

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

### **Sixty-Third Series of Meetings Geneva, July 14 to 22, 2022**

#### GENERAL REPORT

*adopted by the Assemblies*

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## INTRODUCTION

1. This General Report records the deliberations and decisions of the following 22 Assemblies and other bodies of the Member States of WIPO (the “Assemblies”):

- (1) WIPO General Assembly, fifty-fifth (30<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (2) WIPO Conference, forty-third (18<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (3) WIPO Coordination Committee, eighty-first (53<sup>rd</sup> ordinary) session
- (4) Paris Union Assembly, fifty-eighth (33<sup>rd</sup> extraordinary) session
- (5) Paris Union Executive Committee, sixty-second (58<sup>th</sup> ordinary) session
- (6) Berne Union Assembly, fifty-second (27<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (7) Berne Union Executive Committee, sixty-eighth (53<sup>rd</sup> ordinary) session
- (8) Madrid Union Assembly, fifty-sixth (32<sup>nd</sup> extraordinary) session
- (9) Hague Union Assembly, forty-second (19<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (10) Nice Union Assembly, forty-second (17<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (11) Lisbon Union Assembly, thirty-ninth (15<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (12) Locarno Union Assembly, forty-second (18<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (13) IPC [International Patent Classification] Union Assembly, forty-third (20<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (14) PCT [Patent Cooperation Treaty] Union Assembly, fifty-fourth (31<sup>st</sup> extraordinary) session
- (15) Budapest Union Assembly, thirty-ninth (18<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (16) Vienna Union Assembly, thirty-fifth (16<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (17) WCT [WIPO Copyright Treaty] Assembly, twenty-second (12<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (18) WPPT [WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty] Assembly, twenty-second (12<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (19) PLT [Patent Law Treaty] Assembly, twenty-first (12<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session
- (20) Singapore Treaty [Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks] Assembly, fifteenth (8<sup>th</sup> extraordinary) session.
- (21) Marrakesh Treaty [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled] Assembly, seventh (7<sup>th</sup> ordinary) session.
- (22) BTAP [Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances] Assembly, third (3<sup>rd</sup> ordinary) session

The Assemblies of the Member States met in Geneva from July 14 to 22, 2023, and decisions were made in joint meetings of two or more of the said Assemblies and other bodies convened (hereinafter referred to as “the joint meeting(s)” and “the Assemblies” respectively).

2. In addition to this draft General Report, separate draft Reports have been drawn up on the sessions of the WIPO General Assembly (WO/GA/55/12), WIPO Coordination Committee (WO/CC/81/4), Madrid Union Assembly (MM/A/56/2), Hague Union Assembly (H/A/42/2) Lisbon Union Assembly (LI/A/39/2), and Budapest Union Assembly (BP/A/39/2). Furthermore, consolidated reports of the sessions of the other bodies have also been drawn up, as follows: WIPO Conference (WO/CF/43/1), Paris Union Assembly (P/A/58/1), Paris Union Executive Committee (P/EC/62/1), Berne Union Assembly (B/A/52/1), Berne Union Executive Committee (B/EC/68/1), Nice Union Assembly (N/A/42/1), Locarno Union Assembly (LO/A/42/1), IPC Union Assembly (IPC/A/43/1), PCT Union Assembly (PCT/A/54/1), Vienna Union Assembly (VA/A/35/1), WIPO Copyright Treaty Assembly (WCT/A/22/1), WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty Assembly (WPPT/A/22/1.), Patent Law Treaty Assembly (PLT/A/21/1.), Singapore Treaty Assembly (STLT/A/15/1), Marrakesh Treaty Assembly (MVT/A/7/1) and Beijing Treaty Assembly (BTAP/A/3/1).

3. The list of the members and observers of the Assemblies, as of July 14, 2022, is set forth in document A/63/INF/1 Rev.

4. The meetings dealing with the following items of the Agenda (document A/63/1) were presided over by the following Chairs:

Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19, 20 and 21	Ambassador Tatiana Molcean (Ms.) (Republic of Moldova), Chair of the WIPO General Assembly
Item 5	Ambassador Kadra Ahmed Hassan (Ms.) (Djibouti), outgoing Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee (presided over the start), Ambassador Alfredo Suescum Alfaro (Mr.) (Panama), Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee (presided over its conclusion)
Items 7, 12 and 13	Ambassador Alfredo Suescum Alfaro (Mr.), Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee
Item 15	Philippe Cadre (Mr.) (France), Chair of the Madrid Union Assembly
Item 16	David R. Gerk (Mr.) (United States of America), Chair of the Hague Union Assembly
Item 17	Pascal Faure (Mr.) (France), Chair of the Lisbon Union Assembly
Item 18	Csaba Baticz (Mr.) (Hungary), as Acting Chair of the Budapest Union Assembly, in the absence of Abdelsalam Mohamed Al Ali (Mr.) (United Arab Emirates), Vice-Chair of the Budapest Union Assembly

5. The agenda, as adopted, the list of documents and the list of participants appear in documents A/63/1, A/63/2 and A/63/INF/5, respectively.

## ITEM 1 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### OPENING OF THE SESSIONS

6. The Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO was convened by the Director General of WIPO, Mr. Daren Tang.

7. The sessions were opened in a joint meeting of all the 22 Assemblies and other bodies concerned by Ambassador Tatiana Molcean (Ms.) (Republic of Moldova), Chair of the WIPO General Assembly.

## ITEM 2 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. Discussions were based on document A/63/1 Prov.4.

9. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said that it viewed the inclusion of the new Agenda Item 19 in the draft consolidated agenda with concern. It stated that the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) should confine its deliberations to matters relating strictly to its mandate. The Delegation cautioned that Member States should refrain from artificially politicizing the Organization's work and rather engage in a spirit of constructive and inclusive dialogue and cooperation. The inclusion of item 19 in the agenda also raised procedural questions. Member States had been notified of its proposed inclusion one month prior to the Assemblies, but they had received the full text only two working days prior to the opening of the Assemblies, which meant that they not had enough time to examine the proposed agenda item at the national level. The content of the agenda item amounted to a political declaration containing assessments and affirmations that went beyond the mandate of WIPO. As a matter of principle, the Organization should not adopt such documents. Moreover, neither the substance of Agenda Item 19 nor its financial implications had been examined. It had not been brought before any of the Organization's main committees for consideration, even though its sponsors had had ample time to do so. It was also unclear why the focus of item 19 was on one particular country. The Russian Federation observed that in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and turbulence in the markets, many countries were in need of the Organization's assistance. The Delegation believed that effective cooperation on intellectual property (IP) matters was possible only on the basis of consensual decision-making. Item 19 was clearly politicized and confrontational in character and its Delegation could therefore not support its inclusion in the agenda.

10. The Delegation of Belarus said that, in the interests of all Member States, the work of the Organization should not be politicized. The introduction of item 19 into the agenda by a particular group of Member States ran counter to accepted practice, undermined multilateralism and constituted an abuse of the Organization as a platform to promote the ambitions of one or several States. The Delegation pointed out that many other countries, aside from Ukraine, faced armed conflict, humanitarian catastrophes and profound economic crises, and were equally in need of assistance and support. Moreover, the fact that various of the Member States that had co-sponsored the new agenda item were fanning the flames of the conflict in Ukraine, stood in contrast to their calls for assistance for that country's innovation and creativity sector and IP system. The unilateral coercive measures taken by Member States sponsoring Agenda Item 19 also had a destructive impact on innovative and inclusive development and infringed intellectual property rights (IPRs). The inclusion of item 19 in the agenda, which had not been properly considered, was clearly controversial, and would set a dangerous precedent that could bring WIPO into disunity and crisis.

11. The Delegation of Zimbabwe said that Member States had been given insufficient time to consider Agenda Item 19. WIPO was a technical agency and political issues should be addressed by other international bodies that had a mandate to do so. The inclusion of item 19 in the agenda carried with it the risk of breaking with the practice and unwritten convention of WIPO of taking decisions by consensus, and could have serious ramifications for its future work and the development of IP. The Delegation stated that it could not support the selective prioritization of one State over others that were experiencing similar or direr circumstances. It was of the view that the Assemblies could consider the agenda item if its scope were extended to all States facing emergency situations, whether induced by climate change, war or economic circumstances. Such a proposal should be examined by the Program and Budget Committee (PBC) or the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP).

Consideration of the proposed agenda item should therefore be deferred to the Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO.

12. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic said that WIPO should adopt a balanced approach to the support it provided, in particular with regard to developing and least developed countries (LDCs), many of which faced economic crises exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and obstacles to development arising from the imposition of unilateral coercive measures. The latter prevented millions of people from realizing their right to development and stymied the recovery of their national economies. In the Delegation's view, the last-minute attempt to include an agenda item concerning support for IP infrastructure in one country, breaking with the Organization's usual practice, was highly irregular. It suggested discrimination, selectivity and an unacceptable politicization of the Organization's work, which should remain purely technical and unaffected by any political agendas.

13. The Delegation of Nicaragua said that Agenda Item 19 constituted a political declaration that was incompatible with the Organization's technical mandate.

14. The Delegation of the United Kingdom, speaking on behalf of the 43 Member States that had requested inclusion in the agenda of item 19, said that the request had been submitted on June 14, 2022, in line with Rule 5(4) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure. Adoption by the Assemblies of the agenda as a whole was a formality and any substantive discussions should be held under individual agenda items. Failure to adopt the agenda could set a dangerous precedent. It stated that it was inconceivable that it might not be adopted because certain Member States were uncomfortable with the idea of discussing a topic contained therein. There had been ample time to discuss the content of any of the agenda items prior to the opening of the Assemblies. It pointed out that the extraordinary situation in Ukraine and the damage caused to its entire innovation and creativity sector and IP system, had brought about an urgent need for assistance and support. The Delegation recalled that the purpose of Agenda Item 19 was not to discuss the political situation in that country but rather to ensure that it received targeted and timely technical assistance, which WIPO was best placed to provide.

15. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) aligned itself with the position of the Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic with regard to the impact of unilateral coercive measures on the IP systems of countries subject to such measures, and in its view, the situation in such countries should also be discussed at the current Assemblies, should Agenda Item 19 remain on the agenda. Item 19 as currently drafted should be dropped and the remainder of the agenda adopted by consensus.

16. The Delegation of the United States of America said that a few Member States should not be allowed to hold the Assemblies hostage and block the Organization's work. The Delegation of the Russian Federation had deliberately conflated the rules of procedure on requests for the inclusion of supplementary items in the agenda, with those regarding the provision of an accompanying document for discussion under that item. It stated that only the request to add an agenda item must be submitted one month in advance of the Assemblies. The inclusion of item 19 in the agenda had been requested in order to enable discussion on support and assistance for the innovation and creativity ecosystem in Ukraine, in the wake of the damage caused by the brutal aggression against that country by the Russian Federation. It fell well within the mandate of WIPO, which indeed needed to act urgently. With regard to the view that the Assemblies should not focus on a single country, the Delegation referred Member States to paragraph 15 of UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/1, based on which WIPO could not ignore the context of the crisis. The invasion by the Russian Federation and its collateral impacts, including the destruction of livelihoods, entrepreneurship and the creativity sector in Ukraine, undermined the ability of WIPO to advance towards its main goal: a balanced and effective IP system that promoted innovation and creativity for a better and more sustainable future.

17. The Delegation of France said that its support for the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda arose from the need to help a neighboring country, the cultural heritage and IP system of which were in the process of disappearing. WIPO was in a position to provide practical and legal assistance to Ukraine for its IP system. Moreover, it had an obligation to do so under its mandate and in the light of the United Nations (UN) call to the entire multilateral system for the provision of whatever assistance that country might require.

18. The Delegation of Monaco said that the destruction of innovative businesses, universities, hospitals, laboratories, research bodies and public institutions in Ukraine had imperiled the entire IP ecosystem of that country. It pointed out that one of the main tasks of WIPO was to provide technical assistance to its Member States in areas that came under its mandate. For that reason, Monaco had co-sponsored the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda.

19. The Delegation of Ukraine said that no UN agency, however technical in nature, could remain silent or ignore current challenges. Member States should therefore adopt the agenda as currently drafted.

20. The Delegation of Lithuania stated that the expression of solidarity with Ukraine through Agenda Item 19 was a response to the destruction caused to that country's IP system by the unprovoked and unjustified aggression against it by the Russian Federation. In its view, Ukraine was at war and WIPO must establish a system for providing it with assistance immediately.

21. The Delegation of Slovakia said that Agenda Item 19 was technical in nature and that its inclusion in the agenda had been requested in compliance with the WIPO General Rules of Procedure. There was no need to either exclude or amend it and those Member States that opposed the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda were themselves politicizing the Organization's work.

22. The Delegation of Bulgaria stood in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The war launched by the Russian Federation on it was undermining not only global security and stability, but also economic development. Ukraine needed the support of the international community in general, and of WIPO in particular. Bulgaria stood ready to work with other Member States and Ukraine to rebuild that country's innovation and creativity sector and to look for common synergies in their respective systems.

23. The Delegation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) said that it opposed any attempt to politicize any area of the work of WIPO and its Assemblies or to turn the latter into a platform for confrontation. WIPO should concentrate its efforts on reaching positive accords and advancing its normative agenda. Moreover, it should provide technical assistance to all Member States.

24. The Delegation of China said that it opposed the politicization of technical issues. As a specialized technical agency, WIPO should focus on its mandate and main responsibilities. Important technical issues concerning the future development of WIPO were on the agenda for the current Assemblies. The introduction of controversial issues and political statements that could affect proceedings should therefore be avoided. Member States should consider the long-term development of WIPO and deal with relevant issues by consensus, which was an important safeguard that ensured ongoing broad support for the Organization.

25. The Delegation of Cuba said that it would not be prudent to include in the agenda an item that, at the very least, would cast a pall over the work of the Assemblies. Delegations had not had sufficient time to consult with their capitals on the document accompanying Agenda Item 19, which had been circulated only 48 hours prior to the opening of the Assemblies. Item 19 contained aspects that went beyond the mandate of WIPO. The Delegation counseled that the Assemblies should work on the basis of consensus, as it had always done.



26. The Delegation of Portugal said that the addition of item 19 on the agenda had been requested in line with the Organization's rules of procedure. The agenda should be adopted, as a whole, as currently drafted.
27. The Delegation of Switzerland stated that, given that technical assistance fell within the mandate of WIPO, there was no reason to exclude item 19 from the agenda. The Delegation also observed that this agenda item had been requested in line with WIPO's General Rules of Procedure.
28. The Delegation of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, said that, in addition to human suffering, the war in Ukraine was causing severe damage to that country's cultural heritage, IP infrastructure and innovation ecosystem in general. No organization was better placed to address those issues than WIPO. The Delegation was of the view that work under item 19 would facilitate a constructive response to those pressing issues.
29. The Delegation of Canada said that excluding item 19 from the agenda would be tantamount to silencing the efforts of Member States convened to express their collective support for Ukraine and their shared commitment to the UN system. The Delegation insisted that the current Assemblies must not proceed without item 19.
30. The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea opposed the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda, as it was clearly politicized and directed at one country. Its Delegation was of the view that discussions at the Assemblies should be conducted in a transparent manner.
31. The Delegation of Estonia aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, on behalf of the European Union and its member states and other delegations in support of the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda.
32. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said that the discussion under way had demonstrated that there could be no consensus among the Member States on the adoption of the agenda if item 19 were retained.
33. The Delegation of Australia urged Member States to adopt the agenda as currently drafted and to reserve discussion of the substance for the relevant agenda items.
34. The Delegation of New Zealand supported the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda.
35. The Delegation of Norway said that there was no reason, procedural or otherwise, not to adopt the agenda as drafted and added that Norway was deeply concerned about the consequences of the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.
36. The Delegation of Sweden said that the request to include item 19 in the agenda should be seen, not as a discriminatory act, but rather as a response by WIPO to the urgent need in Ukraine for assistance with regard to its cultural heritage, IP infrastructure and innovation ecosystem, upon all of which the aggression by the Russian Federation had had a grave impact.
37. The Delegation of Latvia said that unanimous support was not a prerequisite for adoption of the agenda as currently drafted.
38. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea said that there was no reason not to include item 19 in the agenda. The WIPO General Rules of Procedure had been observed and the aim of the item was merely to provide assistance for the innovation and creativity sector and the IP system in Ukraine.

39. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic said that none of the Member States that opposed the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda had stated that Ukraine was not in need of assistance. Rather, they had pointed out that other Member States also required support. It was clear that Ukraine needed assistance immediately and the Delegation wondered if the Member States opposed to Agenda Item 19 were suggesting that WIPO should wait until the process of destruction in Ukraine was complete before acting. The absence of unanimity on the question in no way meant that item 19 should be dropped from the agenda and its Delegation supported its inclusion.

40. The Delegation of Japan said that the scope of Agenda Item 19 fell within the technical mandate of WIPO. That the item had been included in the draft agenda one month prior to the Assemblies and that discussions on it were due to take place the following week. The Delegation therefore urged Members States to adopt the agenda as drafted.

41. The Delegation of Poland said that as a result of military aggression by the Russian Federation, Ukraine needed technical assistance and capacity-building to rebuild its IP infrastructure and innovation ecosystem. It was therefore of the view that Member States should adopt the agenda as a whole in order to provide Ukraine with such assistance.

42. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said that it was unacceptable that political accusations and statements were being made in the course of the current discussion. The Delegation cautioned that Member States should refrain from politicizing the work of the Assemblies and stated that the Chair should call to order any Member States making such statements.

43. The Chair acknowledged the point of order made by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

44. The Delegation of Germany said that Agenda Item 19 had been included in the agenda at the request of numerous delegations, because IP provided an important tool for crisis recovery and meeting global challenges. The invasion of Ukraine was the latest and most urgent such challenge, which affected the work of WIPO and was having an immediate impact on the creativity and innovation sector in and beyond that country. It urged that the agenda should therefore be adopted with item 19.

45. The Delegation of Israel said that Agenda Item 19 had been proposed ahead of time in line with the Organization's rules of procedures. For that reason, the Delegation supported the adoption of the agenda as a whole.

46. The Delegation of Albania said that Members States should adopt the agenda as a whole.

47. The Delegation of Slovenia urged Member States to adopt the agenda as a whole and said that rebuilding IP infrastructure in Ukraine was a major priority.

48. The Delegation of Luxembourg, stating that it had co-sponsored the request to include item 19 in the agenda, said that there was an urgent need to restore the IP sector and ecosystem in Ukraine.

49. The Delegation of Belgium said that it was deeply concerned about the illegal and brutal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. It observed that Ukraine needed assistance urgently and Member States should therefore adopt the agenda as a whole.

50. The Delegation of Sierra Leone said that it supported the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda as Ukraine required assistance. It stated that other Member States were also free to seek support for the inclusion of similar items in the agenda regarding their own situations.

51. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) said that it was regrettable that WIPO should find itself mired in a divisive debate at the outset of the current Assemblies. The long-standing practice of taking decisions by consensus had been beneficial for the Organization and its Member States and should be maintained. The Delegation was in favor of supporting the IP infrastructure and the creativity and innovation sector in Ukraine. Other countries facing economic difficulties, conflict, occupation, unilateral coercive measures and natural disasters, such as Afghanistan, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Iran (Islamic Republic of), would also benefit from such support. Technical assistance could be provided under established mechanisms, such as through consideration of specific proposals by the CDIP. The inclusion of item 19 in the agenda was potentially divisive and could jeopardize the normal functioning of WIPO. The Organization should focus on its technical mandate and avoid being dragged into the discussion of contentious geopolitical issues.

52. The Delegation of Austria said that Member States should proceed with the adoption of the agenda, as amended one month prior to the Assemblies, and save substantive issues for discussion under the appropriate agenda items.

53. The Chair suggested that the draft consolidated agenda contained in document A/63/1 Prov.4 be adopted. The Chair pointed out that it had been prepared in line with the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and the vast majority of delegations that had taken the floor in the course of the preceding discussion had expressed support for its adoption as a whole.

54. The Delegation of the Russian Federation objected, saying that consensus on the inclusion of item 19 in the agenda had not been reached and that a number of Member States clearly opposed its inclusion. The question of the adoption of the agenda should therefore be put to a vote.

55. The Chair suggested to adjourn the meeting in order to allow the interested parties to discuss the matter further informally.

56. Upon returning to the plenary, the Chair, regretting the absence of consensus on the adoption of the draft agenda, opened the floor to the Delegation of the Russian Federation to state clearly their proposal with regard to the adoption of the draft agenda.

57. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, stating its regret that there was no consensus, said that it believed that the only way to adopt the draft Agenda by consensus was to remove Agenda Item 19 from the agenda. Noting that they did not wish to force a vote as it was not normal WIPO practice, the Delegation stated that Agenda Item 19, as proposed, was politicized and, as it had been submitted a month prior to the WIPO General Assembly it had not been subject of consultations in the relevant committees. The Delegation stated that financial expenditure details had not been provided, and, in the Delegation's opinion, with regard to Agenda Item 19, it had not been proposed in conformity with WIPO procedure. In the Russian Federation's opinion, the goal of Agenda Item 19 was to demonize the Russian Federation and accuse it of aggression. In the Delegation's view, the proponents of Agenda Item 19 were trying to violate the Rules of Procedure in the course of discussion. With these statements, and reiterating that retaining Agenda Item 19 on the Agenda as proposed was unacceptable to the Russian Federation, the Delegation requested the Chair to clarify the situation regarding the draft consolidated agenda as it was proposed.

58. The Chair asked the Russian Federation if her understanding that the Delegation of the Russian Federation was proposing to have a concrete proposal on Agenda Item 19 was correct.

59. The Delegation of the Russian Federation clarified that they were suggesting the removal of Agenda Item 19 from the agenda.

60. The Delegation of Belarus, stating that it was not in a position to support the retention of Agenda Item 19 on the draft consolidated agenda, supported the removal of Agenda Item 19 from the agenda.
61. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic stated its support of the Russian Federation's request to remove Agenda Item 19 from the draft consolidated agenda.
62. The Chair concluded that the Russian Federation was proposing a vote with the Delegations of Belarus and the Syrian Arab Republic supporting the proposal. The Chair requested the Deputy Legal Counsel to make an announcement regarding the voting process.
63. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) requesting clarification, asked whether the Delegation of the Russian Federation asked for Agenda Item 19 to be put to a vote, or if it was stating their objection to the inclusion of Agenda Item 19, noting that there might be other ways to reach consensus.
64. The Chair, thanking the Delegate of Iran (Islamic Republic of), stated that the various positions were clear and the request was for the exclusion of Agenda Item 19 from the draft Consolidated Agenda. She gave the floor to the Deputy Legal Counsel for clarification on the procedure.
65. The Deputy Legal Counsel, thanking the Chair, stated that a vote had been requested. She wished to recall that the Delegation of the Russian Federation had submitted, in accordance with Rule 21 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the following proposal on which it requested a vote. The proposal was for the exclusion of Agenda Item 19 from the draft Consolidated Agenda as contained in document A/63/1 Prov.4. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that the proposal had been supported by the Delegation of Belarus, thus, in accordance with Rule 25, the proposal would be put to a vote. She drew the Delegates' attention to document A/63/INF/1 Rev. paragraph 2, which contained the list of Member States of the WIPO Conference. Delegates representing these Member States of the Conference were invited to vote. She recalled that, in accordance with Article 7(3)(c) and (e), subject to the provisions of Article 17 of the WIPO Convention, the WIPO Conference made its decisions by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, and abstentions were not to be considered as votes. With regard to the necessary quorum which was constituted by one-third of the States members of the WIPO Conference, she had been informed that the necessary number of Member States were present. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that in accordance with Rule 29 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, after the Chair had announced the beginning of voting, voting shall not be interrupted except on a Point of Order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting.
66. The Chair announced the beginning of the vote by roll-call and gave the floor to the Deputy Legal Counsel to provide additional guidelines for the voting process.
67. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that in order to proceed with the vote by roll-call, she wished to remind delegates that the roll-call vote would be called in the alphabetical order of the names in French of the States Member of the WIPO Conference. The Deputy Legal Counsel requested the Chair to draw by lot the delegation that would be called first.
68. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, raising a point of order, asked how the voting process would be organized to include the delegations who were not physically in the room due to the hybrid format of the meeting.
69. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that countries would be called in the order of the French alphabet to state their vote and that those in the room would do so in the room, and those connecting virtually would do so virtually through the platform by which they had been intervening thus far. The Deputy Legal Counsel, stated that, by the Chair's drawing by lot, the roll call vote would begin with Kazakhstan and then would proceed in alphabetical order of the

names in French. She restated the proposal on which the vote was conducted, which was the exclusion of Agenda Item 19 from the draft Consolidated Agenda as contained in document A/63/1 Prov. 4. Any delegation wishing to support the proposal was requested to respond with “yes”; any delegation opposing the proposal was requested to respond with “no”; and delegation wishing to abstain from the vote was requested to respond “abstain”. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that pursuant to the General Rules of Procedure, the vote of each delegation would be recorded in the Report of the Session.

70. The result of the vote was as follows:

The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Nicaragua, Syrian Arab Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Samoa, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, Belarus, China, Cuba, Russian Federation and Iran (Islamic Republic of) voted “yes” (12). The Delegations -in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Dominican Republic, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, Albania, Germany, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, United States of America, Finland, France, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy and Japan voted “no” (65). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Central African Republic, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia, Afghanistan, South Africa, Algeria, Angola, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica and Jordan abstained from voting (71). The Delegations -in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Kiribati, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Maldives, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Holy See, Sao Tome and Principe, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Chad, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Yemen, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, Eritrea, Eswatini, Fiji, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Solomon Islands were absent (45).

71. The Deputy Legal Counsel announced the results of the vote, on the basis of which the Chair stated that the proposal to exclude Agenda Item 19 from the agenda had not been adopted.

72. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, adopted the agenda as proposed in document A/63/1 Prov.4 (referred to in this document as “the Consolidated Agenda”). The Consolidated Agenda was adopted following a vote of 12 in “favor”, 65 “against” and 71 “abstentions” on a proposal to remove Agenda Item 19 from the draft agenda, as proposed in document A/63/1 Prov.4.

73. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said that 117 Member States had not given their support to the inclusion of item 19 in the Draft Consolidated Agenda. There was therefore

no consensus among Member States in that regard. Many of the Member States that had not taken part in the vote needed the assistance of WIPO and had not been prepared to participate in the politicization of its work. The result of the vote, in the conduct of which there may have been infringements of procedure, was shameful. The question now arose, given that a majority of Member States had not supported the inclusion of item 19 in the draft Consolidated Agenda, as to how Member States intended to approach the substance of that item in upcoming meetings.

74. The Delegation of Singapore said that it had voted in favor of tabling Agenda Item 19 because all WIPO Member States should have the right to table agenda items of concern to them relating to the work at WIPO. This is, however, without prejudice to its voting position on the proposal that may be considered under Agenda Item 19, and which will be considered in its own merit.

75. The Delegation of Indonesia said that it had abstained out of concern that the decision to resort to a vote on the adoption of the Consolidated Agenda could constitute an undesirable precedent for the Organization's working methods.

### ITEM 3 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL TO THE ASSEMBLIES OF WIPO

76. The Address of the Director General is recorded as follows:

"Your Excellency, Ambassador Tatiana Molcean, Chair of the WIPO General Assembly,

"Honorable Ministers,

"Excellencies,

"Distinguished Delegates,

"Friends and Colleagues,

"It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States.

"After two years of meeting in a mostly empty hall it is an incredible feeling to be able to welcome 900 of you in person this year. Our warm welcome also extends to those who are joining us remotely from around the world. Together we have over 1100 participants from the global IP community at this year's Assemblies.

"I first want to thank our Chair, Ambassador Molcean, for your invaluable leadership and guidance to me and my colleagues throughout the first year of her term, and in the lead up to this year's Assemblies. Our appreciation also goes to all the Presiding Officers of the many committees, working groups and other bodies whose meetings took place over the past year. And as ever, we are deeply grateful for the support of the Group Coordinators, who have the challenging task of representing the different regional groups and of finding consensus. Your guidance, support and encouragement helps us make WIPO work for all of its Members.

“My deepest thanks also goes to the many colleagues at WIPO who have been working tirelessly and passionately to make these Assemblies a success, and who are working closely with all of you in the past year.

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“Dear Colleagues,

“When we met at last year’s Assemblies, I said, “that in these times the work of WIPO cannot be business as usual”. That is why our Medium Term Strategic Plan laid out an ambition where the world “uses IP as a powerful tool to create jobs, attract investments, grow businesses, and ultimately develop economies and societies”.

When I shared this new vision and mission, we were still in the midst of the Covid crisis. This year, it seems that we may finally be emerging from the long and dark Covid tunnel, but our exit is not to sunny days and blue skies, but to storms above and clouds ahead.

“The invasion of Ukraine. Global inflation. Disruptions to food and energy supply chains. Our global situation remains extremely challenging.

“But despite these challenges, we cannot look back or stop our work of building the future of the global IP ecosystem.

