was made up of officials from the region’s IP offices, met periodically at the League’s Secretariat headquarters in Cairo to regulate IP cooperation between Arab countries. Many online activities had been organized in 2021 in conjunction with the WIPO Division for Arab Countries and had been attended by Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General and Head of the Regional and National Development Sector at WIPO, and Walid Abdelnasser, Director of the Division for Arab Countries.
131. The Representative of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) commended WIPO on its pivotal role in promoting an inclusive international IP system and providing capacity-building and technical assistance to its Member States, thereby helping them to achieve the SDGs. The Representative welcomed the progress made by several member States of OIC in the GII rankings in 2021 and the recently updated MoU between WIPO and the Islamic Development Bank, which greatly supported the advancement of science, technology and innovation across its 57 member countries. In implementing its OIC-2025 Program of Action, OIC recognized that IP rights, especially patents, were key to advancing innovation and scientific development. Acknowledging the need to increase investment in science, technology and innovation, OIC had adopted its STI Agenda 2026 at a summit held in Kazakhstan in 2017. Science and technology transfer was key to accelerating the economic development of developing countries. At a second science and technology summit, held in Abu Dhabi in June 2021, OIC had issued a declaration on the need for its member States to work together to reduce IP-related barriers to the timely access to affordable medical products, including vaccines and medicines.
132. The Representative of the South Centre (CS) said that a balanced and flexible international IP system, with adequate safeguards, could be supportive of the SDGs. Increasing the global supply and access to COVID-19 countermeasures could be accelerated with greater cooperation and a removal of IP-related barriers; to that end, WIPO should support its Member States in reaching an agreement on a temporary waiver of the TRIPS Agreement. The Representative looked forward to accelerated work within WIPO on the protection of GRs, TK and TCEs. It would also welcome the organization by WIPO, together with WHO and WTO, of a global conference on IP and public health that would be open to all interested stakeholders. WIPO should also produce patent landscapes on potential treatments, vaccines, diagnostics and other medical technologies for COVID-19, and disseminate relevant technologies in the public domain. In the context of the PCT, Member States should discuss how to promote the early publication of COVID-19 patent applications. The SCP should discuss trends in patent applications and patent grants on, *inter alia*, monoclonal antibodies, and share recent jurisprudence and experiences on the application of patentability criteria. The CS, for its part, offered free technical assistance to developing countries on the intersection of IP and public health.
133. The Director General said that he was heartened by the positive responses of the delegations to the Organization’s new vision and MTSP 2022‑2026, which had been drafted after broad and transparent consultations with the Member States. He shared the desire of many Member States for progress on unresolved normative matters and WIPO would do all in its power to facilitate progress in that regard. WIPO would continue to serve as a neutral platform for discussing common challenges and exchanging ideas as part of a global IP community. In addition to fostering greater geographical, linguistic and gender inclusivity, WIPO would focus on bringing hitherto underserved sectors of the community, such as SMEs, young people and women, into the IP fold. WIPO had a key role to play in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and building back better and it would continue to work with WHO and WTO on implementing trilateral cooperation to that end. Close cooperation with Member States was crucial for WIPO to deepen its long-term engagement with IP actors at the regional and country levels and deliver results on the ground. The many national IP initiatives undertaken in the previous year dovetailed with the Organization’s overall IP vision.

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