“We as the global IP community must continue being fully committed to transforming IP from a technical vertical of interest only to specialists, into a powerful catalyst for jobs, investments and development that supports innovators and creators everywhere.

“Indeed, the larger trends are also telling us that we have to remain strong on our path. Although the pandemic has been a great disruptor, it has also been a powerful accelerator for technology, digitalization and innovation. In many countries, IP continues to move from the periphery to the center, as businesses and economies use the crisis as an opportunity to reimagine, restructure and rebuild, using innovation and creativity as engines of growth.

“International patent applications filed via WIPO’s PCT system reached their highest ever level in 2021, passing the 275,000 mark for the first time. Trade Mark and Design applications coming through the Madrid and Hague systems saw double-digit growth of 15 and 21 percent respectively. Usage of WIPO’s ADR mechanisms grew by 44 percent, with a 22 percent rise in the usage of WIPO’s domain name dispute resolution mechanisms.

“These numbers reinforce the larger arc of IP filings growth in recent years, which many of you as national IP offices are experiencing as well. Since 2015, trademark volumes have explosively doubled to over 17 million filings, and whilst more modest, patent and design filings have risen by a substantial 15 percent over the same period.

“Other elements of the innovation economy are also growing or resilient. Unlike after the 2008 financial crisis, global R&D expenditure grew by over 3 percent in 2020. At the company level R&D growth has continued into 2021, with the top corporate R&D spenders increasing their expenditure by an estimated 10 percent. The 2022 edition of WIPO’s Global Innovation Index, to be published in September, will provide more detail on the state of innovation globally.

“Significantly, these positive IP, innovation and creativity metrics are being driven by diverse engines of growth, rather than just those from the traditional innovation powerhouses.

“7 out of 10 IP applications are now taking place in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Venture capital investment more than quadrupled in Africa and Latin America over the last twelve months to US\$3 billion and US\$16 billion respectively. Bollywood and Nollywood have surpassed Hollywood in terms of the number of films produced, and in 2021, the most streamed content on Spotify and Netflix came from Puerto Rico and the Republic of Korea.

“Countries as diverse as Brazil, Bulgaria, India, and Viet Nam are amongst the most consistent in making progress in the GII. And close to 50 countries now boast a start-up that has achieved unicorn status – including Ecuador, Indonesia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Senegal and Thailand. A decade ago, the number stood at just five.

“These are exciting times we live in, where innovation and creativity can come from anywhere.

“But what is most touching for me is the real impact that our work is having on people on the ground.

“When I was on mission in Mexico earlier this year, I had the privilege of meeting with indigenous communities from across the country who made the long journey to Mexico City to engage with WIPO, because they want to know how IP can be their friend and ally in bringing their heritage to the world. These communities included a special group of women from the State of Oaxaca who have a traditional handicraft, a form of silk weaving called “Seda de Cajonos”, which has recently obtained GI status.

“The Oaxaca region has been badly hit by the pandemic, and as the local community looks to get back on its feet, WIPO is helping them to combine GI protection with the use of trade marks, designs and other types of IP, to market, brand and package this artisanal product in a way that takes it to the world whilst respecting local traditions.

“Stories like this remind us of the importance of our work at these Assemblies, and that when we work well together in here, we can make a difference to the lives of people out there.

“Dear colleagues and friends,

“Last year, we received your approval of the Program and Budget for 2022/23, and your endorsement of our Medium Term Strategy Plan 2022- 2026.

“Our focus since then has been simple and single-minded – to translate them into concrete plans and actions so as to deliver the results and impact that you expect.

“To do this well, we have continued to manage the organization’s resources prudently, efficiently and effectively, using the Results Based Management framework.

“I am pleased to report that, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we have recorded a very healthy surplus of almost 245 million CHF for the 2020/21 biennium. This puts us in a good position to invest these surpluses into capabilities, tools and projects to



continue supporting you strongly, even as the overall financial and macro-economic environment remains volatile and challenging.

“High standards of governance and risk management are key to our success, and I am also happy to share with you that our External Auditor has recognized our approach to risk management and internal controls as one of the strongest in the UN system.

“A UN agency that supports innovators and creators must itself have a workplace culture that supports initiative, energy and proactivity. This transformation of our culture to one that is open, transparent and dynamic continues to be a key leadership priority for me and my colleagues, and we are fully committed to making it happen over the years.

“As part of this process, we have embarked on our first ever employee engagement survey, and are already using the results to have frank and open conversations at the level of individual work units, as well as at the whole of organization level, about what can we do to improve as an organization. We also believe that diversity is a source of strength for us, and we will continue to work on building a diverse and dynamic work force.

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“On these foundations of dynamic management, strong governance and sound administration, we have built four pillars of work – reaching out to all, bringing people together, bringing value to people and creating impact on the ground. I’ll go through them one-by-one.

“First, reaching out to all.

“For far too many people, IP remains an intimidating and technical subject, best left to a small group of IP experts and technicians. This needs to change, and we as the global IP community must make IP relatable and understandable to laypersons, innovators and creators.

“In the course of the past year, WIPO’s has transformed the way we communicate about our work away from just focusing on technical IP issues to sharing stories that brings alive the impact of IP to people. One of our most viewed stories has been that of Zimbabwean comic artist Tino Makoni, who is creating a new breed of African superheroes and inspiring a whole new generation of African illustrators and artists.

“Our channels of communication have also broadened. We launched our Instagram account at the end of last year – where 60 percent of our followers are 35 and under, and we are due to launch our TikTok account next year. We now have over 350,000 followers across our social media platforms, a double-digit increase since the last Assemblies.

“We have also been leveraging on the power of digital to engage with our stakeholders in new ways. Our virtual exhibition on Geographical Indications has seen 70,000 online visitors since its launch last autumn and to connect youths in indigenous communities with climate change, we recently held a Photography Prize for Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Youth, drawing over 230 submissions from around the world.

“I am also happy to report that this year's World IP Day attracted record global engagement. Themed around ‘IP and Youth: Innovating for a Better Future’, we recorded over 15 million impressions across our digital platforms and there were nearly 600 World IP Day events across 189 Member States, our largest participation ever.

“We are seeing many IP offices communicate in fresh, new ways and develop bilingual capabilities – the ability to talk about IP in a technical way amongst ourselves, but to communicate about IP to others in a way that resonates and connects with them. We hope that more of you will join this movement to connect your community to our work.

“Second, WIPO continues to play a key role as the global forum that brings people together to share ideas, shape norms and partner in different ways.

“It has been heartening to see our Committees and Working Groups return to their normal hours of work and rhythms of engagement as the health situation stabilizes. While there has yet to be full consensus on all of our outstanding issues, the revival of these meetings gives me hope that we can make meaningful steps as an IP community to move these issues forward.

“And we do not need to look too far to see that while achieving consensus is challenging, it is not impossible. On July 1<sup>st</sup> this year, IP offices around the world implemented the new WIPO standard ST.26 for describing amino acids and nucleotides in patent documentation, the culmination of a process that took years of close cooperation, collaboration and consensus. Where there is a will, there is a way, and the Secretariat stands ready to help Member States find both.

“Beyond norm setting work, WIPO continues to be a place where cutting edge IP issues are discussed. We have started conversations on issues relating to trade secrets, a topic that is increasingly taking center stage in many industries. We continue to build momentum behind our Conversation on IP and Frontier Technologies. Since the last Assemblies, two sessions have been held reaching over 2,000 registrants from over 110 countries. Our sixth conversation, scheduled to begin on September 21, will take a deep dive into AI inventions and policy questions – issues very alive to many of you as DGs of IP offices.

“On 1 November this year, we will also launch WIPO’s first High-Level Conversation on IP-Backed financing. This is an issue of considerable interest to many Member States and we look forward to bringing together stakeholders from business, finance and public sectors to discuss how we can support startups and SMEs to use their IP and intangible assets for funding. To tee up these discussions, we are publishing a series of reports on what various countries have done in this area – starting with Singapore last year, but with Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, Jamaica, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Switzerland and the UK in the pipeline.

“While we are happy to bring people together to talk, we also want to bring people together to act. Partnerships are increasingly important for us to be able to deliver impact at scale. Addressing complex global challenges like the pandemic and climate change requires partnerships across different stakeholders.

“To deepen our support for SMEs, we are working with the International Chamber of Commerce, the International Trade Centre and the International Renewable Energy Agency to deliver our expertise and programs to SMEs under their care or within their networks. Our collaboration with NGOs like the Association of University Technology Managers and the International Trademark Association allow us to draw on a broad range of IP expertise to support you in areas like tech transfer, traditional knowledge and supporting women in IP.

“Another area where we are working with partners to change lives is the work of our Accessible Books Consortium. The ABC now has over 750,000 titles available in 80

languages for cross-border exchange, helping to expand learning and leisure possibilities for millions of people around the world who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled.

“As a UN agency, it is our mission to use our expertise to address global challenges. That is why we are excited to have finally joined the UN Sustainable Development Group this year, and are fully committed to bringing our expertise in IP and innovation to help in the achievement of the SDGs.

“Within Geneva and beyond, we continue to build partnerships to help Member States overcome complex challenges like the pandemic. In April this year, we launched – in partnership with the World Health Organization and World Trade Organization – the 'Trilateral COVID-19 Technical Assistance Platform'. This is an online platform, hosted by WIPO, which allows Members to draw upon the expertise of all three organizations and is a direct result of our strengthened cooperation around the issues of IP, public health and trade. I would strongly encourage Member States to visit the platform and explore how it can be of assistance to you. We will also be holding a third trilateral workshop on diagnostics in the autumn, followed by a joint symposium on COVID-19 and Pandemic Preparedness on 15 December.

“Climate change is one of the global challenges where innovative solutions are critical in every aspect. I am happy to share that the revamped WIPO GREEN tech matching platform for climate change technologies has grown to cover nearly 130,000 needs, technologies and patents. In addition, a further nine partners have joined the platform since the last Assemblies, and we have supported six new matchmaking deals in Argentina, China, Indonesia and Japan. The next chapter for WIPO GREEN will be in focusing on certain industry verticals as well as supporting IP offices in designing policies to support climate change technologies in their own countries.

“Excellencies,

“One of the things that is unique about WIPO amongst UN agencies is that we are a provider of services not just to government stakeholders, but also to entrepreneurs and enterprises.

“We are grateful that demand continues to be robust, and we are fully committed to ensuring that they continue bringing value to our users. Sustained investments in the relevant IT platforms, for example, in the Resilient and Secure Platform project for PCT, and stepped-up customer and user engagement will be key to improving our efficiency, maintaining service standards and enhancing the customer experience. In this way, we hope to continue bringing value to your innovators as they use our services to move their IP across borders.

“We are also committed to providing you with the data you need to make informed policy choices, and we are pleased that two-thirds of the close to 80 countries that participated in our first survey of the usage of the Global Innovation Index reported that they use it as a valuable policy resource for improving the strength of their innovation ecosystems. Our team is also taking forward a project to help Member States capture and better measure the metrics of the creative economy.

“Our IP Office Suite continues to provide the IT architecture and software for IP offices to manage their back office, as well as to digitalize, with the most recent versions allowing IP offices to use Cloud-based solutions. Already, more than 90 WIPO Member States are

users of the IP Office Suite and we expect demand to grow as more IP offices digitalize and engage with their applicants and users online.

“One of the most important and fulfilling areas of our work is to help, you, our Members, especially developing countries and Least Developed Countries, use IP for growth and development. Impact is critical for success here, because an intangible asset like IP needs to be made tangible in order for people to truly see its value.

“In our MTSP, we identified women, youth and SMEs as areas of focus for us. I will highlight some of our work in these areas.

“With Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Mexico, we are delivering a new project to support 32 women in STEM careers through a tailored-made training and mentorship program that develops practical IP skills in areas like biotechnology, engineering and chemistry.

“In Uganda we have mentored 70 women entrepreneurs in using IP for product development and commercialization. 13 trademark certificates have been issued to support these entrepreneurs with their brand strategy, with another 15 in the pipeline.

“We are now in the second phase of our mentoring and matchmaking program for women entrepreneurs from indigenous and local communities. And we recently launched our first project on IP and women entrepreneurship in the Arab region, which is helping 35 female entrepreneurs in Petra, Jordan, register, manage and commercialize their IP rights.

“Engaging with youth is another key priority for the Organization. Young people are not only our future innovators and creators, but they are a large part of the population in developing regions such as Africa, where 65 percent of the population is under 30.

“Accordingly, we are developing a regional youth entrepreneurship program which, through mentorship and IP skills development supports more young African entrepreneurs to use the IP system to boost their businesses. We are also working towards a new project with Cabo Verde to train 200 young entrepreneurs in unlocking the value of IP.

“In tandem, we have broadened the work of the WIPO Academy to go beyond transfers of technical IP knowledge to the building of practical IP skills. By introducing courses such as “IP4Youth&Teachers”, as well as programs on IP for startups and IP for apps and videogame producers, we aim to equip entrepreneurs, business owners and others with IP skills for success.

“For those who want to pursue deeper expertise in IP, we are meeting demand by expanding our network of IP Training Institutions around the world. We currently have a dozen IPTIs in operation, which is set to rise to 30 in the coming years, with new institutions in development in Algeria, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates and with international partners including ARIPO, ASEAN and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

“We are also gearing up to open the second round in applications to our Young Experts Program, which has brought eleven young experts from around the world to WIPO to broaden their IP knowledge and skills, so that they become the next generation of IP and innovation leaders in your country, in your region.

“Supporting start-ups as well as SMEs to use IP for business growth is another key feature of our work. SMEs play a critical role in the global economy, accounting for 90 per cent of

all companies in the world, employing 70 per cent of the global labor force and generating up to half of global GDP.

“Since its launch in November last year, our IP Diagnostics tool has helped over 3,000 business owners understand their IP assets and how they are connected to business strategy, generating over 800 personalized reports. The tool has already been translated into the 6 UN languages, with two more languages soon to be added.

“As well as regular projects to train SMEs in Ethiopia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine and others, we are delivering a program on IP commercialization and Monetization for MSMEs in Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Peru and we are working with El Salvador and Georgia on training programs for small businesses in their technology and agricultural sectors. And the WIPO Academy in 2020/21 reached 15,000 participating SMEs, a 20 percent increase from the last biennium.

“For researchers, our network of Technology and Innovation Support Centers continues to expand, reaching 1300 last year in almost 90 countries, which in total handled 1.7 million enquires. We are now linking these Centers into national networks including in Eswatini, Sierra Leone and Cabo Verde, and we are beginning to join national networks into regional networks, with a pilot in the Baltic States. Last month, we also completed a project spanning 22 universities in Egypt and 11 universities in Jordan to build their capacity in managing IP rights.

“We are also committed to making IP work for communities, especially in the area of heritage and traditional knowledge – so that IP can help them to bring their crafts, heritage and wisdom to the world, creating jobs and uplifting communities in the process.

“I spoke earlier about our project in Mexico on “Seda de Cajonos”. We have also launched our first community focused initiative in Brazil, working with the government agency SEBRAE to support the development of collective Marks for the Tefé and Alvarães communities in the Amazon region. This has supported 420 producers to create value from products made of local flour, honey, and oils.

“Beyond these, we are delivering a range of national and regional GI projects, including those in support of Senegal’s “Madd de Casamance”, Algeria’s “Miel de Chechar”, Cambodia’s “Kampot Sea Salt” and “Kava” from the Pacific Islands.

“Following feedback from our LDC Members, we have also put together a graduation support package for them, which aims to provide targeted, substantive and impactful technical assistance to economies scheduled for graduation. We have already begun reaching out to LDCs to tap on this package and we welcome LDCs to reach out to us to find out more.

“Finally, we are pleased that the Covid-19 assistance package which we developed last year at the request of Member States is gaining traction, with 23 projects already completed or in development, and 8 more under discussion. Still, we urge more Member States to tap on the wide array of support and assistance available under the package.

“This is just a snapshot of the work that WIPO is doing to support you as our Member States, and to truly make WIPO your partner in using IP for growth and development.

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“Dear colleagues and friends,

“Whatever our challenges and difficulties, the global IP community can and should draw on the dynamism, energy and optimism of the innovators and creators that we support, and continue on the transformation journey that we have started together.

“It is the sincere hope of me and my colleagues that these Assemblies will not only give us an opportunity to reaffirm our relationship with you as our Members, but for you to reconnect with one another, reimagine the role of IP and IP institutions, and renew our efforts to transform IP from a bundle of legal rights into a powerful catalyst for jobs, investments, business growth and ultimately economic and social development.

“WIPO will continue to be with you on your journey of growth and development, and wishes all of you a successful, fruitful and impactful General Assemblies.

“Thank you very much.”

#### ITEM 4 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### GENERAL STATEMENTS

77. The Delegations and Representatives of the following 125 States (including 9 on behalf of groups of States), one observer, four intergovernmental organizations and nine non-governmental organizations provided oral or written statements under this agenda item: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia (the), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao (People's Democratic Republic of), Lesotho, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Palestine, African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office), All-China Patent Agents Association (ACPAA), China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Inter-American Association of Industrial Property (ASIPI), Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA), Health and Environment Program (HEP), Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), Latin American School of Intellectual Property (ELAPI) and Third World Network (TWN).

78. The Statements on this agenda item are included in the Annex.

## ITEM 5 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

79. Discussions were based on document A/63/INF/1 Rev.

80. Introducing the agenda item, the Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that at the current year's Assemblies, Member States were required to elect officers as follows: one Chair and two Vice-Chairs for each of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Paris Union Executive Committee, and the Berne Union Executive Committee. She also recalled that in the current year, with respect to officers of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Chair and the second Vice-Chair should be elected from among the delegates of the ordinary members of the Executive Committee of the Paris Union and the first Vice-Chair should be elected from among the delegates of the ordinary members of the Executive Committee of the Berne Union, in accordance with Rule 3(2)(a) of the Special Rules of Procedure of the WIPO Coordination Committee. The Deputy Legal Counsel reminded delegations that the officers of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Paris Union Executive Committee and the Berne Union Executive Committee were all appointed to a one-year term. She then announced that pending further nominations it was proposed to elect, for the moment, officers for the following positions: the Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the second Vice-Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Chair of the Paris Union Executive Committee, the Chair of the Berne Union Executive Committee, and the Vice-Chair of the Berne Union Executive Committee. As there were still vacant positions, the Deputy Legal Counsel invited additional nominations on the still vacant officer positions.

81. The Chair thanked the Deputy Legal Counsel and, with respect to the agenda item, she noted there was consensus among delegations on the nominations as read out by the Deputy Legal Counsel. The Chair observed that while more nominations and consultations were required for the remaining vacant positions for officers, she proposed that Member States endorse those nominations on which consensus had been reached. She asked delegations, in the meantime, to continue with the consultations on the remaining nominations and inform the Deputy Legal Counsel accordingly.

82. Seeing no objection, the Chair gavelled the elected officers and announced that the meeting would revert to the agenda item at a later stage. She thanked the delegations for their cooperation and said that before opening the floor for deliberation, she wished to congratulate the Chair of the Coordination Committee, as well as the Vice-Chairs and other officers of the other committees on their election.

83. Reverting to Agenda Item 5, the newly elected Chair of the Coordination Committee welcomed the delegations to the session of the Coordination Committee and announced that before opening the deliberations on the item, he wished to recall that it was the national day of his neighboring country, Colombia, and wanted to take the opportunity to wish them all the best in celebrating their national day. He thanked the Member States for the trust that they had placed in him by electing him to the present office. He also wished to thank his predecessor and to congratulate her for the work that she had done during her term with all the outgoing officers of the WIPO Coordination Committee and wished them all the best in their future work as representative of their countries at WIPO and hoped that he would be able to count on their support and that of their respective delegations. The Chair assured the Member States that he would do everything possible to show that the trust they had put in him was well-placed.

84. The Chair recalled that there were still some vacant positions for which the Secretariat had received new nominations. He therefore proposed to reopen the agenda item so delegations could be informed about the nominations and then move to electing the remaining officers for the different WIPO bodies.

85. Seeing no objection to his proposal to reopen item 5 of the agenda, the Chair invited the Deputy Legal Counsel to give an update on the nominations for the vacant posts.

86. The Deputy Legal Counsel announced that following informal consultation among Member States, consensus had been reached to elect the following officers for the remaining vacant positions: the first Vice-Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, the Vice-Chair of the Paris Union Executive Committee, as well as the Vice-Chair of the Berne Union Executive Committee. She informed delegations that the names of all the elected officers to the various bodies would be contained in document A/63/INF/2, which would be published on the WIPO website in due course.

87. The Chair thanked the Deputy Legal Counsel and called for support of the nominated officers as their nominations enjoyed consensus among Member States and, seeing no objections, gavelled the decision.

88. The following officers were elected:

WIPO Coordination Committee

Chair: Alfredo Suescum Alfaro (Mr.) (Panama)

Vice-Chair: Taeho Lee (Mr.) (Republic of Korea)

Vice-Chair: Vivienne Katjuongua (Ms.) (Namibia)

Paris Union Executive Committee

Chair: Ainna Vilengi Kaundu (Ms.) (Namibia)

Vice-Chair: Fayssal Allek (Mr.) (Algeria)

Berne Union Executive Committee

Chair: Ahmed Al-Sulaiti (Mr.) (Qatar)

Vice-Chair: Anna Vuopala (Ms.) (Finland)

Vice-Chair: Laura Hammel (Ms.) (United States of America)

89. The list of all the officers of the Assemblies and other bodies appears in document A/63/INF/2.

## ITEM 6 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

90. Discussions were based on document A/63/3 Rev.

91. Introducing the agenda item, the Deputy Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegations to document A/63/3 Rev., and recalled that the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO were invited to consider applications by three international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 16 national NGOs, as listed in paragraph 4 of the document, for observer status in the meetings of the Member States of WIPO. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that in accordance with the rules applicable to national NGOs that were adopted by Member States, the Secretariat had held the requisite consultations with the Member States from which the national NGOs originated prior to the submission of the NGO requests to these Assemblies. She further noted that the necessary agreement had been received in respect of all 16 national NGO applications concerned.

92. The Delegation of China thanked the Chair and the Director General for the careful organization and successful conduct of the meeting. Commenting on the requests for observer status by NGO applicants, the Delegation shared that China had no objection to most



NGO applicants for observer status and that it was willing to see these organizations playing a positive role. However, the Delegation added that China could not agree to the observer applications from the Asian Law Students' Association (ALSA), Wikimedia Argentina, Wikimedia CH – Association for the Advancement of Free Knowledge, Wikimedia France – Association pour le libre partage de la connaissance, Wikimedia Germany – Society for the Promotion of Free Knowledge, Wikimedia Italy – Association for Open Knowledge Dissemination, Wikimedia South Africa, and Wikimedia Sweden. The Delegation objected to these requests for observer status. Further, the Delegation stated that ALSA's references to Hong Kong, China, Macao, China, and Taiwan Province of China in their list of 17 national chapters was a serious violation of the one-China principle. The Delegation said that with regard to the Wikimedia chapters in Argentina, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, and Sweden their main business was to support and promote Wikimedia projects in specific regions. In the Delegation's view, some of the projects, including the Wikipedia website, contained a large amount of inaccurate information that violated the one-China principle. China recalled that in this regard it had repeatedly stated its position, including at the 2020 and 2021 Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO and during the meeting of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR), which took place from May 9 to 13, 2022. As of this day, Wikimedia and its affiliates had not addressed the concerns raised by the Delegation. It observed that the aforementioned eight applicants for observer status are in serious violation of the one-China principle, which is contrary to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 2758 and WIPO's consistent position on the one-China principle. The Delegation highlighted that WIPO as a specialized agency of the UN, should implement UNGA Resolution 2758 and not accept ALSA or the Wikimedia chapters as observers. The Delegation stressed that past decisions to admit observers had been made with the consensus of the Member States.

93. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the working document A/63/3 Rev. and expressed its support for all requests for observer status contained therein. The Delegation observed that the document set out that all requests for observer status received by the Secretariat contained the requisite information and that, to the understanding of Group B, this would mean information necessary to enable the consideration, and subsequent granting of, observer status. The Delegation further pointed out that, in its understanding, all organizations in the working document had complied with the proper procedures and met the admission criteria for applying for observer status at WIPO, as indicated on the WIPO website. The Delegation shared that observer organizations brought technical expertise and insights to the deliberations of WIPO and that, if they were able to show the direct relationship between their objectives and the field of IP, Group B believed it was important that such organizations would be able to observe and contribute to proceedings. The Delegation highlighted that it had been a common practice at WIPO to welcome the involvement of a wide diversity of NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, industry groups, and other stakeholders in consultation processes and discussions regarding current IP issues. The Delegation pointed out that this had been part and parcel of the transparency and inclusiveness Member States cherished in WIPO. The Delegation noted that Group B was unaware of any information that would lead its members to believe that any of the organizations listed in the working document would not be able to bring valuable contributions to the deliberations on current IP issues. The Group therefore urged the approval of the full list of applications as listed in document A/63/3 Rev.

94. The Delegation of Tajikistan took note of the concerns raised by the Delegation of China. It recalled that decisions on the admission of observers had always been made by consensus among the Member States and it expressed its hope that all parties would continue to respect and observe the principle of consensus prior to accepting the requests for observer status by NGO-applicants.

95. The Delegation of Zimbabwe noted the request for observer status by Wikimedia Foundation and its affiliated organizations and the reservations raised by some Member States with regard to these organizations. Reaffirming the sanctity and importance of the principle of consensus when considering the approval of observer status, the Delegation stated that the concerns of the Delegation of China should be taken into account and expressed its support for deferral of consideration of the agenda item in the next Assemblies to allow for bilateral discussions by the concerned parties.

96. The Delegation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) wished to thank the Secretariat for the preparation of document A/63/3 Rev., and stressed the importance of considering the concerns of Member States expressed in the matter. The Delegation stated that consensus had not been achieved and that the principle of consensus had to be respected.

97. The Delegation of Nicaragua called for implementation of a procedural approach for observers being admitted to WIPO meetings and noted that there should be open access for NGOs including all of the Wikimedia Chapters, and the ALSA. At the same time, the Delegation highlighted the importance of moving forward through mutual cooperation and with a consensus based approach.

98. The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan stated that the sovereignty of States, their territorial integrity and independence, was very important and constituted the basis of international law, as reflected in the UN. It stressed that it was therefore important to maintain the principle of consensus with respect to the admission of NGOs as observers to WIPO.

99. The Delegation of Switzerland thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of document A/63/3 Rev. and expressed its support for the statements made by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B. The Delegation stated that it supported all the requests for admission of observers, particularly the request made by Wikimedia Switzerland. It further explained that the objective of Wikimedia Switzerland was the free distribution of knowledge in Switzerland and abroad and that Wikimedia Switzerland concentrated its activities, particularly on education and research. The Delegation stressed that as these objectives were linked directly to IP, Wikimedia Switzerland could significantly contribute to the work of WIPO. The Delegation wished to underline that Wikimedia Switzerland was a legal entity subject to Swiss law and was independent from the Wikimedia Foundation. The Delegation further stated that the Wikimedia Foundation was not a member of Wikimedia Switzerland nor did it provide any funding to Wikimedia Switzerland. Consequently, the Delegation supported Wikimedia Switzerland's admission as an observer and invited other delegations to likewise support its admission.

100. The Delegation of the United States of America supported Group B's statement and shared that its Delegation supported the approval of the full list of observer applications as contained in document A/63/3 Rev. The Delegation stated that observers were intended to enrich debates and bring diverse and informed views that link to, and support, the activities and objectives of WIPO. According to the Delegation's understanding, all of the applicant-organizations listed in A/63/3 Rev. met the requirements for admission, otherwise the Secretariat would not have published their applications. Regarding the applications of the Wikimedia country chapters, the Delegation noted that these applicants were similar to many other NGOs that had views on copyright related issues and had already been accepted as observers at WIPO. These applicants had already clearly demonstrated their interest in the field of copyright and their link to WIPO's work. The Delegation reiterated its call to make the UN, and in particular, WIPO, more transparent and accessible for civil society organizations and to ensure that its processes remained focused on enriching the work of WIPO. The Delegation believed that the applications of the Wikimedia chapters should be decided on the merits of their application and their ability to contribute to WIPO discussions on IP issues which, in the Delegation's view, they had proven. The Delegation noted that evaluating an international NGO

credentials for observer status in WIPO was not a one-China principle issue. Participation of Wikimedia affiliates and ALSA did not raise any question about the political status of other Member States. The Delegation noted that allowing these affiliates to participate as observers would be consistent with established precedent at WIPO of supporting other existing observers and Member States that might also have some affiliation with Taiwan. In the Delegation's view, there was no information to suggest that any of the applicants would be unable to contribute to WIPO consultations and debates about current IP issues and thus urged the approval of all the organizations listed in document A/63/3 Rev.

101. The Delegation of Sweden expressed its support for the approval of all the applications listed in document A/63/3 Rev. It noted that observers were admitted to enrich debate and bring diverse and informed views that link to, and support, the activities of WIPO. According to the Delegation, all applicants listed in the documents had met the requirements requested by WIPO, otherwise their application would not have been included in the working document. The Delegation stated that observers brought technical expertise and insights to the deliberations of WIPO and if observers are able to show the direct relationship between their objectives and the field of IP, it was important that those organizations, such as Wikimedia Sweden, were able to observe and contribute to proceedings.

102. The Delegation of Belarus emphasized the importance of maintaining a consensus approach in the decisions on admissions of observers as with all other items on the agenda.

103. The Delegation of Pakistan acknowledged the contribution of NGOs in the work of WIPO. It noted that the granting of observer status to a large number of NGOs to participate in the Organization's work was a recognition of their important contribution and was also evident by the number of observers taking the floor in the session. Underlining the importance of agreement among all WIPO Member States, the Delegation noted that the approval of observer status was only possible with the agreement of all Member States and echoed the views expressed by the Delegation of China.

104. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the working document and aligned itself with the concerns raised by China, which, in its view, were legitimate. The Delegation supported the principle of consensus and the statement made by the Delegation of China.

105. The Delegation of France expressed its support for Group B's statement and for the presence and participation of civil society in multilateral organizations. It stated that the Wikimedia chapters, including Wikimedia France were independent organizations founded to support and promote Wikimedia projects in a specific geographic region. The Delegation said that while the chapters could collaborate amongst themselves or with Wikimedia Foundation, they were distinct and independent legal entities. The Delegation pointed out that Wikimedia France did not have any member of the Wikimedia Foundation in its Council of Administration, which confirmed the independence of the French NGO. The Delegation underscored that Wikimedia France concerned itself with distribution of information and knowledge, and played an important and significant role in debates around IP, copyright, and all aspects, particularly with regard to new modes of communication. Adding that Wikimedia France was independent from public authorities and received no instructions from public authorities, the Delegation supported the admission of the full list of NGOs appearing in the working document.

106. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Secretariat for preparing the working document under consideration and stated that it believed that the admission of observers was a technical issue. The Delegation recalled the WIPO sessions in 2020 and 2021, during which similar issues related to the admission of observers had been discussed. The Delegation stated its conviction that the decision on the admission of observers should only be made by consensus and therefore the principle of consensus should be

supported. The Delegation supported the comments made regarding the affiliated structures of the Wikimedia Foundation and the ALSA with regard to their request for observer status and noted that the requests for observer status by Wikimedia chapters were rejected by the SCCR in May 2022. There was a need to ensure independence and modalities of transparency, and inclusivity, so that all decisions of the Assemblies were taken by consensus. It observed that there was no consensus with regard to the eight organizations and therefore its Delegation supported the statements made by other delegations suggesting that the Assemblies should defer making a decision on these NGOs to a later date.

107. The Delegation of Canada expressed its support for the inclusion and participation of NGOs in relevant discussions in UN agencies, such as WIPO, and it believed that the eligibility of NGOs to participate in WIPO discussions should be judged principally on the merits of their request.

108. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the working document A/63/3 Rev. and recalled the tradition of making a decision on the admission of observers by consensus. Emphasizing that the principle of consensus must be observed, the Delegation shared the concern raised by the Delegation of China and other Member States. It expressed support for the proposal to postpone the decision to grant observer status for those specific organizations to a later date due to the lack of consensus.

109. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking in its national capacity, welcomed the work and significant contribution of NGOs within UN organizations. The Delegation noted the reservations and concerns expressed by China and other delegations with regard to the granting of observer status to some of the observer applicants and called for respect for the principle of consensus which, to date, had framed the work of the Assemblies and urged delegations to continue in the same manner.

110. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic said that it valued and appreciated the concerns of China with regard to the admission of observers according to the adopted procedures, which took into consideration the sovereignty of States. In that regard, the Delegation emphasized the importance of consensus when admitting observers.

111. The Delegation of Germany aligned itself with the statements delivered by Group B and the Delegations of France, United States of America, Sweden, and Switzerland. The Delegation stated that Wikimedia Germany had a legitimate interest in being accredited as an observer by the Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO and the Unions administered by WIPO. The Delegation expressed its knowledge of the Organization and its long-term constructive involvement in legislative procedures and consultation, notably in the field of copyright and related rights in Germany. It noted that Wikimedia Germany was an organization under German law that was legally independent of the Wikimedia Foundation and other national chapters. The Delegation emphasized the importance of WIPO remaining a transparent Organization open to civil society and other observers.

112. The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea noted the practice of making decisions on the admissions of observers to the meetings of WIPO by consensus and suggested that this practice be maintained.

113. The Delegation of Cuba asked the Member States to respect the principle of consensus.

114. Thanking the delegations for their statements and acknowledging the differing views, the Chair noted the delegations' expressed desire for consensus. The Chair proposed to adopt the decision paragraph as contained in document A/63/3 Rev., with the exception of the requests by ALSA, and the Wikimedia chapters of Argentina, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, and Sweden:

115. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, decided to grant observer status to the following organizations:

- (a) International non-governmental organizations:
  - (i) Global Expert Network on Copyright User Rights (User Rights Network); and
  - (ii) Innovation Council.
  
- (b) National non-governmental organizations:
  - (i) American Arab Intellectual Property Association (AAIPA);
  - (ii) Argentine Management Society of Actors and Performers (SAGAI);
  - (iii) Association pour le Devenir des Autochtones et de leur Connaissance Originelle (ADACO);
  - (iv) China Trademark Association (CTA);
  - (v) Digital Law Center (DLC);
  - (vi) Hiperderecho;
  - (vii) InternetLab Research Association in Law and Technology (InternetLab);
  - (viii) Italian Industrial Property Consultants Institute (OCPI); and
  - (ix) Patent Protection Association of China (PPAC).

#### ITEM 7 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### DRAFT AGENDAS FOR 2023 ORDINARY SESSIONS

116. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document WO/CC/81/4).

#### ITEM 8 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### NEW ELECTORAL CYCLE OF THE OFFICERS OF WIPO ASSEMBLIES AND OTHER BODIES

117. Discussions were based on document A/63/5 Rev.

118. Introducing the agenda item, the Deputy Legal Counsel drew the delegations' attention to document A/63/5 Rev. and recalled that, following the successful experience of the shift in the election cycle of the officers of the WIPO General Assembly, as adopted by Member States in 2016 (see document WO/GA/48/17, paragraphs 17 and 18), document A/63/5 Rev. contained a proposal to likewise align the electoral cycle for the officers of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO and other bodies of the Member States of WIPO, with that of the WIPO General Assembly by amending Rule 9(2) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure. The Deputy Legal Counsel explained that in doing so, the officers' terms of office would begin, as is currently the case, with the officers of the WIPO General Assembly, following the final meeting of the session during which they were elected. The Deputy Legal Counsel noted that in order to facilitate the new electoral cycle, a one-time extension of the terms of office of the incumbent officers at the 2022 WIPO Assemblies, elected under the current Rule 9(2) of WIPO General Rules of Procedure was also proposed. This would bridge the otherwise existing gap between the end of their terms of office with that of the start of the terms of office for new officers elected in 2023 under the proposed new rule. The Deputy Legal Counsel further explained that document A/63/5 Rev. also proposed to modernize the WIPO General Rules of Procedure as well as the Special Rules of Procedure of the Governing Bodies of WIPO and the Unions Administered by WIPO in selected points, which do not alter the substance of the rules

themselves. In closing, the Deputy Legal Counsel explained that the modernization concerned gender-neutral language, an update of terminology, and the deletion of obsolete references.

119. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, noted that WIPO bodies, like standing committees and working groups, dealt with highly technical and complex issues and that the proposed changes would allow officers of those bodies to take office after the last meeting of the session in which they were elected. Thus, these officers would have more time to familiarize themselves with the subject matter and better prepare for the first meeting under their chairpersonship. The Group stated that the changes were intended to facilitate consensus building and ultimately lead to more effective and efficient meetings. It therefore expressed its support for the proposal, noting that the change in the election cycle for the officers of the WIPO General Assembly, six years ago, had proved beneficial. The Group was confident that the advantages would be evident for the officers of the other WIPO bodies. At the same time, the Group was pleased that the proposal would make WIPO's governance structure more unified and it appreciated the fact that the Secretariat had seized the opportunity to modernize certain aspects of both the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure, including gender-neutral language and updating general terminology.

120. The Delegation of the Russian Federation believed that the proposed changes with regard to the officers' terms of office, so that they will begin following the final meeting of the session during which they were elected, would enable the officers to better prepare for the sessions and would improve the sessions' results. Commenting on document A/63/5 Rev., the Delegation noted that the Russian language was one of those languages in which it was grammatically difficult to have neutral terminology and therefore it would be grateful to the Secretariat to provide clarifications with regard to the proposed gender-neutral formulations.

121. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the Central European and the Baltic States (CEBS) Group, confirmed the merits of the proposed changes to the electoral cycle and welcomed the fact that a change would provide the officers of the relevant bodies with the necessary time to efficiently and effectively prepare for their respective meetings and allow them to consider the issues that were sometimes highly technical. The CEBS Group also recognized the necessity of a transition period to adapt the two legal frameworks into one consistent framework that reflected the electoral cycle of all officers. The CEBS Group therefore expressed support for the modifications of the electoral cycle and the adaptation of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure accordingly.

122. Responding to the query regarding gender-neutrality in the Russian language, raised by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, the Director of the Language Division informed the meeting that WIPO had recently published its guidelines on inclusive language in all six UN languages. The guidelines contained strategies and practical solutions to encourage the use of non-discriminatory language in WIPO documentation and publications in line with the fundamental values of the UN regarding equality and diversity. The Director said that WIPO also recognized that approaches to inclusive language varied across countries and cultures, and that certain terms and expressions were not universally accepted. So, the guidelines were based on the current broad practice in and beyond the UN system. The Director recognized the fact that the Russian Language had some difficulties and clarified that, with regard to the working document, all the six languages had been prepared separately. He expressed willingness to work with the Russian Federation regarding the document under consideration to ensure compliance with Russian language usage.

123. The Delegation of China welcomed the amendment to the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure to bring them in line with the current WIPO policies and practices. The Delegation believed that the Secretariat should take into consideration all of the contents that required amendments comprehensively and deal with them together. The Delegation pointed out that Article 40 of the General Rules of Procedure entitled

“Languages of Document,” and Article 41, “Languages of Oral Interventions, Interpretation” would also benefit from the deletion of outdated expressions to bring them in line with the current WIPO Language Policy. The Delegation suggested that the Secretariat amend Article 40(1) to become, “the documents to be sent to all different bodies should be drafted in the six official languages of the UN”, and the amended Article 41(1) to become “the oral statements delivered in the meetings of the different bodies should be in the six official languages of the UN, and interpretation shall be provided in the six official UN languages. However, the Director General, in the light of operational needs, can decide to add or reduce the use of non-UN languages as interpretation languages”. The Delegation further suggested the deletion of Article 4 of the Special Rules of Procedure of the WIPO General Assembly and Article 3 of the Special Rules of Procedure of the WIPO Conference.

124. The Deputy Legal Counsel thanked the Delegation of China for the points raised, with which the Secretariat agreed, as the General and Special Rules of Procedure would clearly benefit from some additional review to ensure that they were consistent in all of the language references. The Deputy Legal Counsel added that the Secretariat would be keen to continue the conversation, take note of the comments, and revert back to Member States with respect to the very specific changes as they would require the Secretariat to take another careful look at the General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure for any other language references, with the goal to make all the references consistent with the multilingual policies at WIPO.

125. The Delegation of China took note of the proposed decision paragraph as contained in document A/63/5 Rev. but remarked that the Delegation’s statements were not reflected in that paragraph and it could not, therefore, agree to the decision paragraph as it currently stood.

126. The Deputy Legal Counsel acknowledged the request made by the Delegation of China, and the Delegation of the Russian Federation, which captured similar sentiments, in response to which the Secretariat proposed to add a new subparagraph (iv) to the decision paragraph as contained in document A/63/5 Rev. The amended decision paragraph now additionally requested the Secretariat to continue the revision of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and Special Rules of Procedure with a view to updating language references and other necessary revisions and to present the proposed changes to the Assemblies of WIPO at their 2023 sessions.

127. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned,

(i) modified the electoral cycle of the officers (Chair and two Vice-Chairs) stipulated in Rule 9(2) of the General Rules of Procedure, such that their terms of office begin following the final meeting of the session during which they were elected;

(ii) facilitated the transition to the new electoral cycle, so that the incumbent officers at this 2022 WIPO Assemblies will preside over their respective meetings during the 2023 WIPO Assemblies;

(iii) adopted the amendments of the respective General Rules of Procedure and Special Rules of Procedure, as set forth in the Annexes to document A/63/5 Rev., implementing the decision listed in (i), and the proposed changes described in paragraphs 12 to 14;

(iv) requested the Secretariat to continue the revision of the General Rules of Procedure and Special Rules of Procedure with a view to updating language references and other necessary revisions and to present the proposed changes to the Assemblies of WIPO at their 2023 sessions.

## ITEM 9 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### REPORTS FROM WIPO COMMITTEES

(i) The Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR)

128. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(ii) The Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP)

129. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(iii) The Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT)

130. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(iv) Matters Concerning the Convening of a Diplomatic Conference for the Adoption of a Design Law Treaty (DLT)

131. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(v) The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) and Review of the Implementation of the Development Agenda

132. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(vi) The Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC)

133. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

(vii) The Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)

134. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12)

## ITEM 10 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### REPORTS ON AUDIT AND OVERSIGHT

(i) Report by the Independent Advisory Oversight Committee (IAOC)

135. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).



(ii) Report by the External Auditor

136. Discussions were based on documents A/63/6 and A/63/7.

137. The External Auditor, made the following statement:

“Chair, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General of the United Kingdom, I am particularly pleased to have this opportunity to present the findings from our audit in person.

“In my presentation I will cover the four main areas of our work, firstly the audit of the financial statements and financial management, and I will then cover the two substantive topics which are contained in our report, namely governance and internal control, and our review of the revenue forecasting models. We have also performed a more detailed follow-up on our previous review of Human Resources Management.

“Turning first to the results of our audit of the financial statements, I am pleased to confirm that the External Auditor’s opinion was unqualified again this year, and that the audit revealed no errors or weaknesses which we considered material to the accuracy, completeness, and validity of the Financial Statements as a whole. Our audit also confirms that the transactions have occurred in line with the Financial Regulations set by Member States.

“WIPO’s financial statements and accompanying financial commentary remain of high quality, supported by sound systems of internal controls and reporting. Overall, our audit results were positive and identified no significant errors or control weaknesses, we reported the detail of this work to the IAOC with whom we have had a good productive engagement.

“On financial management, overall, WIPO has maintained a sound financial position, this is primarily due to WIPO’s cash generating business model. It has made substantial investments in its property estate and holds significant retained reserves, which are significantly backed by cash and investments, which are more than sufficient to meet its total liabilities. It remains important that as WIPO changes its operating arrangements post-pandemic, that the utilisation of these significant assets is kept under review to seek opportunities to best utilise its estate. As highlighted previously, the differing financial performance and position for each Union demonstrates how reliant the Organization is on the PCT and Madrid Unions, which, especially the PCT, compensate for the deficits reported by the Hague and Lisbon Unions.

“We have again highlighted the continued growth of the employee benefits liabilities. These predominantly comprise the staff member’s after-service health insurance, their repatriation entitlements and accumulated leave liabilities. During 2021, the overall liability for these staff benefits increased by a further 120 million Swiss francs to 616 million Swiss francs. Assuming current assumptions remain consistent, WIPO forecasts that the liability for the after-service health insurance is projected to increase further to 716 million Swiss francs by 2025. These benefits will consume a growing proportion of WIPO’s future revenues. Members may recall that we recommended last year that WIPO consider the options for mitigating the potential future growth of these liabilities. After the completion of the 2021 audit, the Secretariat released its Asset and Liability study which we will consider as part of next year’s audit.

“Moving now to the first topic area of our performance reporting, which speaks to the issues of governance and internal control, which help provide Member States with confidence and assurance over the management of resources.

“Our audit has continued to conclude that WIPO has sound systems of internal control and no significant weaknesses have come to our attention during the audit process. The Organization has always been proactive in its approach to internal control, and we have noted the proposals to amend the Financial Regulations, the evolving nature of compliance, the development of a revised risk appetite statement and pending changes within the Internal Oversight Division.

“As Member States will know, WIPO are proposing certain changes to Financial Regulations. The objective is to modernise and streamline them, reflecting current practices and the new organisational structures. The proposals also address important gaps within the existing Regulations, in areas such as partnership working and the management of liabilities. We provided early feedback on the Secretariat’s proposals and our overall conclusion is that the revised structure provides a more coherent framework. We have highlighted the benefits of a post implementation review to allow for the adaptation of any Regulations which need further refinement following their initial implementation.

“WIPO has a well-developed approach to reviewing compliance with its identified controls. We have reviewed the processes undertaken and made observations to help further mature the approach. We have highlighted the need to focus more on the key controls. Greater assurance over the significant key controls will create efficiencies, to inform management on the quality and effectiveness of the most important and material elements of the system of internal control. Mindful of our observations, we continue to see WIPO as having one of the better approaches to compliance within the UN system.

“Since the start of our mandate in 2018, we have supported WIPO’s ambition to adopt data analytics to provide a greater breadth of assurance over the operation of the control environment. Analytics provide cost effective and systematic tools to provide feedback on the operation of controls, to inform management on areas of risk and the scope for improvement. There have been delays in implementing the approach arising from how data is stored, but we strongly encourage management to move forward in the delivery of at least some analytics to inform the way in which the Organization may deploy these more widely. Several different areas within the Secretariat are developing their own analytics, it is important that WIPO’s investment in these tools is approached in a holistic manner, avoiding duplication of effort, and ensuring expertise can be developed and shared across a common platform.

“On risk management we have noted the positive development of a clear and concise Risk Appetite Statement in consultation with Member States, focused on the Expected Results of the Organization. In our view, the articulation of the risk tolerance and appetite provides a platform against which WIPO can focus its resources, assess the effectiveness of mitigating actions and demonstrate its management of risks. The Statement is amongst the clearest we have seen, and we will consider how WIPO is using this to inform and determine its approach in future audits.

“We have noted the work and operation of the Risk Management Group, the RMG, chaired by the Director General. It considers the most significant risks facing the Organization, and how these are being managed. There is scope to review how the RMG obtains assurance over Sector level risks and on the level of challenge on these and their associated mitigations.

“Turning now to our review of the revenue forecasting models, last year we observed that WIPO regularly exceeded its fee revenue target and consistently underspent against its expenses budget, leading to surpluses higher than those originally anticipated. We

therefore decided to review the basis for the modelling of revenues as a key element of the assumptions underpinning the budget.

“The models were designed in-house to provide information on expected future filing volumes and corresponding fees from the WIPO Global IP Systems. While filing activity is a key driver for certain variable cost elements of WIPO’s budget, many costs are fixed by their nature and influenced by inflationary factors and changes arising from the implementation of new initiatives and less dependent on the filing activity themselves.

“Our work confirmed that the model achieves its purpose of providing a reasonable basis for planning and budgeting. Over time, the model has demonstrated its reliability and our review highlights WIPO’s prudence in its financial planning which minimises the risk to Member States but does increase the potential for consistently exceeding forecast surplus. We continue to urge Member States to take a strategic approach to how these surplus funds are best utilised by the Organization.

“On our follow-up of Human Resources Management, in 2018, we reviewed how WIPO reported its performance, with reference to the work of the Human Resources Management Department. In October 2021, WIPO adopted a new HR strategy which has refocused its approach and has led to strategic and structural changes to the Department.

“The restructure provides greater emphasis on priority areas and supports a better framework for the Department to progress from a transactional to a more strategic function in the way it supports the Organization and its staff. This will be underpinned by enhanced performance reporting and compliance activities, creating better information for decision making and efficiency.

“The new strategy has placed considerable focus on issues of diversity and talent management, addressing areas we identified as needing attention. The plans established should help deliver a better skilled workforce matching the needs of WIPO with the aspirations of staff. Specific attention is being given to strengthening training and skills in leadership and management and on the effectiveness of training and its contribution to staff and the Organization. These changes provide the opportunity to support improved workforce planning and delivery of a more agile workforce to meet future needs.

“The arrangements and approach to the management of staff absences have been strengthened. WIPO has enhanced its compliance monitoring and established parameters for actions and interventions when staff are absent. These arrangements should deliver benefits in reducing overall WIPO absence levels and providing enhanced support for a successful return for individuals. Over time, further refinement can be made to these processes by reviewing the timescales for intervention and by benchmarking levels of absence with other entities.

“We welcome the move to enhanced staff engagement, which is supporting a culture of change at WIPO. Underpinning this is the use of new tools and communications with staff, such as staff surveys. These will be used to frequently track employee experience and provide information to monitor the impact of changes and the effectiveness of the new strategy. It will be important for management to monitor the levels of response; experience shows that where actions are not taken this can impact on engagement participation and scores and may put the achievement of the new strategies at risk.

“While it is too early to assess the impact of the HR changes overall, sound frameworks have been established to position the Organization to address the key areas we identified in our 2018 report. Given these are new initiatives, time will tell what impact they will have on the Organization and its performance.

“To conclude, I can confirm that progress was made in closing and implementing six other recommendations from previous years, with nine recommendations remaining in progress. These mostly relate to ongoing actions arising from our report last year.

“Finally, I wish to express my thanks to the Director General and the staff of WIPO for their support and cooperation in facilitating our audit.

“Thank you for your kind attention and I would be happy to take any questions or to provide further background to our audit.”

138. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the External Auditor for its Report on the 2021 WIPO Financial Statements and thanked Mr. Damian Brewitt, United Kingdom National Audit Office for the presentation. Group B took this opportunity to express its gratitude, for the work and the efforts of the External Auditor. A well functioning oversight system is essential to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of the Organization. Regarding substantive comments, Group B recalled its statement as delivered to the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC.

139. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the External Auditor for preparing the Report and for his presentation. The Delegation noted with satisfaction the Auditor's conclusion on the attainment of high financial indicators of the Organization and also the stable work in the context of global economic uncertainty. The Delegation called upon the External Auditor to pay attention to more detailed monitoring of future expenditure, including expenditure connected with the payment of medical insurance. Given that the payment of entitlement to staff is a major risk factor for the financial health of WIPO, the Delegation felt that more detailed data on the relevant future expenditure would be very useful to allow Member States to assess the situation appropriately. The Delegation also noted the need for the Secretariat to strictly implement the recommendations of the External Auditor, and to provide regular updates to Member States. The Delegation felt that all of the open recommendations should be fulfilled as soon as possible.

140. The Delegation of India, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, thanked the National Audit Office of the United Kingdom for presenting the comprehensive results of the audit. The Group appreciated the excellent work carried out by the External Auditor despite the continued challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group noted the External Auditor's observation of WIPO's strong financial performance in 2021 and that the Organization remained well placed to respond to the continued global economic uncertainty. The Group was heartened to note WIPO's sound systems of internal control and that there were no significant gaps in WIPO's processes that had come up during the audit process. The Group agreed with the recommendation of the External Auditor to take a strategic approach to how surplus funds would be best utilized by the Organization to ensure that the Organization continued to deliver on the expectations of the Member States. Lastly, the Group noted the positive acceptance of the recommendations of the External Auditor by WIPO's management and looked forward to their implementation.

141. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, took note of the Report by the External Auditor contained in document A/63/6, and thanked the External Auditor for their excellent work in spite of the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group welcomed the fact that the WIPO Annual Financial Statements had been prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and contained no significant anomalies thanks to sound financial management. The Group also welcomed the fact that the solid financial situation of WIPO in 2021 allowed it to carry out its activities to a high performance standard. Nevertheless, numerous uncertainties continued to threaten global economic prospects, which required continued vigilance. The Group shared the view of the External Auditor of the importance of agreeing on a strategic approach for the use of surplus funds in order to pursue more effectively the strategic objectives contained in the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022-2026. The Group welcomed the solidity and soundness of internal

control systems even though improvements are possible in order to ensure that internal control processes are more effective on the basis of any Risk Appetite Statement. This would enable avoiding overlapping responsibilities within internal audits and guarantee a better use of the available resources for audit for essential qualitative operations. On the human resource management issues, the Report did not address the chronic issues linked to diversity within WIPO staff, both in terms of gender and geographical balance, and the issue of geographical diversity must be a key part of control work, because that remained a priority for the majority of Member States. On the financial report, the Group believed that all of the initiatives taken by WIPO to implement the strategic Program of Work Budget objectives should be mentioned by giving particular attention to activities for the WIPO Development Agenda (DA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Group stressed the importance that the Annual Financial Report contain data on new recruitment within WIPO, posts occupied and the related financial implications. The Group encouraged the Secretariat to implement the recommendations contained in the Report effectively and to continue with the progress made in implementing previous recommendations.

142. The Delegation of Spain wished to endorse the statement made by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B, and thanked the Chair for the work during the recent PBC. The Delegation welcomed the complete and detailed Report by the External Auditor, which underscored that in spite of the difficulties faced in 2021, the collaboration between the External Auditor and the Secretariat has been exemplary. The Delegation congratulated the Secretariat on the outcome of the External Auditor Report, which stressed for example that WIPO has one of the best internal control systems analyzed within the UN System. The Delegation recalled Group B's statement at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC session that the Report emphasized the sound financial management that had been shown based on a very prudent approach. The Delegation agreed with the External Auditor that an adequate discussion should take place on the use of surplus funds because of WIPO's surplus every year, and believed that surplus could be better invested to improve better services and offer better assistance to Member States, for instance through the programs under the different sectors. The Delegation recalled that the Young Experts Program (YEP) was discussed the previous day, but it was sure that there were other programs that could be mentioned. The Delegation wished to recall to the Secretariat, External Auditor and Member States that the fees for WIPO services and their modelling should take into account not only statistical, mathematical and technical issues, but also strategic and holistic ones, because international IP systems stood alongside regional and national systems. Though they may be independent, that influenced the perception that users had of the system overall. Therefore, the Delegation believed that in any future decision on potential changes, that should be taken into account and discussed with Member States. For those reasons, the Delegation wished to indicate its support for the WIPO General Assembly taking note of document WO/PBC/34/4.

143. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, commended the work of the External Auditor and thanked him for the comprehensive and detailed Report and presentation. The CEBS Group had reviewed the Report by the External Auditor and had noted with satisfaction that the Annual Financial Statements received a high assessment. At the same time, the CEBS Group was pleased to hear that WIPO had a sound system of internal controls and reporting, which showed that effective governance without any significant weaknesses, forms an integral part of the Organization. The CEBS Group also welcomed that WIPO continued to deliver a strong financial performance in 2021 and that despite the continued challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Organization kept a healthy reserve position and was able to respond to the global economic uncertainty. The CEBS Group also recognized that recommendations of the External Auditor were well elaborated and encouraged the Secretariat to continue working on their sound implementation.

144. The Delegation of the United States of America thanked the External Auditor for his Report. The Delegation lent its support to the statement made by the Delegation of Germany

on behalf of Group B. In the External Auditor Report, the Delegation took particular note of the observation that the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and Madrid Systems, especially the PCT System, had been covering for deficits in the Hague and Lisbon Systems. The Delegation continued to urge WIPO and Member States to take decisions that would drive all of the systems to financial sustainability and a day in which PCT applicants would no longer need to subsidize other registration systems. The Delegation continued to maintain that WIPO Member States could agree to adjustments that would bring more balance among WIPO's fee-funded Unions in the long-term and compliance with the treaty obligations of all Union members.

145. The External Auditor thanked the Chair for the comments on the External Auditor Report. The External Auditor stated it had taken note of a number of issues that Member States had raised, and would take them into consideration as it planned its work for the next cycle, and would revert to the delegations on some of those issues that were raised in its future reporting. The External Auditor thanked the delegations for engaging with the External Auditor Report and providing those observations.

146. The Chair thanked the External Auditor for the work done, both on the information and the Report that had been presented. The Chair was delighted to hear that there were no significant weaknesses and there is a sound system in place. It was even more encouraging to see that WIPO has one of the most sound internal control systems in the UN, and for also giving the recommendation and opinion concerning some of the discussions that already had taken place during the week of the Assemblies on the Revision to the Financial Regulations and Rules (FRR).

147. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, took note of the "Report by the External Auditor" (document A/63/6).

(iii) Report by the Director of the Internal Oversight Division (IOD)

148. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

## ITEM 11 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### REPORT ON THE PROGRAM AND BUDGET COMMITTEE (PBC)

149. Discussions were based on document A/63/7.

150. The Chair noted that the item covered all PBC matters. One document was considered under the Item, as stated in the List of Documents, namely document A/63/7, "List of Decisions Adopted by the Program and Budget Committee" which contained all decisions taken at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session.

151. The Secretariat explained that as 2022 was a non-budget year, only one PBC session was held from June 27, to July 1, 2022. The PBC agenda covered a number of items, including Audit and Oversight matters, Performance and Financial Review, proposals and items following decisions of the 2021 Assemblies and the 33<sup>rd</sup> PBC Session. Under the leadership of the PBC Chair, Member States had engaged very constructively throughout the PBC Session with the Secretariat and had taken note or recommended for approval by the Assemblies of WIPO, a number of items, as listed in document A/63/7. Those items included the Report of the WIPO Independent Advisory Oversight Committee (IAOC) Selection Panel; Progress Report on the Implementation of the Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) Recommendations; WIPO Performance Report 2020/21 and the Internal Oversight Division (IOD) Validation of the WIPO Performance Report 2020/21; Supplementary Capital Master Plan Project; Revision of the Financial Regulations and Rules (FRR); WIPO Risk Appetite Statement; WIPO Funding Plan for

After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) Liabilities; Preliminary Draft Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices; Methodology for Allocation of Income and Expenditure by Union; the Annual Financial Report and Financial Statements 2021 and the Status of the Payment of Contributions as at May 31, 2022. In that connection, document A/63/INF/4 provides an update to the Status of the Payment of Contributions as at June 30, 2022. Furthermore, since July 1, 2022, and as of July 15, 2022, the following contributions have been received in chronological order: Costa Rica, 5,407 CHF; Bahrain, 5,697 CHF; Côte d'Ivoire, 66 CHF; Gabon, 23 CHF; Mali, 45 CHF; Niger, 23 CHF, Burkina Faso, 4,894; and Uruguay, 5,697.00.

152. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, thanked the Secretariat for preparing document A/63/7. The Group thanked the Chair and Vice-Chair of the PBC for their tireless efforts to take forward discussions in an effective and fruitful manner. The Group extended its gratitude to the Assistant Director General, Administration, Finance and Management Sector, and his team, for the support provided to Member States. The Group noted with satisfaction that WIPO had been in a position to maintain a positive performance in 2021, as shown by the many achievements in activities done in its Sectors and despite a very difficult situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group appreciated the quality of the reports submitted by the various oversight bodies because they showed WIPO's commitment to improve its performance on transparency, accountability and good governance. The Group was of the opinion that audit and oversight activities should be focused around risk management systems, which are developed to guarantee that the audit resources available are focused on those areas that are relatively higher risk. The Group believed that the Annual Report on Human Resources however did not meet its expectations in terms of dealing with questions related to geographical balance in the WIPO Secretariat. The Group felt that the Annual Financial Report and Financial Statements 2021, contained inadequate information on WIPO's recruitment policy and the relevant financial implications, including information on the number of posts created to meet the Organization's needs. The Group positively welcomed the Financing Plan to Manage Risks Arising from Long-Term Employee Benefits at WIPO and urged the Secretariat to continue its efforts on what is a very important item of expenditure as part of a global management strategy over the medium and long-term. The Group was concerned by the delay in developing a WIPO strategy for the inclusion of persons with disability in accordance with the UN Strategy on the matter. The Group urged the Secretariat to build on the progress already made to put in place a global strategy to improve physical and digital access to people with disabilities and the systematic inclusion of disability in the projects and programs run by WIPO, including the concerned directives related to procurement. The Group welcomed the new modifications to the FRR and implementing regulations thereto and would wait with interest for the report on the impact of the implementation on the governance and operation of WIPO. The Group believed that the External Offices Network was an important asset of the Organization, enabling it to put its services and development coordination activities within the reach of its Member States, all other parties involved, its partners and to achieve the strategic goals of the Organization. The Group reiterated that the mandate for the evaluation of External Offices should be harmonized with good practices recognized throughout the UN System while making best use of the expertise and experience that WIPO had built up in terms of oversight and audit. The issue of the seniority of the External Offices should also be taken into account, particularly in respect of the new offices in Africa. Lastly, the Group appreciated the progress made on the matter of External Offices and encouraged Member States to continue with their efforts in order to finalize the mandate for the evaluation within the time scheduled.

153. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the Report on the PBC. The Delegation noted with satisfaction the achievement of positive financial indicators and outcomes to the program activities of the Organization for the biennium 2020/21. As the Delegation had requested previously, the Delegation was grateful for the information on compliance with recommendations made by the JIU to the Secretariat. The Delegation believed it essential that attention be focused on compliance with JIU

recommendations contained in document JIU/REP/2020/6 on Multilingualism in the UN. The Delegation welcomed compliance with recommendation one, on organizations preparing a strategic policy framework for multilingualism accompanied by administrative and operational guidelines addressed to the governing bodies and the administration of WIPO. The Delegation highlighted the need for the submission to Member States on a roadmap on the language policy of WIPO as agreed in 2021. The Delegation welcomed the efforts of the Secretariat on attracting new translators and interpreters and retaining qualified staff. In addition, the Delegation supported the recommendation of the PBC on the financing of the implementation of the PCT Resilient and Secure Platform (RSP) hybrid phase project. The Delegation believed that projects that were directed to users and to the improvement of the IT infrastructure of the international registration systems were very important. The Delegation stated that it saw a need to increase the level of security for systems which store and process confidential data in the Organization. The Delegation hoped that there would be regular monitoring of the state of information technology (IT) systems from the point of view of cybersecurity when confidential information and personal data were being processed and stored. The Delegation would be grateful if Member States could be provided with regular reports on this matter in accordance with the decision of the PBC. The Delegation concluded noting the need for more detailed monitoring of future expenditure including those relating to the payment of staff benefits and health insurance.

154. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for preparing the List of Decisions Adopted by the Program and Budget Committee (PBC). Group B thanked the PBC Chair for his efforts in chairing the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session. The Delegation was pleased that the PBC had reached agreement on important proposals and had made recommendations to the WIPO General Assembly, in particular, on the Revision of the FRR, the Supplementary Capital Master Plan Project and the Financing Plan to Manage Risks Arising from Long-Term Employee Benefits at WIPO. Group B appreciated the progress made on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices and would continue to participate constructively in discussions at the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session.

155. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, thanked the Ambassador of India for his able Chairpersonship of the PBC and his Vice-Chairs at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session. The CEBS Group thanked the Secretariat for its hard work and all the preparations. The CEBS Group noted with satisfaction the financial results for the biennium 2020/21 with record surplus, which was generated mainly thanks to the income from fees from international IP systems for patents, trademarks and industrial designs, especially with respect to the PCT System. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, this clearly showed continued growing demand for IP services provided by WIPO. Therefore, the CEBS Group welcomed the sound performance of WIPO and appreciated the fact that the Organization enjoyed such positive financial results. The CEBS Group underlined the importance of continuing this trend in the future. The CEBS Group recalled that during the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session, some important decisions and recommendations were adopted. Besides endorsing the Secretariat to continue assessment and implementation of open recommendations of several WIPO bodies, the CEBS Group supported the approval of the Supplementary Capital Master Plan Project. The CEBS Group shared the view that such forward-looking projects would contribute to better use of resources while ensuring the efficiency in delivering high quality services and helping to address cybersecurity challenges. The CEBS Group was also pleased to recall the decision to approve the proposed amendments to the FRR, which had been adapted to the evolving Organization's business models, processes and systems, as well as the MTSP and the revised WIPO strategic framework. The CEBS Group noted that the Methodology for the Allocation of Income and Expenditure by Union would remain open for discussion at the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session. The CEBS Group noted the two rounds of negotiations on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices. The CEBS Group emphasized that the evaluation of WIPO External Offices must be done in a highly transparent, independent and objective manner, and should reflect relevant



specific circumstances of all External Offices and their host countries. Based on the inputs and comments of delegations, the Member States were far from reaching consensus, but the CEBS Group believed that those discussions had helped to understand the different perspectives and views. The CEBS Group stood ready to further engage constructively on the Draft Terms of Reference in the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session.

156. The Delegation of India congratulated the PBC Chair on his election and the excellent work of the PBC. The Delegation was pleased to see the progress made on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices and was certain that the PBC would expedite its work and finalize the Terms of Reference (ToR) in the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session. The ToR must be inclusive of fairness and transparency in the evaluation and in conformity with the Guiding Principles. The Evaluation should focus on analysis of the individual performance indicators of each External Office and must be mindful that it would not affect the already submitted application of opening new External Offices. The Delegation looked forward to productive discussions on that agenda item and would participate constructively in the deliberations.

157. The Delegation of China thanked the Secretariat for preparing the Report on the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session, which reached agreement on a number of issues including the Report on the IAOC Selection Panel, the Supplementary Capital Master Plan Project, Revision of the FRR and the WIPO Funding Plan for ASHI liabilities. Those decisions effectively promoted the Organization's supervision, financial, IT, data security and other important work. The Delegation appreciated this. With regard to the Preliminary Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of the WIPO External Offices, the Delegation was expecting that all parties would demonstrate a spirit of cooperation and push the consultations forward on that topic at the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session.

158. The Delegation of Chile, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), thanked the Secretariat for the work done and the documents provided. GRULAC welcomed the efforts made by the Chair in order to make headway on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices in document WO/PBC/34/15. GRULAC regretted the fact that no consensus was reached and that the topic would be discussed again at the following PBC session. The Group recalled that Member States took on a commitment in October 2015 to implement the Guiding Principles for WIPO External Offices and hoped that on the basis of agreed criteria to engage in the process of opening WIPO External Offices, an agreement could be reached. Countries of GRULAC were certain of the need to show maturity in the process for selecting new WIPO External Offices and had agreed to put forward a candidate by consensus, Colombia. That exercise of deciding on new External Offices was carried out with the conviction that in so doing, it would further the decision-making process instead of having to select a candidate from a list of the different candidates from the GRULAC region. GRULAC stated that technically the proposal of Colombia was solid, applied fully with the Guiding Principles and would strengthen the presence of WIPO in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Several years after putting forward a candidate, the Assemblies had failed to take a decision on that point. GRULAC was grateful for the efforts put forth by previous Assemblies' Chairs to build support around the candidate from GRULAC and the specific nomination of Colombia. GRULAC believed the delay should not be an excuse not to build upon WIPO's commitment to open future WIPO External Offices. Any delay in this process would affect the future of WIPO. GRULAC hoped that the Assemblies would take a decision that would end a deadlock, which had lasted since 2016. It is essential that Member States consider the value of having a consensus candidate that met the Guiding Principles. GRULAC urged Member States to demonstrate commitment and responsibility, and keep the promises previously made that complied with the decision of previous Assemblies, which would end the constant delay in approving the opening of a WIPO External Office in Colombia. GRULAC hoped that in accordance with the previously adopted decision, particularly

the decision adopted the previous year, that the Assemblies would be able to reach agreement on the opening of four WIPO External Offices including one in Colombia.

159. The Delegation of Brazil supported the statement made by the Delegation of Chile on behalf of GRULAC. The Delegation congratulated the Organization's management on another solid year of financial results and hoped that would continue after the COVID-19 pandemic and other global challenges. The Delegation hoped that there would be positive prospects and outcomes for the Organization in the future. The financial results showed that there had been good management of the financial situation and there had been an accumulation of reserves over the previous few years. The Delegation stated its commitment to work with WIPO and other Member States to guarantee the efficient and balanced use of the available resources. The Delegation supported WIPO's commitment to the DA and the SDGs. The Delegation thanked the PBC Chair and the Secretariat for all of their efforts in the discussion on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices. The Delegation reiterated its willingness to contribute to a successful outcome in the negotiations and discussions to have an independent and appropriate evaluation of the WIPO External Offices and ensure that the resources would be used effectively.

160. The Delegation of Indonesia conveyed its appreciation to the Secretariat and the Assistant Director General, Administration, Finance and Management Sector for their excellent work. The Delegation thanked the PBC Chair for his able leadership and guidance at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session, which managed to reach important agreements and had made recommendations to the 63<sup>rd</sup> Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. The Delegation commended the Secretariat for its positive financial and programmatic performance towards achieving the expected results in the 2020/21 biennium as reflected in the WIPO Performance Report 2020/21 and as validated in the IOD Validation of the WIPO Performance Report 2020/21. The Delegation welcomed the agreements reached at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session on the funding of the PCT RSP Hybrid Phase Project and the Revision of the FRR and hoped that the Assemblies could approve those recommendations. The Delegation reiterated its commitment to support the work of the PBC. The Delegation looked forward to the continued discussions on the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices and the Methodology for Allocation of Income and Expenditure by Union at the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session and hoped for positive decisions on those matters.

161. The Delegation of Pakistan thanked the Secretariat, the IAOC, the External Auditor and the IOD. The COVID-19 pandemic had continued to cause socio-economic disruptions globally in 2021 as reflected in various reports presented to the Committee. It was heartening to note that WIPO had continued to display its financial and administrative resilience despite the COVID-19 pandemic fallout. As the global scientific and research community had continued to embark on new technological solutions to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic related challenges, the demand for fee-based services offered by WIPO had increased in 2021, which attested to the continued relevance and importance of WIPO *vis-à-vis* innovation. The Delegation continued to hold the view that IP should not be considered an end in itself. Innovation and growth of science and creativity drove IP filings globally. Therefore, innovation should be promoted in countries and regions of the world not only from a development angle, but also with a view to tap the IP filing potential in the developing world. The Delegation commended WIPO's leadership and the Secretariat for providing technical assistance activities tailored to the needs and priorities of Member States. The Delegation had engaged constructively on further developments concerning the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices. It was heartening to note that some tangible progress was made on that important matter. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for presenting the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices, which allowed substantial discussions at the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Session. The future of the WIPO External Office network, including its expansion, should remain subject to the outcome of the planned evaluation in line with the decision taken at the 61<sup>st</sup> Assemblies held in 2019. The

Delegation underlined the importance of conducting a serious review to determine the need for existing External Offices as well as the rationale of establishing new ones. Only an independent, transparent and external assessment would provide an objective and a political evaluation of the External Offices network. The Delegation looked forward to the continuation of an inclusive and transparent process to develop the Terms of Reference at the 35<sup>th</sup> PBC Session.

162. The Delegation of Saudi Arabia thanked the Secretariat for the document prepared under the agenda item. The Delegation was pleased with the efforts made by the Organization and with the positive financial outcome of the 2020/21 biennium. The Delegation hoped to reach an agreement on a method for the evaluation of External Offices on the basis of proposals made to that effect by Member States. The Delegation welcomed and was grateful for the efforts to revise the FRR and to ensure that IPSAS rules would be applied.

163. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea expressed its appreciation to the WIPO Secretariat for the hard work in preparing document A/63/7. Regarding the Annual Financial Statements 2021, the Delegation was very happy to announce that its annual contribution had increased in 2022. Further, since the establishment of the Republic of Korea's Funds-in-Trust (FIT) in 2004, which was the second largest amount of voluntary contributions among Member States, the Delegation noted that it had implemented various activities that supported technical assistance and capacity building in the field of IP. The Delegation would continue to strengthen its efforts in the development of the IP community and ecosystem through the continuous increase of its contributions. Regarding the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices, the Delegation believed that more active engagement by the WIPO Secretariat would be vital to move forward on that issue. In that context, the Delegation appreciated the efforts made by the WIPO Secretariat in their unsparing efforts to prepare that draft. The Delegation hoped that the evaluation for existing WIPO External Offices would be expedited so that the new External Offices would be established promptly in a country with a strong need for WIPO global IP services. The Delegation believed that would enhance WIPO's local customer service and lead to an increase in PCT and Madrid applications, which could also contribute to strengthening WIPO's financial soundness.

164. The Delegation of Nigeria supported the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for introducing Agenda Item 12 and thanked the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Chair and Vice-Chairs for guiding the PBC work and making tangible progress on converging views regarding the Preliminary Draft of the Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices. The Delegation reiterated its position that the ToR for the Evaluation of WIPO External Offices should be balanced, transparent, fair, and conducted in consultation with host countries. The Delegation expected that the evaluation should be conducted in due recognition of the unique characteristics of the External Offices, which were spread across different regions with distinct pace of development resources available at their disposal and their length of operation. The Delegation believed that it was important to give the existing External Offices a voice and opportunity to contribute and offer suggestions on how their functions and scope of activities could be improved and enhanced respectively. The Delegation believed the efficiency and effectiveness of the PBC would be positively impacted and would stimulate the coordination of activities of the Secretariat.

165. The Chair thanked the 34<sup>th</sup> PBC Chair and Vice-Chairs for their tremendous work and was impressed that despite the most complicated discussions on finance and other matters, it had been possible to reach agreement and present a List of Decisions Adopted by the PBC.

166. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, reiterated its concern about the delay in the adoption of WIPO's disability inclusion strategy in line with the UN

framework. The Group asked the Secretariat if it had an established timeline for the adoption of the strategy.

167. The Assistant Director General, Administration, Finance and Management Sector thanked the Delegation for the question and explained that the Secretariat had been prioritizing the implementation of the disability inclusion strategy. The Secretariat was in the final stages of preparing the strategy and would be happy to meet bilaterally to discuss the timetable and next steps.

168. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned,

(i) took note of the “List of Decisions Adopted by the Program and Budget Committee” (document A/63/7), and

(ii) approved the recommendations made by the Program and Budget Committee as contained in the same document.

#### ITEM 12 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### REPORTS ON STAFF MATTERS

169. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document WO/CC/81/4).

#### ITEM 13 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### AMENDMENTS TO STAFF REGULATIONS AND RULES

170. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document WO/CC/81/4).

#### ITEM 14 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### WIPO ARBITRATION AND MEDIATION CENTER, INCLUDING DOMAIN NAMES

171. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document WO/GA/55/12).

#### ITEM 15 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### MADRID SYSTEM

172. See the report of the session of the Madrid Union Assembly (document MM/A/56/2).

#### ITEM 16 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

##### HAGUE SYSTEM

173. See the report of the session of the Hague Union Assembly (document H/A/42/2).

## ITEM 17 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### LISBON SYSTEM

174. See the report of the session of the Lisbon Union Assembly (document LI/A/39/2).

## ITEM 18 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### BUDAPEST UNION ASSEMBLY

175. See the report of the session of the Budapest Union Assembly (document BP/A/39/2).

## ITEM 19 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE'S INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY SECTOR AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SYSTEM

176. Discussions were based on document A/63/8.

177. The Delegation of Ukraine, speaking on behalf of the 52 Member States that had submitted a proposal for Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System (document A/63/8), stated that the proposal sought to address the destruction of Ukraine's IP and creativity sector. The Delegation stated that the damage inflicted since the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, had been significant. For example, the number of national applications submitted for registration of IP had been reduced by approximately 50 per cent. There had been an almost total cancellation of regular cultural events and activities, in addition to TV, audiovisual, musical productions, and broadcasting, which had crucially reduced royalty-based collections for artists, producers, and beneficiaries. The Delegation noted that Ukraine's only gene bank, which stored more than 160,000 varieties of species and hybrids from around the world, had been destroyed. The Delegation shared that educational and scientific facilities were under continuous attack around the country and operations of most of the Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) had been suspended. Action was required because the effects of the invasion were wide-reaching and if left unaddressed and underestimated, more devastating effects on Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system were likely. The Delegation explained that the proposal recalled resolutions of the UNGA and called on the WIPO Secretariat to undertake research and further implement targeted technical assistance to key Ukrainian innovation and IP sectors, infrastructure, and capacity building on immediate and long-term perspectives. The Delegation invited Member States to take measures in accordance with their domestic and international laws and regulations to assist Ukrainian IP applicants, and by adopting the document in its entirety, WIPO would be supporting the efforts of the UNGA, including its resolution of March 2, 2022, as well as the capacity of available resources to oversee the initiative, which had been proposed in a clear and transparent manner. The Delegation believed that the financial regulations of WIPO provided appropriate oversight to give Member States confidence that the initiative would be undertaken with the financial prudence and transparency that they expected out of all WIPO programs. The Delegation acknowledged that Ukraine was not the only Member State in need of assistance, but that the proposal did not, in any way, affect ongoing WIPO technical assistance and capacity-building to others. The Delegation believed that the proposal was an urgent call under urgent circumstances, and that the scale of harm and destruction warranted the proposal. The Delegation added that Ukraine had added 51 other co-sponsors, and that it looked forward to the support by the broader membership of WIPO in full compliance with Article 3 of the WIPO

Convention to promote the protection of IP throughout the world through cooperation among States. Finally, the Delegation informed the Secretariat that Norway had joined the list of co-sponsors of the proposal.

178. The Delegation of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union, stated that the European Union and its member states fully supported the statement delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine on behalf of the 53 co-sponsors of the proposal on Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation stated that all Member States were aware of the context that had led to the high number of Member States submitting the proposal, and shared its deep appreciation for the vast majority of delegations that had demonstrated their wish to allow the Consolidated Agenda, together with the proposal, to proceed. The Delegation stated that the unjustified and illegal war against Ukraine had been condemned on countless occasions including through the resolution of the UNGA of March 2, 2022, which was supported by more than 140 delegations. The Delegation noted that, regrettably, despite calls for the Russian Federation to cease the use of force against the sovereign country, the war in Ukraine had continued for almost five months. The Delegation stated that the unbearable damage caused to the Ukrainian peoples' economy and infrastructure could no longer be disregarded by anyone. The Delegation called for reflection by the top governing body of WIPO, just as many UN agencies had done, to determine how the early recovery of Ukraine could be supported. The Delegation stated that while the broader context was political, the specific problems addressed were technical. In the Intellectual Property System, which was heavily damaged by the war, WIPO was best placed to address the IP-specific implications of war, and assess and provide the necessary assistance for the restoration and rebuilding of Ukraine's creative industry and IP system. The Delegation stated that the request was urgent and justified, which was technical in nature and tailored to the specific mandate of WIPO. The proposal was an honest and constructive attempt to help Ukraine in the current difficult times. The Delegation shared that the proponents of the proposal had duly respected the procedural requirements before its submission and that the standpoints of different Member States from various regions and perspectives had been reflected in the final language, in order to address sensitivities and make it broadly acceptable to the WIPO membership. The Delegation shared that they foresaw a smooth adoption of the proposal by the Assemblies and that it would continue to stand in solidarity with Ukraine, which was a candidate country for membership in the European Union. The Delegation wished to reassure all delegations that it would remain open to consider the eventual request for WIPO assistance to any other Member State in urgent need, which any delegation remained free to submit, and could then be discussed in its own right.

179. The Delegation of the United States of America stated its support for the intervention delivered by Ukraine. The Delegation added that the time to assist Ukraine with rebuilding its innovation and creativity sector and intellectual property system was now, and that the United States was ready to adopt the decision proposed and encouraged all Member States to support its adoption.

180. The Delegation of Slovakia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. Speaking in its national capacity, the Delegation declared Slovakia's full support for the statements made by Ukraine on behalf of the 53 sponsors of the proposal submitted under Agenda Item 19 on Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation stated that Ukraine was a functioning economy with a vibrant IP system and that the unprovoked aggression against Ukraine significantly damaged its economy and IP infrastructure. The Delegation shared that the time for WIPO to act was at the current moment, and that WIPO was the only international, technical organization that could address the negative IP implications, and provide Ukraine with the necessary technical assistance. The issue required urgent action and could not be left alone, and the Delegation believed that the decision fell within WIPO's mandate. Additionally, as WIPO was a member of the UN family, the Delegation stated that WIPO might want to take into consideration

the outcomes of the UNGA, including the resolution of March 2, 2022, to reflect the efforts of other UN agencies. The Delegation believed that attempts to help Ukraine by providing technical assistance and capacity building in order to restore and rebuild Ukraine's creative industry and IP system were more than timely. It was of the view that the Member States needed to act to prevent an even more devastating impact on Ukraine's economy and stated that Slovakia was looking forward to the adoption of the proposal.

181. The Delegation of Poland aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine on behalf of the 53 co-sponsors of the proposal on Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System and expressed its support for the statement delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states. The Delegation condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the unprovoked attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbor country, Ukraine, which constituted a gross violation of the UN Charter and international law as broadly recognized by the UNGA Resolution of March 2, 2022. Poland stood with the Ukrainian people and with colleagues from the Ukrainian Intellectual Property Institute (Ukrpatent) and supported them in their fight for a peaceful life. The Delegation called upon the Russian Federation to immediately stop the war in Ukraine and to withdraw its forces from the territory of Ukraine. The war was not only a tragedy, from a humanitarian point of view, but also because of the impact on IP. Important institutions symbolizing creativity or promoting innovation including museums, libraries, theatres, schools, universities, as well as SMEs and start-ups had been destroyed. All of these places relied on IP – be it copyrights, trademarks, or patents – to protect their work while promoting innovation and creativity. The Delegation added that it was vital to support Ukraine's IP system and to start thinking about the post-war recovery plan. In that spirit, its Delegation joined other countries in highlighting the need for technical assistance and capacity building for the restoration of Ukraine's IP infrastructure and innovation ecosystem. The Delegation pointed out that the proposal was presented well in advance of the day's deliberations so that all the delegations could have enough time to scrutinize and consult the text. The outcome of the consultations was duly reflected in the final language in order to address any possible sensitivities and to make it broadly acceptable to the WIPO membership at large. The Delegation hoped that the proposal would be adopted by the Assemblies that day, taking into account the urgency of the matter and the extraordinary situation.

182. The Delegation of Japan said that the Government of Japan wished to show solidarity with Ukraine and stated that the Russian Federation's recent invasion of Ukraine was an attempt to change unilaterally the *status-quo* by force and had consequences for IP. The invasion had seriously affected Ukraine's capacity to create IP by negatively affecting its relevant infrastructure, innovation, and creativity sectors. In addition, the invasion had prevented Ukrainian colleagues from fully participating in several WIPO meetings. The Delegation stated that Japan stood with the people of Ukraine and believed that the proposal proved that WIPO was capable of taking action to assist Ukraine.

183. The Delegation of Lithuania endorsed the arguments supporting Agenda Item 19 delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine on behalf of 53 WIPO Member States, and aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member states. The Delegation stated that the decision on Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System was of extreme importance as the ongoing war destroyed cultural heritage, IP infrastructures and the overall innovation eco-system. As the inclusion of item 19 on the agenda had gained significant support of a majority of delegations, the Delegation believed in a joint commitment of Member States to address IP relevant implications of the war in Ukraine while the nation defended itself.

184. The Delegation of Georgia, speaking in its national capacity, aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine. The Delegation stated its great concern over the ongoing situation in Ukraine and the resulting loss of human life, and the impact on the IP

system of Ukraine as well as its educational, cultural institutions, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and start-ups. It stressed the importance of rebuilding the innovation and creativity sector of Ukraine, including the protection of IP, copyrights, trademarks, and patents, which could not be achieved without the immediate halt of military aggression. The Delegation reiterated Georgia's unwavering support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

185. The Delegation of Canada said that it was pleased to co-sponsor the proposed decision in document A/63/8 and fully aligned itself with the statement made by Ukraine. The Delegation welcomed the proposal, which served an urgent need at an urgent time and would additionally align WIPO's actions with UN agencies around the world. The Delegation was pleased that WIPO had the mandate, governance structure, infrastructure, and capacity to oversee the initiative in a clear and transparent manner. Canada looked forward to working with Member States towards achieving the objectives outlined in the proposed decision.

186. The Delegation of the Russian Federation recalled that the introduction of Agenda Item 19 did not receive universal support and that over half of the Member States were not in favor of discussing the agenda item. The Delegation drew attention to the procedural aspects of the text, stating that the proposal was presented on July 11, 2022, which, in its opinion, did not allow delegations the time to carefully study and develop the proposals at a national level. Additionally, the Delegation stated that the form of the document indicated that the proposal was a political declaration, which contained assessments and comments that went beyond the framework of WIPO. It observed that the practice of WIPO did not include the adoption of this kind of document as a matter of principle. The Delegation stated that it was in favor of the strict observance of WIPO's mandate as an independent agency of the UN system, and in the work of the governing bodies and the Organization as a whole. The Delegation was forced to note that the proposal, under the guise of technical assistance, looked at a number of issues that went beyond the terms of reference of WIPO concerning, in particular, the topic of the sovereignty of States and internationally recognized borders, among other things. It believed that the initiative was not worked through properly in terms of substantive content and financial implications. The draft had not been submitted to the relevant bodies of WIPO for consideration for which the initiators of the proposal had time to do. Many other Member States, as demonstrated by the discussion on the first day of the Assemblies, had a clear lack of understanding of the implementation and justification of the discussion of the topic at the Assemblies. Its Delegation was not surprised by the subjective approaches used when the consultations were held, and believed that the consultations should have been comprehensive in nature and their results should have been communicated upfront. The Delegation stated that it was not clear why the Assemblies were asked to focus their efforts on one specific country at a time when the pandemic and economic upheaval were having an impact on many countries that required assistance from the Organization. This was demonstrated by the discussions in the past year during the PBC when COVID-19's impact on the work of the PBC for the next biennium were discussed. The Delegation stated that while some delegations referred to the urgent nature of the need to take measures, Member States could not forget that the established formats for technical assistance of WIPO did not envision any urgent nature as they had to go through a number of procedural steps, which included national legislation to bring it in line with procedure. The Delegation recalled that the task ahead was important which was, namely, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the pandemic had caused little progress in their attainment. All the resources of WIPO must be used to address the tasks that faced the Member States within WIPO's mandate and in accordance with the established rules of its work to provide technical assistance. The Delegation felt that following the outcome of the discussion, Member States needed to listen to countries who spoke in favor of the need for WIPO to provide technical assistance – first and foremost to the least developed countries (LDCs) and developing countries, but also to States that had faced other crisis situations, such as natural disasters and consequences of climate change. The Delegation was of the view that it was critically important to support those who suggested expanding the list of beneficiaries of



technical assistance in connection with the comments that the Delegation had proposed. Additionally, it pointed out that there was not yet a proposed text of the draft decision on the agenda item.

187. The Delegation of the United Kingdom echoed the comments made by the Delegation of the United States of America, and thanked the Chair for her handling of the issue, including the procedural issues mentioned by the Delegation of the Russian Federation during the first day's session. The Delegation called on fellow Member States to commit to supporting IP and innovation systems in vulnerable countries and to deliver on that commitment through agreeing to the proposal at hand, which was focused on targeted, technical assistance that was urgently needed by the innovation and creative sectors in Ukraine. The Delegation of the United Kingdom expressed its full support for the statement delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine on behalf of the 53 co-sponsors, on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System, as contained in document A/63/8. The intent of this proposal was to respond to an unfolding disaster and ensure that Ukraine's innovation community receives the support that it so urgently needed as soon as possible. The Delegation stated that the proposal was specific to the needs of Ukraine, at a critical time. The Delegation recalled that WIPO was mandated to enable innovation and creativity for the benefit of all, including by supporting the effective protection of IP around the world. WIPO existed to develop a balanced and accessible international intellectual property system, which rewarded creativity, stimulated innovation and contributed to economic development. The Delegation noted that the invasion of Ukraine was having a profound impact on the ability of Ukrainian citizens and businesses to benefit from the global IP system. Attacks on the systems and infrastructure, which enabled creativity and economic development, were incompatible with the spirit of WIPO. It observed that before the invasion, Ukraine was a regional Science and Technology powerhouse. The technology sector accounted for 4 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Ukraine was home to around 5,000 information technology (IT) companies and 285,000 IT specialists. Science and Technology had already played a role in boosting Ukraine's defensive effort from international crypto donations, to companies like Uber and AirBnB using their platforms to help those forced to flee violence. The sector would also be vital to Ukraine's long-term resilience and recovery and would be a platform on which, Ukraine can rebound - providing jobs, attracting investment and developing next-generation technology. The Delegation recognized the importance of the science and technology sector, supported by the international IP ecosystem, and the role WIPO and individual Member States could play. Since March, for Ukrainian customers and rights holders, the UK IP Office had used the maximum flexibility available in law to consider requests for extensions of time, reinstatements and restorations. The United Kingdom had also recognized that communications were difficult, and in some cases impossible, at present in Ukraine. The United Kingdom continued to send all of its communications electronically when possible, and for customers where they only held a postal address they were arranging an alternative method of communication when those customers would be able and ready to contact them. The Government of the United Kingdom had also announced a further package of measures in late June. For example, more than 130 Ukrainian academics were supported under the 'Researchers at Risk' program, which was launched in March. A total of GBP 12.8 million would allow the program to expand significantly to meet demand. The Researchers at Risk scheme enabled Ukrainian academics to continue their research, helping Ukraine to preserve its research and innovation ecosystem. Its Delegation believed that this would enable the country to rebuild and prosper. The Delegation further stated that its Government also provided funding to support Ukrainian academic institutions. The project aimed to establish more than 100 long-term, sustainable partnerships to support Ukrainian institutions, students and researchers during the current conflict and beyond and 79 UK universities had already signed up to the scheme. The United Kingdom Government's support for the 'Re.Build' conference, organized by the Founders Forum, was enabling the UK's most innovative tech companies to contribute to Ukraine's recovery in the most effective way. While the United Kingdom had made these and other efforts on a bilateral basis, it also believed that in the multilateral space, there were positive actions that WIPO could

undertake to support the innovation landscape in Ukraine. Examples of such actions were clearly set out in the statement by the Delegation of Ukraine and in the proposal in document A/63/8, which it supported and co-sponsored. The Delegation recalled that the UNGA Resolution of March 2, 2022, urged the immediate peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine and called on Member States and international organizations to play their part. Accordingly, a majority of international organizations, including specialized agencies, convened discussions on the impacts of the war, and taken decisions in support of the de-escalation of the conflict and rebuilding of key sectors of Ukraine's economy. It therefore encouraged WIPO to also make its unique contribution to this global effort. The Delegation regretted that procedural attempts, including calling a vote, were deployed earlier in the session to prevent a discussion on the matter, and its Delegation welcomed that these attempts had been overcome. It called on all Member States to commit to supporting IP and innovation systems in vulnerable countries and deliver that commitment through agreeing to the proposal in document A/63/8 focusing on targeted technical assistance that was urgently needed in, and required by, Ukraine.

188. The Delegation of Monaco expressed its full support for the statement delivered by Ukraine on behalf of the co-sponsors of document A/63/8 and stated that Member States were facing an exceptional situation and a conflict that had destroyed most of the essential infrastructure of Ukraine, including the innovation and creativity sector, among others. The Delegation stated that at WIPO, they were responding to the March 2, 2022, UNGA request and believed that it was important to act and that it was fully within the Organization's remit. The Delegation hoped the decision would be adopted and did not believe that it would cause any harm to WIPO's technical assistance program, including post COVID-19 activities and requests that might be received from other States facing equally dramatic and exceptional circumstances.

189. The Delegation of France aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegations of Ukraine and the Czech Republic, and supported the comments from the Delegations of the United Kingdom and Monaco. The Delegation stated that Member States were facing an ongoing invasion and that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation had said that day that its military objectives in Ukraine would no longer be restricted to the east of the country but to a series of other parts of the country, so it was not just talking about the People's Republic of Donetsk and Luhansk, but other areas of the country, which was an ongoing and determined process. The Delegation stated that WIPO was not in isolation from the rest of the international system, and as one of the UN agencies, like so many other UN agencies, it was expected to follow the UNGA resolutions when they applied to all international organizations – which were requested to try to deal with the consequences of this damaging invasion. The Delegation stated that the internationally recognized borders and sovereignty of Ukraine had been violated by the Russian Federation and that it was important for the protection of the IP system to take that into account. It stated that apart from all the damage that was being inflicted on Ukraine, the co-sponsors had fully respected the procedures of WIPO for submitting draft proposals, and that the proposal was submitted within the timeframe established. Therefore, the Russian Federation's procedural arguments did not seem credible as the co-sponsors had a fully appropriate decision that would not prevent other countries that might also require WIPO's assistance from requesting it and adapting WIPO's policies to the required situation.

190. The Delegation of Nicaragua believed that any assistance provided by WIPO should not be politically motivated and should be in the normal cooperation between States. It stated that the global health crisis and climate crisis were currently being faced by and were affecting certain countries and therefore, many countries needed legal, financial, and technical assistance to develop their IP systems. The Delegation believed that technical assistance should be requested by countries that required it and it underscored that this body should promote a genuine spirit of cooperation in order to protect creativity and invention all over the world on a level playing field.

191. The Delegation of Belarus stated that it was against the artificial politicization in bad faith of the work of WIPO. The Delegation stated the Assemblies must remain equal and take into account all of the needs of Member States of the Organization, otherwise, it believed, WIPO could turn into a politicized platform. The Delegation reiterated that in addition to Ukraine, there were many countries affected by humanitarian disasters, war, conflicts, and economic crises, which also required support. It believed that the proposal created unequal conditions and discriminated among States that required assistance and gave preference to one country. The proposal was an abuse of the international platform of WIPO and it needed to be fine-tuned and re-worked entirely – especially regarding the removal of the political declarations. The Delegation believed that the text needed to take into account the needs of other Member States and interested countries that required assistance, and it was convinced that there was no need to take such an artificial decision to provide support to Ukraine. The Delegation had no basis to believe that WIPO would not provide Ukraine or any other State assistance if there was a request to do so and called upon Member States not to get stuck in a stalemate and to refrain from extreme measures. The Delegation noted that, in view of the previous interventions, it would be sufficient and reasonable for the decision of the Assemblies to be “to implement technical assistance, legal assistance, capacity building and other assistance for Ukraine and other Member States as appropriate and as required”.

192. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea stated that as a co-sponsor, it supported the adoption of the proposal contained in document A/63/8 co-sponsored by 53 Member States. The Delegation stated that innovation was the driving force for economic crisis recovery and that IP was a motivator for innovation, and was increasingly important. The Delegation emphasized the need to enable innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. The Delegation recalled that in the general statements on the first two days of the Assemblies, a number of Member States had recognized the necessity of technical assistance of WIPO in favor of a Member State in need in general and, Ukraine in particular. In this context, and given the urgency of the matter, the Delegation stated that the proposed WIPO technical assistance to Ukraine was fully in line with WIPO’s mandate, as stipulated in the WIPO Convention, and would meet the needs of Member States in dire need – maintaining the relevance of WIPO. The Delegation reiterated that the decision was of great urgency and necessity considering the current situation in Ukraine and reiterated its support for the adoption of the proposed decision and looked forward to other Member States doing the same.

193. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) expressed support for assistance and support of innovation and creativity sectors and IP systems in all WIPO Member States, particularly in those IP systems facing conflict, emerging economies or other crises of various kinds including those suffered by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) due to unilateral coercive measures. The Delegation noted that the UN System had made resolutions on that as well. It stated that the proposal was received two days prior to the opening of the Assemblies and, in its view, was an attempt to politicize the work of WIPO and went beyond the technical remit of WIPO. The Delegation said that it was not sure whether any consultations were carried out to ensure that the text was balanced or inclusive.

194. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) stated that it was encouraged and moved to see that delegations were thinking of ways and methods to instruct WIPO to provide help and assistance to countries’ innovation and creative sectors that had suffered from extraordinary situations like war, natural disasters, pandemics, and unilateral coercive measures. The Delegation observed that this was a good start and it supported such initiatives, but it was against the politicization of specialized UN agencies. Member States should build upon the proposal and discuss it to transform it into a comprehensive and constructive document to benefit all countries in need. The Delegation did not believe that there was the time to do so at the current moment, and noted that all it had received was a short document in a short period of time; its Delegation therefore could not support the proposal contained in the document at the present time. The Delegation believed in working together to expand the content of the

document to provide assistance and help to the creativity and innovation sector of all countries who were suffering from extraordinary situations, in which it wanted to include a clear reference to unilateral coercive measures that had hindered the innovation of certain Member States including Iran (Islamic Republic of).

195. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that its Delegation had always shown its interest in promoting IP for development – especially in developing countries and LDCs. The Delegation stated that the pandemic's consequences, which had hindered development, and unilateral coercive measures, which had impacted millions of people, had not allowed for any promotion of economic activity. The Delegation called for balanced and comprehensive help for those countries that had been affected by the unilateral measures by providing them with expertise, and helping them in capacity building and developing of their IP systems. Assistance should not be limited to one country, because doing so was contrary to the practices that WIPO was accustomed to and would lead to unacceptable politicization of the Organization.

196. The Delegation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) believed that the nature of the meeting and WIPO was technical, and it disagreed with any attempt to politicize the issues being discussed in the Assemblies, which had led to unnecessary confrontation. The Delegation agreed with the delegations that said that technical assistance should be provided to all Member States according to the procedures established in the Organization, and noted that many countries were facing situations of war, conflict, and crisis linked to the pandemic, climate change, and others. It noted that those issues had never been mentioned before, specifically in WIPO, and added that there is a need to consolidate a balanced intellectual property system for the inclusive and constructive development of all nations.

197. The Delegation of New Zealand aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Ukraine, stating that the Russian Federation's unprovoked attack on Ukraine had negatively impacted the innovation, creativity, and cultural environment in Ukraine and that its actions had undermined the principles that brought the Assemblies together. New Zealand stood with the international community in condemning the war against Ukraine, which had already had very real implications for global peace, security, and economic stability. There had been credible reports of targeted Russian bombardment of Ukrainian cultural infrastructure as well as reports of the suppression of Ukrainian cultural identity in areas of Ukraine occupied by Russian military. In that context, and as co-sponsor of the proposal, the Delegation called on the other Member States to join it in supporting the request to support Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and the IP system.

198. The Delegation of Zimbabwe thanked the proponents of the proposal at a critical moment of global setbacks in health, climate change, military tensions, food shortages, and other challenges that had disproportionately and negatively impacted developing countries. The Delegation said that, as it had stated under Agenda Item 2, it was of the view that any special technical assistance for countries in emergency situations should be considered for all countries that were in dire need of such technical assistance to create resilience in IP systems. It pointed out that for over two decades, Zimbabwe had suffered inordinate economic, social and humanitarian ordeals as a result of unilateral coercive measures caused by some proponents of the proposal. The Delegation stated that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures were a flagrant violation of human rights according to Human Rights Council Resolution 27/21. It explained that according to the resolution, unilateral coercive measures were contrary to international law and international humanitarian law, the UN Charter, and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations amongst States and it highlighted that in the long-term, these measures resulted in socio-economic problems and raised humanitarian challenges in targeted States. The Delegation expressed its view that the illegal economic sanctions must be lifted as they undermine the IP ecosystem of Zimbabwe. It was important to respect the efforts, purpose, and objectives of WIPO, and to avoid any attempts to politicize issues within this technical Organization. The Delegation urged constructive discussion on creating harmonious,

depoliticized, non-discriminatory interventions for countries in dire need of IP resilience, mechanisms and interventions.

199. The Delegation of China noted that some delegations had mentioned that it was desirable to expand the list of beneficiaries so that more developing countries, especially LDCs, would benefit, and added that resolving the concerns of countries suffering from unilateral sanctions measures and other problems was of great significance. It stated that these questions deserved Member States' in-depth reflection and hoped that all parties would demonstrate the most sincerity and good faith, avoid politicization, and work hard to bridge divisions and reach consensus. The Delegation emphasized that Member States should do their utmost to deal with this question on the basis of consensus.

200. The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said that the proposal submitted by Ukraine and its co-sponsors under Agenda Item 19 was seeking biased and unilateral treatment while constituting double standards. The Delegation stated that WIPO should support all Member States in crisis rather than just one country to ensure the proposal was reasonable and unbiased.

201. The Delegation of Estonia aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. The Delegation stated that the proposal had been presented well in advance of the deliberations and the proponents had duly respected all procedural requirements and enough time had been allowed for each delegation to read it in full. The Delegation found it very important for WIPO, as an international organization, to support all its members with solidarity such as by providing the urgently needed assistance to Ukraine. The Delegation believed in and supported Agenda Item 19's adoption in its entirety, and looked forward to a constructive approach by Member States.

202. The Delegation of Switzerland stated that, together with 52 Member States, it had decided to co-sponsor the decision proposed to the Assemblies to provide technical assistance and support to the creative sector and IP system of Ukraine. The support was vital in order to address the damage caused to the innovation and creative sector of Ukraine, in particular universities and research institutions, cultural institutions, and both public bodies in charge of protecting and ensuring compliance with IP. The Delegation noted that technical assistance was required not only in keeping with WIPO's mandate, but it was also vital because it sought to promote the protection of IP throughout the world. The Delegation stated that as Switzerland was the host country of WIPO, it attached great importance to multilateral collaboration and added that assistance was needed in the current time, and was supported by many countries, which demonstrated the essentialness of multilateral collaboration and solidarity.

Consequently, Switzerland supported the decision proposed, and was ready to work with other Member States and the Secretariat to allow for adoption of the document. Following the comments made by the Russian Delegation, its Delegation desired to focus on the fact that the nature of the proposal was in no way political, but technical. The proposal asked the Secretariat to provide technical assistance to assess the damage caused to the creativity and innovation sector and the IP ecosystem, which was related to the technical management of WIPO. The Delegation explained that the proposal was not asking to reduce financial means already available to provide technical assistance to the LDCs or developing countries and countries in transition. Recalling Switzerland's support for projects within the CDIP, the Delegation emphasized its bilateral engagements in technical cooperation projects in the field of IP with developing countries and countries in transition in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and in Southern Europe. With the proposal to support Ukraine, the Delegation stated that it was adding another partner to the long list of operations. Every cooperation project must address the challenges facing a country, and it was therefore important to bear in mind that challenges differed from one country to the next, thus requiring a nuanced approach. The Delegation stated that Switzerland remained ready to discuss, at a bilateral or multilateral level, opportunities with any interested stakeholder to explore cooperation.

203. The Delegation of Sweden expressed its full support for the statements delivered by the Delegations of Ukraine, and by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states. The Delegation stated that the war in Ukraine had destroyed most of the creative sectors in the country and added that its Delegation was responding to the call of the UN and of Ukraine. It noted that delivering targeted and technical assistance was fully within the mandate of WIPO. In the Delegation's opinion the decision would make WIPO more relevant, not less, for countries in urgent need, and that Ukraine was in urgent need of assistance for its creative sectors and IP structures. The Delegation declared its aim for a responsive and quick reaction to the urgent situation and hoped for prompt adoption of this important decision.

204. The Delegation of Australia stated that as a co-sponsor, it supported the adoption of the proposal, which would provide urgent technical and financial assistance to support Ukraine's IP system. The Delegation urged all members to adopt the resolution as submitted given the significant damage inflicted to Ukraine's innovation, creativity, and IP sector directly caused by the unprovoked, unjust, and illegal invasion of Ukraine.

205. The Delegation of Latvia expressed its support for the statement delivered by Ukraine and the European Union, on the proposal for assistance and support for Ukraine's innovative and creative sector and IP system. The Delegation stated that it was very clear that the Russian Federation was waging an unjustified and illegal war against Ukraine, which had resulted in unimaginable destruction and had a negative impact on the whole of Europe and potentially the world, adding that many IP offices could see the impact in their daily work. The Delegation stated that as the war was heavily influencing the IP systems in Ukraine, it was its strong belief that concrete technical actions had to be taken by the top governing bodies of WIPO. The Delegation urged Member States not to hide behind the idea that the proposal was purely political, but to note that it addressed consequences of the war, and therefore the response the proposal was expecting of WIPO was technical. The Delegation stated that the proposal had been presented well in advance of the deliberations and delegations had enough time to scrutinize it. Additionally, the Delegation said that all the procedural requirements were followed and asked all delegations to support the proposal.

206. The Delegation of Albania expressed its support for the statements made by the Delegation of Ukraine and the co-sponsors of the proposal. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine had caused the destruction of institutional capacities and infrastructure in the country and had largely affected the IP sector and the access to knowledge, research and development as a country. The Delegation stated that WIPO, as a technical multilateral organization, was best placed to provide the timely technical assistance that was urgently needed. The Delegation declared Albania's support for the proposal tabled according to the procedure, as well as its conviction that the approval of the text was of utmost importance - not only to assist the Ukrainian IP sector but as a strong signal of WIPO's relevance and responsibility.

207. The Delegation of Cuba stated its commitment to WIPO's work and noted that WIPO was a technical agency. The Delegation said that it defended the right to fulfill countries' requests for technical assistance in a balanced and inclusive way. Technical assistance was needed for all countries suffering from challenging situations restricting development, including Cuba, which had been suffering from the impact of unilateral coercive measures for over 60 years. The Delegation stated that it could not agree with the politicization of the work of the Assemblies which, it believed, was the current case, as the proposal had been introduced just two days before the beginning of the Assemblies. The Delegation reiterated the need to respect the principles of consensus-based decision-making, which in its view, was not being attempted to be achieved in this case.

208. The Delegation of Israel expressed its support for the proposal introduced by Ukraine, noting that the severe damage to the infrastructure in Ukraine would take many years to repair. The Delegation observed that universities, schools, and hospitals needed to be rebuilt, and livelihoods and Ukraine's innovation and creativity sectors needed to be restored. In its view, it was WIPO's role, along with Member States, to ensure that resources were made available and assessments were made to determine Ukraine's needs in the IP field. Stating that it was imperative for Ukraine's economy that Member States support the country's creativity and innovation infrastructure, the Delegation reiterated Israel's support for the technical resolution, and called on other Member States to do the same.

209. The Delegation of Ecuador expressed its support for the proposal for assistance and support for Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system.

210. The Delegation of Algeria speaking in its national capacity, stated that it strongly believed in multilateralism which, in its view, was an opportunity for people and nations. The Delegation also believed that the law should apply everywhere, for everyone, and that there should be no selectivity for reasons linked to geography, race, color, or other grounds. Noting that there were many needs for technical assistance in many different situations around the world relating to crises or conflicts, the Delegation called upon WIPO to step up its technical assistance to all States in line with its conviction that the mandate should apply to everyone.

211. The Delegation of Iceland expressed its support for the statement delivered by the Delegation of Ukraine and those who had taken the floor in its support. The Delegation stated that the proposal entailed the provision of urgent support and assistance to Ukraine's innovation and IP system as a whole, and was in line with actions taken in recent months by other international organizations and Geneva-based specialized agencies. The proposal did not prevent the support to other Member States in need but it was put forth under exceptional circumstances that required urgent attention.

212. The Delegation of Ukraine thanked Member States for their support of the draft decision and the needs of Ukraine. Emphasizing that the proposal was an urgent call under urgent and dramatic circumstances, the Delegation proposed the adoption of the draft decision in its entirety and urged the Assemblies to do so.

213. The Delegation of the Russian Federation underscored that the discussion had demonstrated that many countries felt it was vital to abide by the principle of inclusivity and not give preferential treatment to just one specific country. Based on the comments made by over a dozen countries, the Delegation suggested to work on a textual proposal that removed the politically motivated provisions. The Delegation pointed out that the delegations that had spoken referred to the technical mandate of WIPO, to which Member States needed to adhere. The Delegation deemed it important to focus efforts on technical assistance, legal assistance, capacity building, and other forms of assistance, to those countries facing crisis-situations and requiring WIPO's support. The Delegation, noting that the co-sponsors had talked about providing technical assistance to all countries in need, was of the view that the list of crisis-situations was important. Many delegations had responded and mentioned illegitimate unilateral measures and along with several delegations, this Delegation had therefore worked on a textual proposal, and asked that it be displayed on the screen for consideration by the WIPO Assemblies.

214. The Chair said that in her understanding, the proposal of the Russian Federation was a motion to amend the proposed draft text. Noting that the initial proposal was available for consideration in all six languages she requested those delegations that needed the text in a language other than English to request that from the Secretariat. The Chair then asked the Delegation of the Russian Federation to clarify if it was making a motion to amend the initial proposal.

215. The Delegation of the Russian Federation affirmed that the Chair's understanding was correct and that it was putting forward a request for the interested countries to discuss the proposals by consultation, as was standard practice in WIPO, in order to achieve consensus. The Delegation stated it had removed all provisions that were of a political nature, and had focused exclusively on the substantive matter of the document with regard to technical assistance, and an expanded scope of beneficiaries. It said that it had included countries that required support, based upon their request, and that priority would be given to LDCs and developing countries, including Ukraine. The Delegation felt that the list of situations requiring a swift response could be expanded upon the request of that States that suggested looking at other criteria.

216. The Delegation of the United Kingdom stated that from a cursory reading and looking at a mass of red-lined text, what the Delegation of the Russian Federation was proposing was not an amendment, in any genuine sense of the word, but rather a new proposal. The Delegation stated the text proposed would leave the text completely unrelated to the agenda item, which was all about Ukraine and which was the agenda item that had been agreed upon. It stated if the Delegation of the Russian Federation wanted to put forth a new proposal under a wholly new agenda item, it would be free to do so but at present, there was an agenda item and a proposed text, and the Delegation asked Member States to move to adopt it.

217. The Delegation of Monaco noted that what it could see on the screen, without even seeing the translated version, was a totally new proposal on a totally different subject than that which was covered by the agenda item. It stated that if the Delegation of the Russian Federation wished to hold consultations on the new text then it would have to add a new agenda item in order to discuss technical assistance following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Delegation was of the view that the amendments were not relevant to the agenda item under discussion.

218. The Delegation of the United States of America stated that it opposed the proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, which went far beyond simply amending the text but took the entire proposal out of context and fundamentally changed its purpose. The Delegation said that technical assistance to other Member States should be introduced in a subsequent meeting as a different agenda item. It recalled that paragraph 15 of UNGA Resolution A/Res/ES-11/1, passed on March 2, 2022, with 141 Member States voting in favor, welcomed and urged the continued efforts by the Secretary-General, Member States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international and regional organizations to support the de-escalation of the current situation, as well as the efforts of the UN, including of the UN Crisis Coordinator for Ukraine, to respond to the humanitarian and refugee crisis that the aggression by the Russian Federation had created. The Delegation pointed out that the proposal circulated under document A/63/8, was drafted in response to the call for action in the UNGA Resolution, and specifically addressed the urgent need for the Assemblies to address the impact of the Russian aggression in Ukraine and its effect on Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system. The Delegation noted that the entire proposal constituted the decision, as the preambular language provided critical context for the operative paragraphs by explaining the urgency and necessity. In its view, the text proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation was neither constructive nor made in good faith, but simply a tactic to delay consideration of the proposal contained in document A/63/8, and to further bog down the Assemblies. It was a blatant attempt to remove any association of the Russian Federation's aggression with the need for this proposal, and to hinder the urgent delivery of needed assistance to Ukraine's creativity and innovation sector affected by the aggression. For these reasons, the Delegation declared that it did not support the proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, and saw no reason to further delay adoption of the initial proposal. The Delegation said that the time was limited and there were many other agenda items to cover before the end of the week. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, in making its proposal, was not only holding up this agenda item but also others that were still open and required



decisions. The Delegation encouraged moving forward with the item in order to address other matters on the Assemblies' agenda.

219. The Delegation of Denmark stated that it rejected entirely the suggested amendments, as they were clearly a new text. It wished to stress that not one among the co-sponsors had said that they would not want to discuss the broader issue brought up by the Delegation of the Russian Federation and other delegations, but that it was a separate issue. The Delegation requested that the proposal should not be hijacked by other issues, and suggested that a proposal or other text from the Delegation of the Russian Federation or any others could be looked at another time.

220. The Delegation of Austria said that as all the other delegations that had spoken before it, it was opposed to the amendments presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Delegation was of the view that the agenda item clearly stated that the item under discussion was on the assistance and support for Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector, IP system, and the text proposed by the Russian Delegation constituted an entirely new proposal, as pointed out by other delegations. The Delegation was further of the view, that there was plenty of practice of international organizations regarding what was considered a proposal or an amendment, and that this constitutes part of customary international law, which needed to be taken into account in the interpretation of the amendment with the rules of procedure of this body. The Delegation therefore reaffirmed its opposition to the amendment. It noted that it had seen on the field that the Russian Federation did not consider itself obliged to comply with the principles, purpose and objectives enshrined in the UN charter and that the population of Ukraine was thus suffering every day. The Delegation remarked that the proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation to even strike out that very line from that draft resolution showed how far this discussion had come. The Delegation stated that the discussion was unprecedented to it, and probably to many other experienced diplomats in the room as well.

221. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) thanked the Delegation of the Russian Federation for trying to respond to the concerns expressed by delegations, including its Delegation. The Delegation stated that in its understanding the discussion that had taken place on the first day of the Assemblies, when Member States discussed the inclusion of Agenda Item 19 on the Draft Consolidated Agenda, underscored that the initial proposal was political. According to the Delegation's understanding, the Delegation of the Russian Federation had attempted to take out all political text and leave the technical substance of the text. The Delegation said that the proposal explicitly referred to Ukraine, which was in the title of the text, and that it would be wise to listen to the request for consultations, in which it would be interested in participating.

222. The Delegation of Japan echoed the statements by the Delegations of the United Kingdom, Monaco, and the United States of America and stated that the amendment presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation was a new proposal, beyond the scope of the agenda item that was adopted last week, and was thus irrelevant.

223. The Delegation of Nicaragua stated its agreement with the Delegation of the Russian Federation's proposal, which it believed avoided the politicization of document A/63/8, that the Delegation believed was made in bad faith and went beyond the mandate of WIPO. The Delegation stated that technical assistance provided by WIPO should be inclusive for all Member States facing emergencies, and added that it would be open to informal consultations to discuss the amendments to the text that were proposed.

224. The Chair stated that a number of delegations had stated their willingness to engage in a broader topic but that there was clear opposition to the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Chair then asked the delegations whether they were

requesting to proceed with a vote on the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

225. The Delegation of Monaco requested a clarification from the Deputy Legal Counsel as the agenda item at hand was very specific and the proposal received from the Delegation of the Russian Federation did not correspond to the agenda item. In the Delegation's view, there was no point in discussing the amendments, if the Delegation of the Russian Federation wished to propose the addition of an agenda item on technical assistance in a broader sense following the COVID-19 pandemic, that could be discussed at another time. The Delegation was not of the view that the amendment should be considered, and that consideration should be turned directly to the text that had already been proposed by the co-sponsors.

226. The Chair asked the Deputy Legal Counsel to respond to the question posed by the Delegation of Monaco and added that she had heard very clear opposition to the amendments proposed by the Russian Federation. The Chair reiterated her request to the Delegation of the Russian Federation to make clear its decision on whether it was withdrawing its proposal to amend the proposed decision contained in document A/63/8, or making a specific request to put the amendments to a vote.

227. The Deputy Legal Counsel, responding to the question raised by the Delegation of Monaco as to whether the scope of agenda item 19 allowed for the discussion of the amended proposal, noted that the agenda had been established and adopted by the Assemblies to guide their discussions and to present items for deliberation and eventual action, as appropriate. Therefore, the Deputy Legal Counsel stated that it was a matter for Member States to arrange their discussions, under the general powers of the Chair, as prescribed by Rule 13 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, to the subject matter under debate.

228. The Delegation of Germany, stating its opposition to the new proposal, doubted that one could speak of amendments, as this was a completely new item introduced by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Delegation wondered whether delegations would be able to vote on the new proposal as there was actually no agenda item under which the proposal could be dealt with at this time. The Delegation further stated that the body was still discussing under agenda item 19, and that it did not recognize the totally new proposal as amendments.

229. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, recalling the principles of inclusivity and the need to take an interest in all Member States of the Organization, stated that in addition to the co-sponsors of the proposal, a number of other delegations had spoken out as well. Additionally, the Delegation pointed out that it was not trying to push anything through but was looking for a solution that would suit all. It recalled its right to a response with regard to the comments made by several delegations, and added that humanitarian assistance was something that WIPO did not do and it was therefore irrelevant here. The Delegation stated that among the countries insisting that technical assistance be provided, one should note that the amended text contained those provisions. The Delegation mentioned that many delegations had stated the need to include a broader list of beneficiaries and that Ukraine was specifically named in the document. Some countries had made comments to refrain from the consideration of the amendments, which it believed was proof of the aims to artificially politicize the work of WIPO, which those delegations had done by putting forward the proposal. The Delegation drew attention to the Rules of Procedure, which stated that, any delegation in a written or oral form, could present a proposal to make amendments to a draft or any other proposal to the Assembly, and therefore its proposal was submitted orally and in writing. The Delegation recalled that there had been statements by several delegations explaining in detail why they were talking about amendments specifically. Stating its desire to achieve consensus, the Delegation said that it wanted to prevent the politicization of the work of WIPO and suggested that focus should be on technical assistance.

230. The Delegation of Zimbabwe welcomed the proposals by the Russian Federation based on the concern that it had mentioned earlier regarding unfair and unequal application of the original proposal. In its view, the amendments provided a constructive approach that could be a basis on which to begin the informal discussions that had been mentioned earlier by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Delegation stated that Rule 21(1) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure specifically allowed a delegation to propose amendments orally and in writing, and observed that the Delegation of the Russian Federation had done so in accordance with the rules. The Delegation therefore believed that the new proposal had to be discussed based on the initial proposal made by the proponents. The argument that this was a new proposal had no standing. The Delegation argued that there was no threshold in the General Rules of Procedure about the extent of amendments that would or would not qualify as a new proposal – regardless of whether it was a 90 per cent amendment or 99 per cent amendment – and advised that the delegations needed to proceed to consider the new proposal.

231. The Delegation of Lithuania echoed the countries that said that the amendments constituted completely new content, which had nothing to do with Ukraine, and its Delegation was not against discussing it in a separate agenda item.

232. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic expressed its support for the statement made by the Delegation of the Russian Federation and supported that any assistance be provided to all members in cases of emergency. It therefore stated its Delegation's willingness to go into informal discussions.

233. The Delegation of Luxembourg stated that it was puzzled, as what was projected on the screen was a completely different and new proposal with new content that had nothing to do with the scope of Agenda Item 19. Instead, delegations should discuss the proposal of the co-sponsors, which was a response to an unprecedented crisis of an unjustified and illegal war of aggression against a Member State of WIPO. The Delegation explained that the intent of the proposal was to ensure that Ukraine and its innovation community received technical assistance as soon as possible. The Delegation stated that the new proposal should not be discussed as that would cause the loss of precious time. The Delegation added that all members were welcome, in cases of urgent need and in line with the WIPO Rules of Procedure, to put forward proposals for WIPO's technical assistance, which its Delegation was open to consider.

234. The Delegation of China stated that China had always believed that WIPO's work should benefit all countries, especially despairing countries, to resolve the concerns of countries suffering from unilateral sanctions measures. The Delegation believed the amendments by the Delegation of the Russian Federation had demonstrated positive efforts and should be considered. China had always opposed the politicization of technical issues. As a technical and specialized agency, WIPO should focus on its key mandate. The Delegation hoped that all parties could avoid political confrontation.

235. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) believed the modifications provided by the Delegation of the Russian Federation provided a good basis for possible agreement. Its Delegation was ready to engage in informal discussions to discuss the new modifications, which to them were basically the same thing and served the same purpose: to focus on providing support to countries in need, including Ukraine. The Delegation observed that this was flexibility on the part of the Delegation of the Russian Federation and a good basis. The Delegation had listened to different interventions from various delegations and wished to remind all that this was not the Security Council or the General Assembly of the UN but the Assemblies of WIPO, where delegations were dealing with technical and specialized issues and were not discussing the causes of wars or other aspects of international political issues. If the text were simply to deal with the provision of technical assistance to one country, it should be done through the normal procedures of WIPO, that is, it should go through the PBC or CDIP and could be materialized

without all the farce, difficulties, and complications. The Delegation believed that the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation could be discussed in informal consultations and could be a basis for an emerging agreement.

236. The Delegation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) believed that it was constructive to discuss any proposal that attempted to avoid politicization of technical issues within the Organization and tried to respond to the needs of Member States.

237. The Chair requested a break in order to consult with delegations to determine a way forward.

238. Returning after the break, the Chair reopened the floor for further debate on Agenda Item 19. She announced that, having consulted with colleagues from the Secretariat and the Office of the Legal Counsel, and after having listened to the statements made by delegations in the past two-and-a-half hours, it was clear that there was no consensus as to whether the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation were indeed amendments, or a new proposal, or a request to add a new item on the agenda. The Chair regretted that there was disagreement, and asked the Delegation of the Russian Federation to clarify whether in presenting its amendments to the initial proposal it was asking for a motion to amend the initial proposal and therefore a call for a vote on the amendments or whether the Delegation of the Russian Federation disassociated itself from consensus regarding the initial proposal as contained in the Annex to document A/63/8. The Chair observed that if there was no explicit objection, she wished to propose the adoption of the initial proposal by consensus and asked for a reaction from the Russian Federation.

239. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that the meeting had been going on for over two hours because the proposal itself was made of a spurious nature with a number of politically motivated provisions. The Delegation stated that there was no consensus on the initial proposal and there could not be consensus, and as many delegations had said, the proposal should not be addressed. The issue was not just relevant to its Delegation, but recalled that 10 other delegations had also made comments on the initial proposal that was supported by 53 countries. The Delegation recalled that WIPO had 193 Member States and therefore speaking about consensus on text was not possible. With regard to the amendments put forward by its Delegation, it clarified that they were amendments to the text and the Rules of Procedure did not limit in any way the volume or minimum length of amendments made. The Delegation observed that there had been calls by countries for inclusivity and to take into account the interests of all countries and the need to provide technical assistance to countries that truly needed such assistance. The proposal provided such a category of countries, and that Ukraine was specifically mentioned. Its amendments had a specific purpose, which was to find consensus and take into account the interests of all groups. The Delegation said that it was not possible to call its amendments a different proposal because it was talking about the same goal and substance, which was the aim of providing technical assistance, and so in its opinion, it had put forward amendments.

240. Reacting to the statement by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, the Chair stated that her question was more specific and not related to content or process. She pointed out that her earlier question was not whether this body was debating a proposal or a separate item or amendments tabled by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The question was whether the Delegation of the Russian Federation, acknowledging that there was no consensus on the amendments among delegations, was intending to promote the amendments by way of a vote, or whether the Delegation was not moving ahead with a vote on its own amendments.

241. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said it was vital to try to find consensus, and it, along with other countries, had proposed to convene informal consultations, which was a standard practice in the Organization. Its Delegation needed to find a mutually acceptable

approach and that additional consultations would help with the quest for compromise for which there was still time.

242. The Delegation of Zimbabwe sought clarity on the procedures being used. The Delegation's understanding was that a proposed amendment had been presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation in accordance with the practice that was normally adopted in WIPO, that the Delegation sought to find consensus, and one method to do so was through informal consultations. The Delegation stated that the Delegation of the Russian Federation had specifically requested informal consultations, but that the request did not seem to be taken into consideration, and its Delegation requested clarification on whether it was a new practice that when there was no consensus, Member States would proceed directly to a vote. The Delegation also wondered why this same approach had not been applied to other discussions such as the Design Law Treaty (DLT) and the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), during which there had been informal consultations on that same day.

243. The Delegation of Belarus recalled that decisions were adopted by consensus in WIPO and that the first proposal contained many politicized and confrontational points. In the Delegation's view, the amendment of the Delegation of the Russian Federation, in consultation with other countries, seemed to "have legs", so to speak. Its Delegation expressed support for the proposal from the Delegation of the Russian Federation and other delegations to continue consultations on the agenda item and, in its view, it was not justified to go to a vote unless every single opportunity to seek consensus had been exhausted.

244. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) apologized for taking the floor on the issue and observed that the main function of diplomacy was negotiation. The Delegation said that there was a text on which amendments were proposed, which may not be acceptable to many delegations, and logically required consultation among Member States. The Delegation agreed with what the Delegation of Zimbabwe had said and, in its view, Member States were setting a bad precedent. It pointed out that this was not the only item on the agenda, and it would not be the only time in the Organization when they would not have a consensus immediately. In its view, that was why consultations had a role and it understood that on both sides people were uncomfortable with just proceeding to a vote in that respect. Where there is a text and proposed amendments, the Delegation was of the view that both sides would appreciate further time to consider them.

245. The Delegation of Monaco reiterated its view that the Delegation of the Russian Federation had proposed a new proposal that could be considered under a new agenda item. The Delegation stated it was completely open to considering the possibility of consultations on that text and on the possibility of adding an agenda item but that it would like to complete the discussion of Agenda Item 19 and focus on the text proposed in document A/63/8 that was submitted by the Delegation of Ukraine and other co-sponsors. The Delegation wished to take a decision, if possible, by consensus on that text.

246. Responding to the request for clarification by the Delegation of Zimbabwe, the Chair explained that there had been consultations on this issue during the opening of the session when the agenda was adopted, and that debates exceeded discussions on the practical decision of including, or not, an item on the agenda. At that stage, the Chair asked for, and there were, consultations. The Chair presumed that there had also been consultations on the proposals for amendments before being presented, adding that in her understanding they were presented by a group of countries.

247. The Delegation of Nicaragua expressed its openness to informal consultations as it believed that it was a practice that helped reach consensus and would constructively enrich the discussion and benefit all members of the Organization.

248. The Delegation of Zimbabwe was of the view that, as a Member State, it had to be clear as to the procedures being adopted, and had to be satisfied that the procedures were the correct ones. The Delegation stated that it heard the Chair's response that consultations had taken place on the opening day but its Delegation had not been a part of those consultations. The Delegation stated that its understanding was that the proposal that had just been presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation was, in fact, a new proposal for an amendment. The amendments were not there during the opening of the Assemblies, which was why the Delegation sought clarification as to whether consultations had taken place, and if so, what had been consulted.

249. The Delegation of Slovakia stated that it could not support the holding of consultations on the proposed text by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. It hoped that in the previous discussions before the break, it had been clear that no consultations would lead to consensus on the text proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

250. The Delegation of Ukraine stated that the current discussion demonstrated that the proposal for consultations did not have the intention of achieving consensus, but had the purpose of delaying consultations and bringing the membership into confusion as to what technical assistance, and for whom, when, and why, would be provided. The Delegation said that its proposal, like many other delegations before it and co-sponsors of the resolution, was to take action on the text presented, or to take action on the amendments proposed by one delegation.

251. The Delegation of Austria aligned itself with other speakers and added that it could not support the conduct of consultations on the amendments presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Delegation was of the view that they proceed as the Chair had suggested.

252. The Delegation of the United Kingdom said it was clear that the amendments were a wholly different proposal, not intended to fulfil the mandate that was set out in the agenda item. The Delegation said that if the Delegation of the Russian Federation wished to come forward with a new proposal under a new agenda item, they could do so, but that delegations should decide whether they were going to adopt the resolution that was before the delegations by consensus, or whether the Delegation of the Russian Federation wished to call a vote on it.

253. The Delegation of Canada expressed support for the statements delivered by the Delegations of Slovakia, Monaco, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. The Delegation said that it rejected, as many other delegations had, what was being proposed as an amendment. The Delegation noticed that what was being proposed was not relevant to the current agenda item and therefore saw no scope for consensus through any consultations.

254. The Delegation of Poland supported the statements delivered by the Delegations of Slovakia, Ukraine, Austria, Canada, and the United Kingdom, stating that it did not see the scope or room for consultations either, and that it expressed support for the idea the Chair proposed in her capacity as the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly.

255. The Delegation of France endorsed what had been said by others considering that the amendments from the Delegation of the Russian Federation were an entirely different text from the text that the co-sponsors had presented to the Assemblies. The Delegation was of the view that the amendments did not fall under the agenda item. If the Delegation of the Russian Federation wished to continue with the text that was its responsibility, but that the Delegation did not see any need to reach consensus on the basis of its amendments. The Delegation wished to move forward with the resolution as submitted by Ukraine and 52 other co-sponsors, including the European Union and France.

256. The Delegation of China recalled, as it had already stressed, that the principle of consensus was a fundamental principle of the Rules of Procedure for WIPO, which also guaranteed a healthy development of the Organization. The Delegation called for respect for that principle, and said that if during the current session consensus could not be reached, informal discussions may be engaged in for the purpose of carrying out further dialogue to narrow differences, which it believed was better than confrontation.

257. The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated that according to its understanding the proposed amendments were intended to eliminate the political factors inherent in the original proposal. Secondly, it was of the view that WIPO's technical assistance should be inclusive and equitable to all Member States, and noted that the proposed amendment had suggested Ukraine as a beneficiary. The Delegation expressed its support for the previous speakers who had insisted on having consultations on the proposed amendments of the Delegation of the Russian Federation to achieve consensus among the Member States.

258. Regretting that she had to reiterate the same statements, the Chair stated that there was no consensus – neither on the question of whether the discussions concerned a separate item, a separate proposal, or amendments to the initial proposal, nor on the substance of the initial proposal or the proposed amendments as such. The Chair explained that she had asked several delegations for action to take a decision on both the initial proposal and the proposed amendments. Therefore, she wished to proceed as indicated in the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, which stated that when amendments to a proposal were moved, the amendments should be voted on first. The Chair stated that it was her understanding that several delegations were calling for a vote and therefore the Assemblies would proceed according to the order as indicated by the rules. The Chair announced that they would begin with a vote on the amendments and asked the Legal Counsel to present the procedure to follow for the vote.

259. The Delegation of the Russian Federation had a question, which in its view, was a relevant one, which was also being discussed quite actively as could be heard in the room. The Delegation said that it needed to know who had put which proposal to a vote, and what kind of vote would be taken. The Delegation stated that, in its view, the vote should be by secret ballot.

260. The Chair, responding to the question from the Delegation of the Russian Federation, stated that there had been several delegations who had asked for action on both the proposal and on the amendments. The Chair noted that to strictly follow the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, she asked the delegations who supported action on either the initial proposal or the proposed amendments, or who asked for action on the agenda item in general, to make statements to clarify the wish for a vote and the exact proposal on which there was to be a vote.

261. The Delegation of France stated that things were clear, 53 countries had presented a proposal and the question was whether there was consensus on the proposal. The Delegation stated that the Delegation of the Russian Federation had put forward an amendment on which there would be no consensus. The question was whether the Delegation of the Russian Federation would maintain that amendment, and if so, the consequences were known.

262. The Chair stated that, after discussion with the Deputy Legal Counsel, she wanted everyone to be clear on the fact that at the current stage, she had not heard a call for a vote. The Chair stated that if she did not hear clear calls for a vote, either from those who had proposed the initial proposal in document A/63/8, or regarding the amendments that had been presented by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, she would propose a break. She reiterated that either there were clear proposals from delegations on the action to be taken under Agenda Item 19 or she would have to adjourn discussions on the item and revert to it the following day.

263. The Delegation of Monaco stated that all of the co-sponsors who had spoken had been very clear and they had rejected the proposal, which had been presented under Agenda Item 19 by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. As the Delegation of France had said, either the Delegation of the Russian Federation maintained its amendments, and if it so decided, then there would have to be a vote. Should the Delegation of the Russian Federation withdraw the amendments and make another proposal later under another agenda item, there would then be a decision on document A/63/8.

264. The Delegation of France stated that the burden of proof, so to speak, lays with the country that made the proposal, which could clearly see that the proposal was not the subject of consensus. The Delegation stated that the Assemblies had no reason to be left hanging pointlessly because there would be no consensus on the amendment proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Delegation suggested that either the Delegation of the Russian Federation requested a vote, which would then be held, or if it did not, there would be no consensus, which would set aside the amendment so that they could move forward with the initial proposal. According to the Delegation, the issue was very clear as that was how consensus operated. The Delegation observed that there was no reason to waste any further time of the Assemblies on the point. The Delegation stated that if there was a question about the rules of procedure, they could be consulted since they were set forth in written form.

265. The Chair adjourned the meeting and asked the delegations to reconvene at 6:30 p.m.

266. Reconvening the meeting, the Chair thanked the delegations for their patience and stated that it was quite clear that there were different understandings and interpretations as to some aspects of the procedure. She wondered if, under the circumstances, there were any delegations who wished to take the floor to make any additional comments or suggestions. Not seeing any delegations wishing to take the floor, the Chair stated that they could not proceed with a lack of understanding of all the steps that were involved, so she announced that this body would begin the next day with discussions on the Agenda Item 19 but not before discussing item 10, the Report by the External Auditor. She then asked if there were any proposals from delegations.

267. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, stated that at the beginning of the afternoon, there had been a call to delay item 9 concerning normative issues in order to look at the additional points on the agenda. The African Group regretted that no progress had been made, and stated that it would like to go back to the order of the agenda, so that item 9 could be examined in the morning.

268. The Chair explained that, as she had indicated to the Group Coordinators, item 9 was opened in order to allow for the proposal to be presented with the understanding that the proposal would be discussed on Thursday morning.

269. The Delegation of Monaco stated that it did not think that consensus could be reached when they came back to the point the next day. Noting that there was a very busy agenda that needed to be completed during the Assemblies, the Delegation asked for the Chair's indulgence in order to conclude the item that night. The Delegation believed that things were quite clear and that it would therefore wish to continue the discussion and conclude agenda item 19 in order to deal with the remainder of the agenda according to schedule.

270. The Chair asked delegations who wanted to continue the agenda item that day to state their proposals regarding a way forward concretely, including the possible call for a vote, as indicated by the Rules of Procedure. The Chair added that this body would either proceed by consensus, or with a vote, and that a vote cannot be called for by the Chair.



271. The Delegation of the United States of America requested a short break, which the Chair granted.

272. Reconvening the session, the Chair stated that there had been a request by the African Group to ensure that enough time was left for other discussions the next day, which were not less important than the current discussion at hand.

273. The Delegation of Ukraine stated that there was a draft proposal presented that day by 53 Member States that had not been rejected by any delegations. The Delegation stated that there was additionally a proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation that aimed to distort, destruct, and destroy the very essence of the draft supported by 53 Member States. The Delegation pointed out that support for Ukraine was within WIPO's mandate, in an unprecedented and emergency situation, and that the amendment proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation could not proceed for the sake of WIPO's credibility and relevance. The Delegation shared its gratitude to the delegations who decided to stay in the room and take a decision, which would strengthen the mandate, role, and standing of WIPO. Noting the emergency and urgency of the matter, the Delegation requested a vote on the proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

274. The Delegation of the United States of America seconded the Delegation of Ukraine's request for a vote.

275. The Chair, based on the request for a vote, asked the Deputy Legal Counsel to explain the procedures for the vote.

276. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that, as just announced by the Chair, and as requested by the Delegation of Ukraine, in accordance with Rule 25 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the adoption of the amendments to the proposal as contained in document A/63/8 had been requested to be put to a vote. In accordance with Rule 25, the proposal had been seconded by the Delegation of the United States of America. The Deputy Legal Counsel drew the attention of the delegations to document A/63/INF/1 Rev. paragraph 2, which contained the list of the Member States of the WIPO Conference. Delegations representing the Member States of the WIPO Conference were invited to vote. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that according to Article 7(3)(c) and (e), and subject to the provisions of Article 17 of the WIPO Convention, the required majority for the amendments to pass was two-thirds of the votes cast, and abstentions would not be considered as votes. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that with regard to the necessary quorum, which was constituted by one-third of the Member States of the WIPO Conference, pursuant to Article 7(3)(b) of the WIPO Convention, she had been informed that the necessary number of Member States were present. She additionally recalled that in accordance with Rule 29 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, once the Chair had announced the beginning of voting, no one should interrupt the voting, except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of voting.

277. The Chair asked the Secretariat and the Deputy Legal Counsel to proceed with the preparations for the vote and to put the text of the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation on the screen.

278. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that in accordance with Rule 27 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the vote would be conducted by roll-call. She stated that in order to proceed with the roll-call, she wanted to remind delegations that they would be called in the alphabetical order of the names in French of the Member States of the WIPO Conference. The Deputy Legal Counsel requested the Chair to draw by lot the delegation to be called first. The Deputy Legal Counsel explained that the vote was being conducted as follows: When the Deputy Legal Counsel called the delegations in alphabetical order, she would ask it to state its vote. For those Member States supporting the amendments presented on the screen, she

asked the States to respond with “yes”; for those not supporting the amendments as presented on the screen, she asked the States to respond with “no”; for those wishing to abstain, she asked the States to reply with “abstain”. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that pursuant to Rule 27(3) of the WIPO General Procedure, the WIPO vote of each delegation would be recorded in the report of the meeting. She then requested the Chair to draw the name of the country to be called first.

279. The Chair drew Afghanistan.

280. The Delegation of the Russian Federation requested a point of order. First, the Delegation wished to know whether the text had been distributed to every Member State to make sure that every Member State had the opportunity to become acquainted fully with it. Second, the Delegation requested that a clean version be put on the screen, as the document on the screen was in track-changes, which would make it difficult to know exactly what people were voting for.

281. The Chair, responding to the first question posed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, confirmed that the text had been presented during the session and it had been duly circulated to all Group Coordinators in all six languages. Responding to the second question, the Chair stated that since the text was being discussed as an amendment, and not as a new proposal, upon the insistence of the Delegation of the Russian Federation, the text would stay in track-changes format so that all delegations would be quite clear of the content.

282. The Deputy Legal Counsel repeated a portion of the voting instructions for the sake of all. She stated that she would proceed by calling delegations in the alphabetical order, beginning with Afghanistan, in French, and would ask delegations to state their votes as follows: for those Member States supporting the amendments reflected on the screen and as distributed to the delegations, she asked the States to respond with “yes”; for the Member States not supporting the amendments as reflected on the screen and as distributed to the delegations, she asked the States to respond with “no”; for the Member States wishing to abstain from the vote, she asked the States to respond with “abstain”.

283. The result of the vote was as follows:

The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Algeria, Belarus, China, Cuba, Russian Federation, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Nigeria, Syrian Arab Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe voted “yes” (12). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Albania, Germany, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, United States of America, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Norway, New Zealand, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Dominican Republic, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uruguay and Vanuatu voted “no” (63). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Egypt, El Salvador, United Arab Emirates, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Uganda, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Senegal, Serbia, Sudan, Thailand, Togo,

Trinidad and Tobago and Viet Nam abstained from voting (43). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lesotho, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nauru, Niger, Niue, Oman, Uzbekistan, Papua New Guinea, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lao People's Democratic Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Holy See, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tajikistan, Chad, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Yemen and Zambia were absent (75).

284. The Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned, decided by a vote of 12 “in favor”, 63 “against”, and 43 “abstentions”, that the amendments to the proposed decision, as contained in the annex to document A/63/8, were not adopted.

285. The Chair proposed to move ahead with the adoption of the proposed decision paragraph, as contained in the Annex to document A/63/8, and reminded delegates that consensus was different from unanimity and delegations were free to disassociate with any of the decisions taken.

286. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that the original proposal was a political statement, which it believed was outside the purview of the work of WIPO. The Delegation said that it had tried to take a constructive approach, which had been clear in everything that it had done. It made amendments to the text in accordance with the mandate of the Organization, and which tried to take into account the concerns expressed by many countries who were also in need of technical assistance from WIPO, and that it had engaged in informal consultations. The fact that its attempts to achieve consensus were blocked by a group of countries and that the amendments were put to a vote, demonstrated that the original proposal was political in nature and its Delegation regretted that WIPO had taken such approach. The Delegation stated that the outcome of the vote demonstrated that there was no consensus on the issue. In the Delegation's view, the countries that did not vote were not ready to accept the politicization of WIPO's activity, and that many of them were in need of support from the Organization, but that their needs were not taken into account by the document as it was proposed. It drew attention to the fact that very few countries voted against the amendments and that the original proposal did not get universal support. The Delegation pointed out that there was no consensus on the original text, and that it was not prepared to disassociate as had been suggested.

287. The Chair confirmed that there was no consensus, which was why a vote was called, and wished to move forward with the adoption of the proposed document.

288. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) sought clarification because, in its opinion, it was manifest that there was no consensus on the original text before the modifications proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, and the lack of consensus continued to be the case.

289. The Delegation of Zimbabwe stated there was no consensus on the original document.

290. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) wished to echo the statement made by the Delegation of Zimbabwe, that there was no consensus on the original text. The Delegation stated that the amendments proposed by the Delegation of the Russian Federation

were rejected by 63 members, which was not one-third of the overall membership of the Organization and was something that should give delegations food for thought.

291. The Delegation of Belarus expressed its support for statements made by delegations that there was no consensus on the text as originally proposed. It stated there had not been consensus earlier and there was not currently.

292. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that it was obvious that there was no consensus.

293. The Delegation of Cuba drew attention to two statements it made previously and wished to confirm that its vote was a vote not to politicize the work of the Organization. The Delegation repeated that WIPO was a technical organization that should not be politicized.

294. The Chair repeated that this indeed was not a decision taken by consensus.

295. The Delegation of the Russian Federation asked the Chair if it understood correctly that the intent was to gavel in the proposal and move on with a decision. The Delegation observed that several delegations had spoken and stated that they were not ready to accept the original proposal, and asked if the comments were going to be noted and the discussion was going to be closed. The Delegation wished to draw attention to Rule 32 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure on voting on amendments reminding the delegates that there was a need to observe strictly the Rules of Procedure.

296. The Chair stated they had taken note of all the statements and that the body had proceeded in accordance with the rules of procedure with regard to the adoption of the decision. She explained that the amendments to the proposal contained in the Annex to document A/63/8 were not adopted by the body, as shown in the results of the vote. She further explained that the right to take a decision based on a vote was an option foreseen by the Rules of Procedure.

297. The Delegation of the Russian Federation asked the Chair to elaborate on Rule 32 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure. It believed that the initial proposal did not have consensus, and that those who voted against its amendment was not even one-third of the total membership of the Organization. It believed that the original proposal needed to be put to a vote. The Delegation stated that the amendments had to be voted on first, which was done, and now, as the Delegation understood it, there should be a vote on the original proposal.

298. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) stated that it was absolutely clear that the Chair was saying that the amendments were not adopted. According to the Delegation, it was also clear that the original proposal did not enjoy consensus. The decision could not be adopted by consensus, and if the delegations insisted on adoption of the proposal they would need to ask for a vote, otherwise, it could not be adopted.

299. The Chair recalled that this was reminiscent of the discussion they had previously, and the reason why a vote was called. She emphasized that consensus did not mean unanimity and for those who were contesting and breaking the consensus, they should call for a vote.

300. The Delegation of the Russian Federation pointed out that two delegations at minimum had expressed the need for a vote on the first proposal. The Delegation stated that the proposal did not have consensus or universal support, and therefore it needed to be put to a vote.

301. The Chair stated that a request was made for a vote on the proposal contained in the Annex to document A/63/8 and asked if the request was supported by a second delegation.

302. The Delegation of the Russian Federation added that it was requesting a vote, and that the vote needed to be conducted by secret ballot.

303. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) seconded the request for a vote by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.

304. The Chair invited the Deputy Legal Counsel to comment on the procedures. The Chair stated that the same rules would be applied as in the earlier vote and that the vote would be by roll-call. The Chair explained that the hybrid format would prevent the use of a vote by secret ballot, so the vote would be carried by roll-call. She asked the Delegation of the Russian Federation to clearly state its request.

305. The Delegation of the Russian Federation believed that Rule 28(1) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, which dealt with voting by secret ballot, should be applied. It stated that two delegations had requested that in line with the Rules of Procedure, that is, the Delegation of the Russian Federation and the Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of). The Delegation requested the Deputy Legal Counsel to clarify the rules that had been previously applied to the voting that had taken place and wished to remind delegations that the proposal concerned a country.

306. The Deputy Legal Counsel, referring to the request for clarification by the Delegation of the Russian Federation, noted that it was a question regarding the applicability of Rule 28(1) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure to the proposal under consideration. She recalled that the primary rule of statutory construction, that is, the plain meaning rule, stipulated that the terms of a provision should be given their plain and ordinary meaning. Rule 28(1) first provided that it applied to elections and decisions concerning States or individuals. The question therefore arose as to whether the matter to be decided upon, that is, the adoption of the annex to document A/63/8, concerned States. The Legal Counsel further stated that while indeed the proposal identified a country, the essence and operative element of the decision was not about a State as such, but rather, “a request to the International Bureau” to conduct a series of actions, including for example, an “assessment of an innovation ecosystem”, the “maintenance of consultations”, the “implementation of technical assistance, capacity building, and other appropriate measures” to ensure the full range of IP services by the Organization, in which the beneficiary, or recipient of these activities, happens to be identified. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that, in short, it could be inferred that the intention behind Rule 28(1) was to provide for a vote by secret ballot when the subject of the decision concerned a State, not when the object of the decision concerned a State. The Deputy Legal Counsel stated that in this case, the subject – that was to say the “doer” – was the International Bureau or Organization, or even other Member States, whereas the object or the country acted upon, was the recipient of the assistance and support. She further noted, for Member States’ consideration, that if one were to posit that every decision regarding assistance and support concerned a State, then arguably the vast majority of WIPO’s program and budget, or the opening of a TISC in a given country, or the provision of legislative advice, or hosting of a workshop, could all be construed as concerning a State. Finally, the Deputy Legal Counsel noted that a restrictive and judicious interpretation of the Rule was supported by the context in which the invocation of the Rule was further subject to its own set of elaborate procedures, governed by a separate annex. The Deputy Legal Counsel suggested that the clear intention of the drafters was for a secret ballot to be reserved for the most formal and relatively infrequent of uses, such as the election of the Director General of WIPO. The Deputy Legal Counsel added that it had been the practice of the Organization that secret ballots were exclusively reserved for the election of the Director General, and that there had not been a vote concerning States, as such, in the history of the Organization. She also noted that the hybrid setting in which the meeting was taking place raised a logistical issue regarding voting by secret ballot, which by its nature had to be conducted in person and in the meeting hall to preserve the confidentiality of the vote.

307. The Chair observed that the Deputy Legal Counsel had clarified the type of vote that was applicable. She called for consistency throughout the sessions, and reiterated that a vote by secret ballot could not be ensured in a hybrid format, and announced that she would proceed with the vote by roll-call. For the sake of time, since the rules for voting by roll-call had already been explained by the Deputy Legal Counsel, and to avoid repetition, only the proposal that was being voted on would be stated.

308. The Deputy Legal Counsel recalled that the Delegation of the Russian Federation requested a vote, which was supported by the Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of), and therefore in accordance with Rule 25, the proposal contained in the annex to document A/63/8 would be put to a vote. She stated she would not repeat the detailed instructions, but would proceed as was just the case by calling delegations, in the order of the French alphabet, in which the Chair would draw the first Member State. The Deputy Legal Counsel requested the delegations to state their votes as follows: for those Member States supporting the proposal as contained in the Annex to document A/63/8, please respond, "yes"; for those Member States not supporting the proposal, please respond, "no"; for those Member States wishing to abstain from the vote on the proposal, please respond, "abstain" and recalled that all votes would be recorded in the report of the session.

309. The Chair drew Switzerland as the first Member State to be called.

310. The Deputy Legal Counsel proceeded with calling Member States by name, in the order of the French alphabet.

311. The Result of the vote was as follows:

The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Albania, Germany, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, United States of America, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Dominican Republic, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, Rwanda, San Marino, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden voted "yes" (71). The Delegations - in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, Belarus, China, Cuba, Russian Federation, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nicaragua, Syrian Arab Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted "no" (10). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Egypt, El Salvador, United Arab Emirates, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Malawi, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Pakistan, Qatar, Senegal, Sudan abstained from voting (37). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French – of Suriname, Tajikistan, Chad, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lesotho, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Maldives,

Mali, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Myanmar, Nauru, Niger, Niue, Oman, Uzbekistan, Papua New Guinea, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lao People's Democratic Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Holy See, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, were absent (75).

312. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned:

*recalling*

- a) The principles, purpose, and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- b) The desire expressed by the Contracting Parties to the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) "to contribute to better understanding and cooperation among States for their mutual benefit on the basis of respect for their sovereignty and equality;" and
- c) The objective of WIPO, as enshrined in Article 3 of the above-mentioned Convention, "to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world through cooperation among States and, where appropriate, in collaboration with any other international organization;"

*recalling further*

- a) The United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/1 of March 2, 2022, on Aggression Against Ukraine, that deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in violation of Article 2 (4) of the Charter and urges the continued efforts by international organizations to support the de-escalation of the current situation; and
- b) The United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-11/2 of March 24, 2022, on Humanitarian Consequences of the Aggression Against Ukraine;

*reaffirming*

The sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters;

*deploring in this regard*

The tragic loss of human life, as well as the impacts on Ukraine's infrastructure, its innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem, including innovative and creative businesses; universities, hospitals, laboratories and other research institutions and educational establishments; museums, libraries, archives and other cultural institutions; government institutions including intellectual property offices and support centers, that have occurred across Ukraine since the beginning of the war.

*Requested the International Bureau*

1. To assess the immediate, medium- and long-term impacts of the war on Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem, including innovative and creative businesses; educational, research, and cultural institutions; government institutions responsible for protection and enforcement of intellectual property and Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs); as well as intellectual property filings in Ukraine by persons outside of Ukraine and filings worldwide by residents of Ukraine;

2. To initiate and maintain consultations with Ukraine on its particular needs with respect to its innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem, including intellectual property offices and TISCs;
3. Based on the aforementioned assessments and consultations, to implement technical assistance, legal assistance, capacity building, and other assistance for Ukraine as appropriate and as required for the restoration and rebuilding of Ukraine's intellectual property sector and ecosystem;
4. To allocate adequate financial and human resources, including through reallocation within the generally approved budget, for the implementation of the activities under item 3 above;
5. To take appropriate measures to ensure that intellectual property applicants from Ukraine, as well as the Ukrainian Intellectual Property Institute, have access to the full range of WIPO's intellectual property services, including WIPO's Arbitration and Mediation Centre services, and are granted appropriate extensions, exemptions and other remedies as provided for in relevant WIPO treaties, rules and regulations, in connection with the current circumstances;
6. To report on the assessment, consultations, implementation and other activities under items 1-5 above at the next General Assembly.

*Invited Member States*

To take measures in accordance with applicable national and international laws and regulations, to assist intellectual property applicants from Ukraine in order to allow effective protection of their intellectual property, including intellectual property applicants that have been forced to relocate.

313. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that it did not agree with the interpretation of Rule 28 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure as its Delegation and another delegation did not request a roll-call vote, so the procedure was, in the Delegation's opinion, incorrect. The Delegation observed that it was told there was consensus, but only 71 Member States out of 193 voted "yes" for the proposal, so it was not adopted by consensus.

314. The Delegation of the United States of America thanked the Chair for her leadership during the difficult session and thanked the Secretariat for its work. The Delegation welcomed the decision that would provide the technical and capacity building assistance that Ukraine urgently needed to rebuild its innovation and creativity sector and IP system destroyed by the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war. It noted that no sector had gone unharmed during the continued aggression and stated that the Russian Federation's attacks had destroyed health facilities, schools, universities, businesses, and critical infrastructure. Transportation had been severely limited as roads were bombed, seaports were shelled and Ukraine's telecommunication towers had been destroyed by the Russian Federation cutting off vital communications. The Delegation recalled that, as had been seen throughout the past spring, international organizations and specialized agencies responded to these barbaric acts and adopted resolutions or decision points consistent with their mandates, and which will help Ukraine rebuild. Decisions were taken at the UNGA, the Human Rights Council, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the World Health Organization (WHO). It noted that the Russian Federation had unsuccessfully tried to avoid having the issue discussed at WIPO, even when the proposed decision was within WIPO's mandate. The Russian Federation Delegation had at the outset of the meetings called for a vote to remove the item from the Assemblies' agenda, even though its brutal attacks had severely damaged Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector, and IP system. At the personnel level, the Delegation stated that the staff of Ukrpatent, had been forced to operate from underground shelters, often risking their lives and health. At the physical infrastructure level, Ukraine's national plant gene bank in Kharkiv was destroyed by shelling earlier in the year. The plant bank housed over 160,000 seed varieties and served as a research and educational



center to assist with food, economic, and environmental security. Moreover, the Russian Federation's strikes damaged and destroyed important institutions symbolizing creativity or promoting innovation including museums, libraries, theaters, schools, and universities, as well as small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups. All of them relied on IP, including copyrights, trademarks, or patents, to protect their works while promoting innovation and creativity. The Delegation observed that the critical discussion and decision on assisting Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector, and IP system were, therefore, absolutely necessary. This was even more apparent after the result of the vote at the beginning of the Assemblies on July 14, where only 12 Member States voted to exclude the item from the agenda. The Delegation looked forward to the implementation of the decision and to the next Assemblies when the International Bureau would report on its assessment, consultations, implementation of items 1 to 5 of document A/63/8, and other activities. At that time, its Delegation would also be prepared to consider and, as appropriate, propose any additional necessary steps to address the impacts of the Russian Federation's aggression on Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system, to include the relocation of WIPO's external office in Moscow.

315. The Delegation of Poland welcomed the decision, which served as a basis for providing Ukraine with the support and assistance in direct reconstruction of the IP system that was needed because of the ongoing war on the territory of Ukraine. The Delegation stated that the decision of the WIPO Assemblies was part of a number of decisions that had already taken place in many international fora, both in and out of the UN System. The Delegation noted that despite the attempts of some States, the majority of the WIPO Member States had noted and admitted that Ukraine urgently needed technical assistance and needed reconstruction of its innovation and creativity sectors, and IP systems that had been destroyed by the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war. The Delegation believed that the decision to assist Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP systems was absolutely necessary. Its Delegation was in favor of having a closer look at the operation of the WIPO external office in Moscow, to take into account some worrying developments in the IP field in the host country and called on WIPO to review its registries and modify them to reflect internationally recognized borders.

316. The Delegation of the Netherlands, speaking on behalf of the 53 co-sponsors of document A/63/8, welcomed the decision, which would provide the technical and capacity building assistance that Ukraine urgently needed to rebuild its innovation and creativity sector and intellectual system destroyed by the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war. The Delegation acknowledged the courage and compassion of the WIPO Member States in supporting the decision in urgent circumstances, and thanked Member States for the support. The Delegation underlined a strong dedication to continue to work in a WIPO-based on decisions by consensus, and stated that it trusted WIPO's IP registries would reflect addresses of the parties according to internationally recognized borders and would correct any erroneous indications. The Delegation looked forward to the implementation of the decision and to the next WIPO Assemblies when the International Bureau of WIPO will report on its assessment, consultations, and implementation of items 1 to 5 of document A/63/8 and other activities. The Delegation stated that at that time, it would be prepared to consider, and as appropriate, to propose any additional necessary steps to continue supporting Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system.

317. The Delegation of Lithuania expressed its appreciation for the decision taken by the Assemblies on technical and capacity building for Ukraine aimed at rebuilding its innovation and creative sector and IP systems, which were severely damaged and destroyed by the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war. The Delegation looked forward to the implementation of the decision and respective report of the International Bureau, to be presented during the next Assemblies. The Delegation stated that at that time, as the aggression continued, further steps should be taken to address the detrimental effect of the unilateral actions taken by the Russian Federation, which undermined the rule of law by

consciously challenging core principles of protection of IP rights enshrined in international agreements. The Delegation observed that well-known basic rules stated that no one could benefit from its wrongdoing, and taking into account the extraordinary circumstances, it was of the view that decisive actions should be taken regarding the further operation of WIPO's external office in Moscow. Finally, the Delegation called on WIPO to consistently adhere to UNGA Resolution 68/262 of 2014 on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, and follow the policy of non-recognition of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol. The Delegation requested that all data regarding party addresses in the WIPO registries, notably in the Madrid Registry, should reflect Ukraine's internationally recognizable borders.

318. The Chair thanked all delegations, and extended her appreciation to the Deputy Legal Counsel and the Secretariat for their assistance. The Chair noted that it had not been an easy process and that all steps were taken in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. She extended her thanks to the interpreters who had stayed until the late hour supporting the work of the plenary, and declared Agenda Item 19 closed.

## ITEM 20 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

319. Discussions were based on document A/63/9.

320. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned,

- (i) adopted the Summary Report (document A/63/9); and
- (ii) requested the Secretariat to finalize the Extensive Reports, post them on the WIPO website and communicate them to Member States by August 19, 2022. Comments should be submitted to the Secretariat by September 16, 2022, after which the final reports will be deemed adopted by September 30, 2022.

## ITEM 21 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### CLOSING OF THE SESSIONS

321. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, thanked the Chair for her enabled and enlightened direction, ideas and wisdom during the work of the Assemblies, and expressed its gratitude to the Director General, Mr. Daren Tang, and his team for their unwavering support to Member States throughout the past 10 days and ahead of the Assemblies. The African Group reaffirmed its faith in multilateralism as the best way of serving the common goals of humanity for a fairer, more inclusive and more sustainable world and stated that the collected commitment throughout the Assemblies in favor of the implementation effectively of the normative mandate of WIPO, constitutes the best gauge of success for the Organization in the face of the various challenges that Member States were facing and indeed the relevant stakeholders. In that regard, the African Group welcomed the major breakthrough achieved in terms of advancing the normative agenda of WIPO, following the historic agreement achieved through consensus to convene diplomatic conferences to conclude international agreements on the protection of GRs and TK associated with GRs, as well as the protection of designs and models. The African Group stated that this important agreement demonstrated the goodwill of Member States to see WIPO playing a more prominent role within the multilateral system on issues of socio-economic development and the promotion of innovation through a fairer and more balanced IT system. The Group called upon all Member States to pursue their constructive engagement with a view to implementing the decision of the WIPO General

Assembly and to show the necessary flexibility to achieve tangible results within the established timeframe. The African Group regretted however, that on one agenda item only, the WIPO General Assembly had to resort to a vote, thus breaking the long-standing rule of consensus within the Organization. The African Group was of the view that consensus must remain the only way to take decisions in keeping with established practice at WIPO, far from any selective approach. The Group noted with satisfaction, the decision taken by the WIPO Coordination Committee on the issue of human resources. The African Group hoped to see tangible progress in terms of geographic diversity within WIPO staff in the future, and, in particular, with regard to the fairer representation of Member States within the decision-making processes across all sectors of activity of the Organization. Finally, the African Group thanked the interpreters, the conference services team, and all of the other stakeholders that have contributed to the good conduct of the Assemblies.

322. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Chair, for her commitment and dedicated guidance throughout the WIPO General Assembly, and extended its appreciation to the Secretariat for its support ahead and during the Assemblies and to the conference staff, the skilled interpreters, and the technicians without whom these sessions would not have been possible. Group B also thanked all of the Member States and regional coordinators for their tireless efforts during the week. As it stated in its opening statement, Group B was pleased to see that WIPO would continue to modernize its PCT infrastructure and was continuing its engagement in the work of the UN System, especially through the trilateral cooperation. In addition, Group B highlighted again the importance for WIPO being a global platform and catalyst for shaping the discussions in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), and IP. Group B expressed its gratitude that the Assemblies under exceptional circumstances, adopted the decision on assistance and support for Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and IP system, and stated that this important decision would provide the technical and capacity building assistance Ukraine urgently needed to rebuild its innovation and creativity sector and IP system. Group B reiterated its firm belief that consensus-based decisions are of utmost importance in the Organization, and Group B members have shown the strong will to do so, which allowed delegations to move ahead with the normative agenda of WIPO.

323. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group expressed gratitude to the Chair, for her tireless efforts in guiding the work during the WIPO General Assembly, and equally commended the Director General, the senior management, and the Secretariat for their efforts invested in the preparation and advancement of the WIPO General Assembly, as well as for the highest efficiency demonstrated throughout the year, ahead of and during the 63<sup>rd</sup> Series of Meetings of the Member States of WIPO. Likewise, the CEBS Group extended its thanks and appreciation to the conference services, IT team, and the interpreters who ensured excellent working conditions for all. The CEBS Group also thanked the regional coordinators, the Member States and all other stakeholders and stated that the dedication and skillful guidance of the Chair during the seven days of the Assemblies enabled all to achieve tangible progress and great results, and even the major breakthrough in some issues. This historic series proved that the Organization was able to respond to the current challenges. Last year, the work of WIPO was still affected by the pandemic, this year, the war in Ukraine affected the work of the Organization. The severe damage of Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and negative impact of war on Ukraine's IP infrastructure was reflected also in the agenda of the WIPO General Assembly. The CEBS Group noted with satisfaction that WIPO as a member of the UN family was not standing aside, and that the outcome desired by many Member States was successfully achieved. The CEBS Group believed that the adopted decision under Agenda Item 19, and such timely reaction, would help to restore and rebuild Ukraine's creative industry and IP system by providing Ukraine with the necessary technical assistance from WIPO. On the normative issues, in particular on the DLT and on the topic of GRs and the IGC, the WIPO General Assembly reached historic outcomes, which should expedite the work on those topics and lead to diplomatic conferences in 2024. All this happened thanks to demonstration of the great amount of flexibility from all regional groups and delegations, and the CEBS Group was

pleased to see that the spirit of consensus was kept in the Organization on such important technical and expert agenda items. The CEBS Group remained committed to continuing negotiations on draft international instruments with a view of achieving diplomatic conferences, a meaningful result that will be highly relevant in the field of IP for the outside world and acceptable to all. The CEBS Group used all the means available to contribute to the positive spirit and efficient work of the WIPO General Assembly. The Group conveyed its full commitment in order to help WIPO to develop an efficient and effective IP ecosystem for the benefit of everyone. In conclusion, the CEBS Group reiterated its thanks to all the delegations for their constructive engagement, and wished all capital-based delegates a safe journey home.

324. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic, speaking on behalf of GRULAC, congratulated the Chair on her leadership and tireless efforts in achieving the historic outcomes that were reached, and commended and thanked the Secretariat for its tireless work. GRULAC also thanked the interpreters and translators who facilitated the work, and the other groups, coordinators, colleagues, and delegations whose tireless work had been vital for the success of these Assemblies. GRULAC underscored the words of the Director General "it had been a triumph for multilateralism". Noting, the Organization had shown that it was capable of rising to current challenges. GRULAC expressed its commitment to the future work in the Organization, by demonstrating its willingness to achieve consensus, through showing flexibility, and helping to advance the WIPO agenda.

325. The Delegation of China expressed its appreciation to the Chair of the Assemblies for her hard work, and thanked all the chairpersons of the different bodies, the Director General, the Secretariat, the interpreters and the technical support team for their diligent work. The Delegation also thanked all the Member States and stakeholders for their constructive participation. The Delegation stated that the active participation of all parties had allowed the Assemblies to complete all agenda items very efficiently, on such items as audit and oversight, IP service systems, fruitful results have been achieved. In particular, after numerous rounds of consultations the previous day, the Assemblies approved the convening of a diplomatic conference on the DLT and the diplomatic conference on GRs and related TK. The Delegation stressed that this was an important achievement, not only for the advancement of rule setting activities at WIPO, but also very meaningful for WIPO to continue to play the important role of leadership in the multilateral IP system, and more importantly, it was a meaningful step taken forward, towards an innovative ecosystem that accommodates the interest of all parties. Looking back at the ups and downs that these Assemblies went through, the Delegation believed that consensus was a long-standing fundamental principle that all WIPO platforms had adhered to. It was also a cornerstone for the Organization to operate smoothly and effectively ever since its foundation several decades ago, and was conducive to its long-term and sound development. The Delegation commended all parties on their active participation in the consultations the previous day and on their cooperative spirit in seeking consensus. The decision on the diplomatic conferences was finally reached on a consensus basis, which was a victory for all. It has also showcased the joint commitment to move forward in the next steps of work. The approval on the diplomatic conferences had indeed opened a new stage of consultation. However, the Delegation underscored that, to conclude the DLT and the international legal instrument on the protection of GRs and related TK, there was still a considerable amount of work to complete and many challenges to overcome. There was the need to maintain the current momentum in the future consultations and demonstrate the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, to remain constructive and inclusive. In addition, the Delegation expressed the need to persevere in overcoming difficulties and divergence until the final victory. In face of the future work and challenges, the Delegation reiterated and called upon all parties to be steadfast in multilateralism in the basic principle of consensus to advance the work of the Organization in a smooth and orderly way ensuring its long-term and sound development. Finally, the Delegation wished all colleagues to stay safe and healthy and a smooth trip back.

326. The Delegation of India, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, thanked and congratulated the Chair for her leadership and able guidance ahead of and throughout the successful sessions of the Assemblies. The Group also extended its appreciation to the Director General for his guidance and dedicated efforts and the Secretariat for its excellent work, which contributed to the success of the Assemblies. Likewise, the Group expressed gratitude to the interpreters, the conference services, the technical team, and all who contributed to facilitating the work during these Assemblies. The Group thanked all Member States, regional groups, and the regional coordinators for their contributions in achieving tangible progress on normative issues in these Assemblies. The Group applauded the constructive spirit and flexibility displayed by all, and believed the positive approach had now given a clear roadmap for moving ahead on issues of critical importance, namely the IGC and the DLT. The Group hoped that this cooperative spirit will prevail in future discussions and was confident that successful outcomes would be achieved, both on the IGC and the DLT. The Asia and the Pacific Group had always participated constructively in the Assemblies with the view of advancing the work and making progress on all issues. The Group reiterated its continued commitment to WIPO's roles and work, extended its full support to the WIPO management and stood ready to constructively engage with all Member States on all outstanding issues.

327. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Chair for her enlightened leadership throughout the session, and thanked the regional coordinators and Member States. The Delegation expressed gratitude to the Director General, Mr. Daren Tang, and all of the senior management of the Organization for their active participation in the work of the Assemblies, and in particular, the Secretariat of WIPO for their tireless efforts to organize this session. The Delegation thanked Mr. Andrew Staines, Assistant Director General, and the leader of the department for diplomatic interaction for the support and for their interaction with delegations, as well as the conference services and the interpreters for their tireless work that had allowed to effectively conduct this meeting. The Delegation deemed the principle of taking decisions on the basis of consensus to be the best way and most effective way to do things in WIPO. The Delegation expressed the hope to be committed to this principle going forward, including all Member States. Sadly, the Delegation noted that following the outcome of the session, a politicized declaration was made on Agenda Item 19, following the lack of consensus, and that the decision adopted did not take into account the concerns voiced by the Russian Federation and indeed many other delegations of the Organization. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation was committed to multilateral cooperation taking into account the interests of all parties, and the quest for consensus-based decisions and solutions, and hoped that the experience of the current session and agreement on holding diplomatic conferences had demonstrated to everyone that the quest for balanced solutions was the only way forward. The Delegation expressed gratitude to the African Group for their initiative and all the participants of the process whose efforts enabled to bring this issue out of a deadlock.

328. The Delegation of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member states, thanked the Chair for her extraordinary efforts and skilled guidance throughout these Assemblies that enabled excellent results. The Delegation was happy to meet the Member States delegations in person again, which represented a return to normal, and highlighted some exceptional moments of these Assemblies. The Delegation expressed gratitude especially for the large amount of solidarity and support for Ukraine, that was demonstrated by the membership within the dedicated agenda item. The Delegation was of the view that the adopted decision was a meaningful and relevant response of the Organization, and was convinced that its implementation would make a substantial contribution to Ukraine's recovery. The Delegation emphasized that consensus was crucial for the Organization, and thus welcomed the consensus achieved regarding the decision taken by the WIPO General Assembly on advancing the normative agenda, resulting in convening diplomatic conferences in 2024. The Delegation thanked all delegations showing flexibility to make this possible, and remained committed to work further constructively together with all Member States. The Delegation was hopeful that the decision taken by the WIPO General Assembly would result in

the adoption of meaningful and new international instruments under the aegis of WIPO. Finally, the Delegation expressed appreciation for witnessing the first ever WIPO global awards ceremony, these awards celebrate innovative commercial solutions based on IP rights which promote economic, social and cultural progress. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat and interpreters whose excellent performance during these sessions was indispensable for the effective running of these Assemblies. In conclusion, the Delegation reiterated its continued commitment to WIPO's work, and stated that WIPO could count on the active support of the European Union and its member states.

329. The Delegation of Indonesia thanked and commended the Director General, the Secretariat, the Secretary of the Assemblies, the Director of the Diplomatic Engagement and Assembly Affairs Division and his team, as well as the Legal Counsel, for their dedicated efforts and excellent work in facilitating the success of the Assemblies. The Delegation also thanked and commended the Chair for her guidance and able leadership throughout these Assemblies, and all Member States for their flexibility, constructive spirit as well as commitment shown within these Assemblies which led to a successful conclusion on all agenda items. The Delegation welcomed all decisions relating to governance, including program and budget, audit and oversight of the Organization and was committed to work closely with all Member States and the Secretariat in achieving the vision and mission of the Organization. The Delegation applauded the decisions made regarding the conveying of diplomatic conferences for GRs and TK associated with GRs, as well as for the DLT, which shows all Member States' commitment to advance the normative work of WIPO and made sure that delegations would deliver meaningful international instruments that would be beneficial for all. The Delegation also thanked the interpreters, conference services and everyone else that worked behind-the-scenes, their dedicated efforts were crucial to the success of the Assemblies. Finally, the Delegation reiterated its commitment to continue contributing actively and constructively to support the work of the Organization. The Delegation wished delegations a nice weekend and a happy summer.

330. The Delegation of Spain supported the statements made on behalf of Group B and the European Union. The Delegation recognized and paid tribute to the work of the Chair during these Assemblies. The Chair's guidance, great skill and patience had enabled delegations to reach important outcomes, which was very much appreciated by Member States. The Delegation commended the Secretariat for all of its work that enabled all Member States to engage in the discussions and make progress on a number of issues. The Delegation noted the challenging times during the Assemblies, but delegations had shown that consensus could be reached, and delegations could move forward with important issues for normative or other work in the IP world for the benefit of IP ecosystems in all countries. The Delegation believed that global, regional, and national IP systems should be balanced between the benefits and responsibility of all stakeholders so that delegations could push forward, progress and socio-economic development in their countries. The Delegation welcomed the fact that a number of Member States supported the initiative to the innovation and creative sector in Ukraine, and was fully prepared to support Ukraine and to support the trust fund in WIPO that was supported by the Director General. The 63rd Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO had seen a number of important texts adopted for the smooth functioning of the Organization. Although it was a non-budgetary year, in particular, in the context of the Madrid and Budapest Unions, the Delegation believed that work and those decisions had made it much more easy-to-use for the users. The international registration systems were vital for the smooth functioning of these Unions and for the smooth functioning of the Organization as a whole. The Delegation noted the progress made in the various committees, and hoped that these committees could continue to meet and allow for fruitful discussions on the various issues connected with IP currently and in the future. It would continue to play a constructive role supporting the various activities in the Organization which are a real example of effective multilateralism and multilingualism which, has been possible because of the excellent interpretation services. Finally, the Delegation congratulated the Director General on the progress made during the 63rd Series of Meetings of the Assemblies.

331. The Delegation of Jamaica, thanked the Chair for her able leadership and perseverance in guiding the work preparatory to and during the sessions, which undoubtedly cumulated very positive results. The Delegation also aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic on behalf of GRULAC. The Delegation commended the Director General, Daren Tang, his management team and other members of staff for their excellent arrangements and support to delegations during the sessions. Undoubtedly the results of the session will fuel the desire and vision of Director General Tang to further bring IP to the man in the street and raising public awareness about the critical role that IP could play in developing solutions for some of the world's most pressing economic and social challenges. The Delegation was buoyed by the consensus that was achieved on the normative agenda, including the GRs aspect of the IGC and commended the African Group for its role in that regard, and trust that the spirit of consensus and multilateralism will not only be maintained in general terms but that it will extend to the work of TK and traditional cultural expressions (TCES) and folklore. The Delegation wished to place on record once more its commendation to WIPO, for its collaboration on hosting Jamaica's national reception on July 14, as well as showcasing "The Role of IP in Supporting Innovation Ecosystems" through its exhibition, and assured both Daren Tang and the Chair, Jamaica's support as delegations continue to make IP more than law but relevant to the development for all countries.

332. The Delegation of France supported the statements made by Group B and the European Union, and aligned itself with the comments of previous speakers who welcomed the Chair's chairing of the Assemblies. The Delegation stated that under the Chair's guidance, significant progress was made and decisive outcomes reached for the smooth functioning of WIPO, such as the adoption of technical assistance and support for the IP ecosystem in Ukraine and the planning of diplomatic conferences on GRs and associated TK and on the DLT. The Delegation underscored the importance it attaches to making further progress on other texts that have been under discussion for many years, on the basis of consensus, which must remain the decision-making mode in the Organization. Finally, the Delegation thanked the Secretariat, the conference services, interpreters, for their important work, as well as other delegations, and wished them happy holidays and a safe trip back home.

333. The Delegation of Saudi Arabia congratulated the Chair on her role in ensuring the success of these Assemblies, for her commitment and able guidance that had enabled delegations to take some very important decisions including the decision on two diplomatic conferences. The Delegation also thanked the delegations for their flexibility in allowing to take this historic decision. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for its coordination role and wished to thank Daren Tang, Director General, the Legal Counsel and all staff. In addition, the Delegation thanked the Director of the Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Affairs Division for his leadership. The Delegation was keen to see the role that IP plays in development and the role that the Organization has to play in development at global level. The Delegation stood ready to provide any necessary support required by the Organization to help delegations move forward on IP issues. The Delegation stated that it would be honored to welcome delegations to Saudi Arabia for a diplomatic conference on a DLT. The Delegation wished everyone a safe trip back home. The Delegation thanked the Chair for her efforts.

334. The Delegation of Sudan congratulated and thanked all those who had contributed to the success of the 63rd Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. The Delegation noted that delegations had achieved some excellent and important results, in particular, on the convening of diplomatic conferences on the DLT, GRs and TK.

335. The Delegation of Eswatini aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation took the opportunity to express its gratitude to the Chair for her leadership and for skillfully handling the Assemblies during a period in the history of the time where the world was faced with so many challenges, spanning from geopolitical challenges, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The Delegation

thanked the DG and his team for the smooth running of the different sessions of the Assemblies. The Delegation equally thanked all the delegations of Member States for the collaboration and interventions had during the entire conference. In addition, the Delegation expressed its gratitude to the regional coordinators for the marvelous work carried out throughout the various sessions held during the two weeks. The Delegation reiterated and encouraged the consensus-based approach in decision-making in this august body. The Delegation noted with much appreciation the historic decision on GRs and the DLT, which was achieved through a consensus seeking approach. The Delegation stated that it would be amiss not to thank the great team of interpreters for their good work. The Delegation concluded by wishing all delegations especially, the capital-based colleagues a safe journey back home.

336. The Delegation of Botswana associated itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation congratulated the Chair for her sterling leadership in the work of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States. The Delegation also thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for their tireless dedication in facilitating and supporting the work of the WIPO General Assembly. In addition, the Delegation thanked and congratulated other delegations for the constructive engagement that led towards effective guidance of the Secretariat on the expectations of the Member States of the administrative matters, including but not limited to ensuring geographical balance in WIPO. The Delegation applauded the WIPO General Assembly for the decisions reached on various matters, particularly concluding to convening diplomatic conferences to adopt international instruments on the DLT, and GRs associated with TK, TCEs and folklore. This indeed was a step forward following the many years of negotiation on those topics. The Delegation committed to work constructively with other Member States to implement the decision of the WIPO General Assembly.

337. The closing remarks of the Director General is recorded as follows:

“Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

“Dear Colleagues and Friends,

“We come to the end of what will be remembered as a historic week for WIPO.

“Thanks to the leadership of these Assemblies, to all of you, this was a week in which longstanding deadlocks were broken.

“A week where we believed we could shape the lives of millions out there, and acted on it.

“And a week where multilateralism was victorious.

“Just as the road to this point has had its challenges, the work ahead will be complex. There will be differences and divergences. But the decisions taken yesterday put us on track to enter into the final lap of what has been a long marathon, and if we keep the spirit of conviction, creativity, collaboration and community that we have seen at these Assemblies, I am certain that we will cross the finishing line together.

“The Secretariat stands ready to support and work with all WIPO Members on this phase of our future journey.

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“Dear Delegates, Dear Friends,

“Last year, I shared with you that WIPO was not in a ‘business-as-usual’ mode. I think you’ve seen that at this year’s Assemblies, which were also not in a ‘business-as-usual’ mode. We were very happy that we were able to innovate the General Assemblies and to build-in new programs like the WIPO Global Awards and side events where IP offices could share best practices with each other.

“But most of all what we tried to do during these Assemblies was to build a sense of community and I want to thank all the Member States that worked with us to arrange these events, which added pizzazz and a sense of community to our work.

“The Assemblies are not only the culmination of a year’s work, as an agency we also provides services and support your growth and development. So our work takes place literally every day of the year. This is why I am also very grateful for the positive, encouraging and supportive statements that many Members made regarding the implementation of the Medium Term Strategic Plan and Program and Budget that you approved last year.

“In the months and years ahead, WIPO will remain laser-focused on delivering the impact that you expect and to leveraging our expertise to support your innovators and creators on the ground.

“I am also grateful for the practical and ideas-focused approach that delegations brought to the many bilateral meetings with me and my colleagues. I have learnt much from all of you and we come away energized by your commitment to transforming your offices from registries to innovation catalysts in support of your country’s ambitions to use innovation, creativity and IP for growth and development.

“Other decisions reached over the last week have also had an important role to play in taking the work of the Organization forward.

“You have endorsed reports on audit and oversight, staff matters and our program and budget, and we will work with all Members to build a diverse and dynamic WIPO staff.

“You have approved a range of provisions that will strengthen the operation of our global services, in various technical areas. These decisions will help us strengthen as an Organization.

“And you agreed to modify the electoral cycle of officers and adopt gender-neutral language into our General and Special Rules of Procedure.

“The Secretariat also stands ready to take the requested action in support of Ukraine’s IP system and innovation and creativity sectors.

“In a nutshell, count on us to work with you to deliver on all fronts.

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“Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

“As we come to the end of what has been a busy week, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all those who have contributed so much to this year’s Assemblies.

“To our Chair, Ambassador Molcean, thank you for skillful leadership, drive and focus. It has not been easy but your wisdom, guidance and dedication have been critical and the ground-breaking results we have achieved under your chairpersonship speak for themselves.

“Thank you also to Group Coordinators for your valuable support. This was an intense Assemblies but your constant engagement, flexibility, diplomacy and stamina were critical to making these Assemblies a great success.

“I also want to thank Member States for your active engagement in our work. Your support for our transformation and your friendship are highly valued and as the first Director General from an IP office background, you always have a very special place in my heart, even though we continue loving the diplomats and Ambassadors equally!

“I would also like to pay tribute to my colleagues here at WIPO who have worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of the Assemblies.

“I am very grateful to our colleagues in the WIPO Secretariat for your skillful stewardship over the last nine days, as well as in the weeks and months leading up to this moment. And although it is difficult to single out specific colleagues I greatly appreciate the work of Assistant Director General Andrew Staines, Deputy Legal Counsel, Anna Morawiec Mansfield and Director of Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Affairs, Omar Katbi.

“Beyond these three, the work of the Assemblies involves so many colleagues from across the Organization. I want to thank our interpreters, translators, audiovisual and IT teams for their professionalism and support. And I want to express my gratitude to our catering, cleaning and security colleagues for everything that you do behind the scenes. A heartfelt thank you to all of you.

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“Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

“One of the great pleasures over the last week or so, has been to see this hall, our lobby – indeed, the whole of our premises – brimming with colleagues and friends, old and new.

“While technology has served us well over the last two years, there is no substitute for a largely in-person WIPO Assemblies and for bringing our community together again.

“There is no technology that I know of that can substitute for a handshake and renewing our ties and friendships. And it is these ties that will help us work as a WIPO family and to continue leading the global IP community as we have done at these Assemblies.

“My colleagues and I look forward to working with everyone to build a world where IP supports innovators and creators from anywhere and where IP truly becomes a powerful catalyst for jobs, investments, business growth and economic and social development for all WIPO Members.

“Thank you very much.”

338. The Chair expressed her deepest gratitude for all the support shown throughout the week and these hard-working days. Firstly, she expressed her gratitude to delegations, both Member States and observers, for the hard work, dedication and wise approach, and to Group Coordinators who truly carried most of the burden of the work done. She also expressed

special thanks to the CEBS coordinator and to her delegation, the Republic of Moldova, which encouraged and supported her in taking the mandate, which turned to be even more engaging, and which she had enjoyed more than she had expected. In addition, the Chair thanked all the delegates who had approached her and commended her for being an inspiration for women empowerment. The Chair thanked the organizers of the side events and stated that everyone benefited and immensely enjoyed the activities. The Chair thanked the Director General, congratulated him for his great team and commended him for doing a great job. The Chair also thanked the Deputy Directors General, the Secretariat, the amazing team on both rows of the podium, the Secretary of the Assemblies, the Deputy Legal Counsel, the Director of the Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Affairs Division and the backup team, the energizing Director of the News and Media Division, the interpreters and all those providing support to these Assemblies. The Chair stated that during this week, which felt like a lifetime, delegations had witnessed important discussions and decisions taken in all fields, covered by the items on the agenda of that day and the other days, some decisions not even hoped or dreamed of, thanks to all delegations. The Chair's biggest gratitude was that the Secretariat kept all delegations safe, and admitted that her greatest fear was not being able to stay until the end, COVID free, as well as not being able to open or close the meeting. Therefore, she extended her greatest gratitude to all. The Chair informed delegations that the Secretariat had prepared a video that summarized in a few minutes the entire activities of the Assemblies and requested the Secretariat to present it.

339. The Sixty-Third Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO was closed by the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly on July 22, 2022.

[Annex follows]

## ITEM 4 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

### GENERAL STATEMENTS

1. The Delegations and Representatives of the following 125 States, (including 9 on behalf of groups of States), one observer, four intergovernmental organizations and nine non-governmental organizations provided oral or written statements under this agenda item: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia (the), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao (People's Democratic Republic of), Lesotho, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Palestine, African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office), Inter-American Association of Industrial Property (ASIPI), All-China Patent Agents Association (ACPAA), China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA), Health and Environment Program (HEP), Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), Latin American School of Intellectual Property (ELAPI) and Third World Network (TWN).

2. Delegations and Representatives 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. Prime Minister José Ulisses Correia e Silva of Cabo Verde:

"I wish to thank the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Daren Tang, for this invitation to address the Sixty-third series of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. It is an honor for me and my country. It was with great pleasure that we welcomed you on your visit to Praia last April, where we deposited with you the instruments of accession to various important treaties and protocols. I am here, today, to reciprocate. I am pleased to be present in person at these Assemblies, which would not have been possible two years ago. The COVID-19 pandemic, through the potential of innovation and information and communication technologies, has accelerated the transformation of our lives and changes in how we work. For my country, the genius of human creativity is key to sustainable development. I would like to thank WIPO for its assistance in the legislative process regarding copyright in Cabo Verde and with regard to its accession to international instruments. Cabo Verde remains committed to implementing the WIPO Development Agenda in order to meet the current demands of change. WIPO has been a key partner for Cabo Verde in the implementation of its intellectual property (IP) policy and strategy charter. We count on this special partnership for the Cabo Verde brand; to work on geographical indications and appellations of origin for agro-food products and handicrafts; to support young entrepreneurs;

to establish a network of technology and innovation support centers; to help Cabo Verde to join those countries where one can monetize content on major online platforms; and to develop and consolidate the IP and copyright governance system. Cabo Verde is about resilience, overcoming adversities and transforming them into solutions. It has existed for more than five-and-a-half centuries. History has forged our homogeneous identity, culture and resilience. We have gone from being a colony to an independent country, from a one-party regime to a constitutional liberal democracy. Today, our democracy is a reference in the world and a stabilizing factor for the country. Cabo Verde has risen from the status of least developed to middle-income country. We continue to work towards sustainable development. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, our people migrated to the United States to embark on the adventure of whaling as a matter of survival. Today, we have a successful diaspora that makes a major contribution to the country's economy, to the development of its scientific, technological, entrepreneurial, cultural and sporting capabilities, and to its prominence. The sun and the wind, once symbols of drought, today represent sources of renewable energy. The sea, once a symbol of emigration and longing, today represents tourism; desalinated water; the export of fish, aquaculture and canning industry products; food security; the digital economy through underwater fiber optic cables; the development of skills and research and development (R&D) in the blue economy; the potential for exploiting blue biotechnology; and the potential to produce clean energy. Our geographical position, which once isolated us from the world, today makes Cabo Verde a tourism platform with great potential as an air, maritime and digital hub, and for cooperation on maritime safety in the Atlantic. Throughout, education has always been key. It has been a family responsibility to provide children with a future, and a matter of public policy in order to develop the country. The country's natural conditions have shown us that resources are a means, not an end. There are countries rich in natural resources and minerals but with much poverty and low levels of human development. The key is to convert natural and mineral resources into education, health, knowledge, technology, innovation, employment and well-being. The predominant factor in this transformation is human capital, in an environment that stimulates initiative, innovation, entrepreneurship and individual and family responsibility, and which creates opportunities. With this DNA of resilience, we have recently been dealing with a triple crisis: drought, COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine. While dealing with such emergencies, we have continued to focus on structural transformation and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. It is in that spirit that we have defined our priorities: the development of human capital to position Cabo Verde as a knowledge and learning economy; acceleration of the energy transition and energy efficiency in order to reduce dependence on fossil fuels; climate action to meet our nationally determined contribution targets; a water strategy to boost farming resilience through smart agriculture; digital transformation and the digital economy in order to make the country more efficient, to develop skills, to create opportunities for young entrepreneurs and to position Cabo Verde as a digital hub in Africa; development of the blue economy to make Cabo Verde a center for R&D and skills-building in that area; the development of fishing, aquaculture and canning for export; the exploration of blue biotechnology and the potential for producing clean energy; more resilient tourism, with multiplier effects on the economy of the islands; smart and green industry as part of the digital transformation, the energy transition strategy and climate action; and development of the smart economy. Those priorities, relating to the knowledge, green and blue economy, can be accomplished through reforms and public policies, with good partnerships, and with public and private investment. IP is an essential component in driving and supporting those priorities. The country's small size and its lack of natural resources leave us no other choice: we can become part of the global economy only with highly qualified human resources, through innovation and efficiency, and by positioning ourselves in the global community as a stable, democratic, well-governed country, with a low level of political, social or reputational risk and the capacity to inspire confidence among the public, investors and partners. The Government has approved a national IP policy and strategy charter that sets out a clear vision on the use of IP as a tool for sustainable and inclusive development. With regard to the ongoing disparity of views among members of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and

Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, Cabo Verde remains in favor of holding a Diplomatic Conference to adopt a binding legal instrument to better protect traditional knowledge, expressions of culture and genetic resources against abuse and misappropriation. We hope to build on our partnership with WIPO in order to meet the country's ambition of achieving sustainable development. I hope that the deliberations of these Assemblies will open up new prospects for fully developing the potential of human creativity on the path to sustainable development, which will be of benefit to all. Thank you."

4. President Iván Duque Márques of Colombia:

"I wish to thank the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Daren Tang, for this invitation to attend the Sixty-third series of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. Protecting copyright is key if creativity and innovation are to contribute humanity's development. For that reason, our Government has drafted a policy paper on intellectual property (IP), the aim of which is to consolidate IP as a tool for encouraging creativity, innovation and knowledge transfer and boosting productivity. The policy will cover a 10-year period to 2031. It contains strategies for achieving synergies between IP administrative agencies and other national bodies. During its term as President of the Andean Community, Colombia led negotiations on the establishment of a regime to protect nation brands. That resulted in the adoption of Decision 876 in 2021. Under this novel regime, which is a global first, the nation brands of the Andean States are protected as industrial property and will serve as a tool for promoting and protecting our countries' image abroad. As you know, one of our flagship initiatives has been the orange economy, a model under which cultural diversity and creativity are pillars of the country's socioeconomic transformation. We are thereby fostering the proper protection of copyright and related rights, which in turn encourages and motivates creators to pursue their activities and ensures that they are financially rewarded for their efforts. In this way, we have been able to ensure access to technical assistance on copyright and related rights for more than 76,000 people. In addition, more than 36,100 works, documents and contracts have been registered by the National Copyright Authority. We are working to protect one of the country's most important resources – creativity and the people behind it. That is how we will pave the way to an innovative future for our country. I invite you to join us and take this road together. Thank you."

5. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on WIPO activities, the Organization had been able to guarantee the continuity and integrity of the services provided to Member States and other stakeholders, while maintaining a positive performance both at the financial level and at the level of established objectives. The African Group was expecting the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (MTSP) 2022–2026 to give a new boost to WIPO efforts to help Member States to confront development-related challenges. The Group was encouraged by the initiatives and projects launched by WIPO to expand its capacity-building activities to a large number of national actors, in particular young people, women, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, so as to help them to make good use of the IP system. The role of WIPO, as a United Nations (UN) agency, was key to boosting production capacities and facilitating the transfer of technologies to developing countries to expedite their economic, social and cultural development. That development-related facet of WIPO was embodied, at the policy and technical levels, in the WIPO Development Agenda (DA), which remained a priority for the African Group. The COVID-19 pandemic, which had slowed progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), had exposed the inequalities between countries in access to essential technologies and highlighted the crucial role that the IP system must play in addressing global challenges, including in health. To that end, the African Group reiterated the importance of WIPO redoubling its efforts to facilitate equitable and affordable access to vital medicines and vaccines for developing countries and urged WIPO to continue its work in the area of global health. In addition, faced with the steep rise in food prices and food insecurity owing partially to climate change, WIPO must step up its development-focused activities in the

areas of food insecurity, the environment, the circular economy and sustainable agriculture. It should do so while facilitating access to green technologies and knowledge and their dissemination, as well as the development of innovation ecosystems in developing countries. The African Group remained concerned by the lack of equitable geographical representation of Africa within the WIPO Secretariat, especially among high-level officials, of whom the number from the African region had decreased alarmingly. Regarding the standard-setting program, the African Group emphasized that standard setting was central to the mandate of WIPO and reiterated the need to make progress on all pending issues by taking into account the varied needs of Member States. In that regard, the absence of real political will to reach an agreement on convening a diplomatic conference on the adoption of an international legal instrument guaranteeing effective and balanced protection for genetic resources (GRs) and the traditional knowledge (TK) associated with them was regrettable. Regarding the convening of a diplomatic conference on the adoption of a Design Law Treaty (DLT), the African Group continued to participate openly and constructively in the work of the WIPO General Assembly to that end. The Group remained optimistic as to the possibility of finding a mutually acceptable solution on the basis of a balance of interests so as to facilitate the registration of designs and models, while contributing to the protection of TK and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs). The African Group reiterated its support for the conclusion of work on the text of the draft WIPO broadcasting treaty to improve the rights of broadcasting organizations in response to pirating of their signals, while ensuring equitable public access to research, education and culture. In conclusion, the African Group invited all Member States to show the political will and flexibility needed to ensure the success of work.

6. The Delegation of India, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, said that the Asia-Pacific region continued to be one of the largest contributors to growth in intellectual property (IP) filings, reflecting the region's entrepreneurial and innovative spirit. IP contributed greatly to socio-economic growth and development, and a fair and balanced IP system would help to develop economies sustainably. Despite contributing significantly to the global IP system, the Asia and the Pacific Group remained severely underrepresented in various WIPO governing bodies, particularly the WIPO Coordination Committee and the Program and Budget Committee (PBC). Membership of WIPO Coordination Committee should adhere to the principle of equitable geographical representation, while membership of the PBC should be universal. The developmental focus of WIPO needed to be reinforced through implementation of the DA. IP must contribute to social good as much as economic good. The pandemic had shown that, while IP was a means to boost innovation, it must not create barriers to accessing the benefits of that innovation. Long-pending issues regarding the normative work of WIPO must be approached constructively. Renewed vigor and commitment was required to ensure that WIPO fulfilled its norm-setting mandate with respect, *inter alia*, to GRs, TK and TCEs; the DLT; and the treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations. The Asia and the Pacific Group welcomed the strong financial performance of WIPO despite the challenges of the pandemic. The positive observations made by the Independent Advisory and Oversight Committee (IAOC), the External Auditor and the Internal Oversight Division (IOD) on the overall governance of WIPO were heartening.

7. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, speaking on behalf of the Group of Central Asian, Caucasus and Eastern European Countries (CACEEC), said that the regional group welcomed the fact that WIPO was returning to normal operations in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries in the region were avid users of the Organization's global services and parties to its multilateral treaties and agreements. Over the previous 10 years, they had deposited more than 30 instruments of accession to WIPO international treaties. Countries in the region were developing IP infrastructure and improving systems for the delivery of IP services. Their main objective was to create conditions conducive to creativity and innovation and to provide legal protection for IP assets as a means of encouraging creators. The Group looked forward to further developing and strengthening international cooperation in the field of

IP in order to improve the global IP system and ensure that it worked effectively. That multilateral cooperation should be based on the principles of inclusiveness, openness and the equal participation of all parties in order to devise balanced and consensus-based solutions. The global IP system had recently gone through a challenging period. The pandemic had left countries facing unprecedented challenges that had affected all sectors of the economy. Member States could overcome its consequences only by working together. It was more important than ever to maintain a professional multilateral dialogue and involve new groups of users. Member States must comply fully with the principle of non-discrimination against any users, as enshrined in international treaties, in order to build an effective global IP system and to ensure that applicants are not prejudiced. For countries in the region to meet the challenges facing them, the range of capacity-building projects being conducted there should be broadened. Those countries also expected the Organization to abide by the principle of equitable geographical representation. The implementation of the revised WIPO language policy was welcome, as were efforts by the Organization to promote multilingualism. Broadening the language regime of the Madrid and Hague Systems was crucial and Russian should be made a working language of the international registration systems. At the previous series of meetings of the WIPO Assemblies, Member States had approved an ambitious five-year plan and the Group was of the view that WIPO should remain a platform for constructive dialogue in order for it to fulfill its specialized mandate.

8. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking on behalf of the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS) Group, said that it was grateful to the Division for Transition and Developed Countries for its help in improving IP infrastructure and capacity-building. The CEBS Group looked forward to strengthening that cooperation. Efforts by WIPO to meet the needs of stakeholders, such as SMEs, and individuals were welcome. Support for green and digital solutions, IP commercialization and IP management could lead to economic growth and improved IP infrastructure. Innovation and technology should thus remain priorities for WIPO. The Organization's efforts to promote balanced IP ecosystems in Member States would be crucial to ensuring global economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group looked forward to seeing the initial results of the implementation of the MTSP. It also stood in solidarity with Ukraine, where war had led to tragic loss of life and the destruction of an independent country, and would help to rebuild that country's IP infrastructure and ecosystem. The failure thus far to adopt a DLT was regrettable and the Group supported work to reach agreement in that regard. A treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations should take into account rapidly developing technologies and address the needs of those organizations in order to provide effective legal protection. The Group would engage constructively in the remaining four sessions on GRs to be held by the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC), regardless of the absence of consensus on the draft treaty text on that subject or on the methodology for the upcoming sessions. The Organization's healthy financial position was welcome. WIPO Unions, especially the International Patent Cooperation (PCT), Madrid, Hague and Lisbon Unions, should continue to be strengthened. The Delegation, speaking in its national capacity and aligning itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic, on behalf of the European Union and its member states, said that it acknowledged efforts by WIPO to secure optimal global services under the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems and welcomed the progress made by the relevant working groups on improving the rules, guidelines and practices of those systems. Efforts by members of the Lisbon Union to eliminate the budget deficit were welcome and Slovakia was participating in discussions with the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System to ensure the Union's long-term financial sustainability. Acknowledging the work of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP), Slovakia stood ready to engage in further deliberations on IP commercialization and collateralization. It also commended the Organization on the technical assistance it provided to Member States and would deepen its collaboration with the Regional and National Development Sector and the Division for Transition and Developed Countries. The Director General had provided welcome support for an



international conference held in Bratislava on the theme “Hydrogen technologies in transport: ready for the future”. His readiness to visit regional centers in Slovakia underscored that innovation and creativity were not limited to capital cities. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that Slovakia had signed with WIPO regarding mediation had created a solid basis for fruitful cooperation.

9. The Delegation of China said that the Government of China had published an IP forecast for the country, *An Outline for Building an Intellectual Property Rights Powerhouse (2021–2035)* in September 2021. In it were set forth the broad brushstrokes for national IP development for the coming 15 years, reflecting the Government’s determination to strengthen IP protection and optimize the business and innovation environment. In February 2021, China had acceded to the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs (Hague Agreement) and the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (Marrakesh Treaty), underscoring the Government’s support for multilateralism and intention to further open up. China and WIPO had been cooperating on many levels with a view to creating synergies between the *Outline* and the Organization’s MTSP. In 2021, China and WIPO had jointly organized the Global Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) Conference and the International Copyright Forum. They were also planning to hold an international symposium on the protection of TK. The ultimate aim of those joint efforts was to build a balanced IP ecosystem. Member States should keep working to advance the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with WIPO leveraging IP and its strengths as a specialized agency in the service of the Agenda. The multilateral IP system centered on WIPO must remain on an even keel and Member States should continue to work in a spirit of unity and cooperation, abide by the principle of consensus and address issues of common interest in a proper manner. The Delegation looked forward to ongoing improvement of the Organization’s global IP services, including the adoption of Chinese and other UN official languages for use in the Madrid and Hague Systems, which would improve service delivery to market entities and innovation actors globally. The oversight and audit systems of WIPO required improvement. The Organization needed to work with greater transparency, for example with regard to program and budget implementation, in order to facilitate a better understanding of and participation in its work by Member States. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China was committed to refining its IP system and thereby fostering the innovation needed to drive development. The Hong Kong SAR was working to amend its Copyright Ordinance in order to address challenges in the digital environment and meet the region’s social and economic needs. It planned to develop its patent grant system and strengthen its capacity to conduct substantive examinations, and thereby better support the development of innovation and technology. Preparations were under way to implement the Madrid System in the region. Under the fourteenth national Five-Year Plan, the region’s advantages in the provision of professional services would be leveraged, and strategic and emerging industries would be supported through IP trading.

10. The Delegation of Germany, speaking on behalf of Group B, said that it strongly supported the inclusion of item 19 on the Agenda, regarding support for the innovation and creativity sector and IP system of Ukraine. The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation was resulting in a tragic loss of human life and was adversely affecting businesses, universities, museums, libraries and IP offices. Group B members were ready to discuss those consequences and to assist Ukraine in restoring and rebuilding its IP ecosystem. WIPO, operating under its MTSP, was in a position to define strategies and priorities and to see the initial results of the work done under its new mandate. The financial results for 2021 were the strongest of any year to date. However, demand for global IP services depended on the global economy, which was currently rather volatile. Thus, prudent and cautious management was required to sustain that positive performance in the years to come. The provision of high-quality IP services that delivered value to users around the world – a core task of the Organization – required services that were technically up to date and fit for purpose. In that regard, the

ongoing efforts of WIPO to modernize the PCT infrastructure was an important step towards continued digitization. The continued growth of the Madrid and Hague Systems and the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center was also welcome. Regarding the normative agenda, Group B stood ready to continue discussions within the appropriate bodies in a bid to find constructive ways to resolve stalemates. Group B fully supported the strategic goal of WIPO to shape the global IP ecosystem. It was pleased to see that the Organization continued to work in unison with other UN agencies, and particularly welcomed the WIPO COVID-19 response package, including the recently launched trilateral technical assistance platform. Finally, with regard to artificial intelligence (AI), a rapidly and dynamically developing field whose implications for the IP system were not yet fully known, WIPO should serve as a global platform and a catalyst for discussions that could shape the future of the IP system.

11. The Delegation of the Dominican Republic, speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), said that GRULAC was grateful for the continued efforts of WIPO to help and cooperate with Member States to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences through technical assistance, support for innovation and technology transfers, and the various activities taken under the leadership of the Director General with other multilateral organizations, in particular the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). GRULAC attached great importance to the work of WIPO in all areas, in particular those with an impact on development. The increase and improvement of services, cooperation, and the technical and regulatory assistance of WIPO contributed to creating a balanced IP system aligned with the 45 recommendations of the DA and the SDGs. GRULAC acknowledged the work and collaboration of WIPO in different areas with Member States in the Latin American and Caribbean region to develop knowledge and use of IP, build capacities and, in particular, implement projects to harness the IP system and encourage innovation. GRULAC was particularly grateful to the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean for its ongoing support in developing and implementing programs and projects related to technical and regulatory cooperation. It also welcomed the efforts made by the Director General to link IP with specific sections of society, especially young people, female entrepreneurs and indigenous and local communities, as well as his decisive approach to development under the WIPO DA. Regarding WIPO committees, GRULAC reiterated its commitment to making progress in work on relevant topics, such as those considered by the IGC and the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR). GRULAC called for the resumption of dialogue with stakeholders and the convening of a diplomatic conference on the adoption of a DLT, and would work constructively to that end. Another issue of particular importance to GRULAC was the opening of WIPO external offices. It was essential to reach an agreement on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation process for WIPO external offices, and to proceed with opening new offices to enable WIPO work to be brought closer to different regions. In that vein, GRULAC reiterated its support for the opening of an external office in Colombia. For GRULAC, it was crucial to bear in mind the value of having had, since 2016, a consensus candidacy that complied with the Guiding Principles, as agreed by the Assemblies in October 2015. It urged Member States to demonstrate their responsibility and commitment to fulfilling past promises and decisions adopted by the Assembly so as to avoid further delays to the decision on opening an office in Colombia. Lastly, GRULAC remained committed to the multilateral system and the Organization's regulatory agenda. It supported the issues to be analyzed under the agenda items "WIPO Committees and International Normative Framework" and "Program, Budget and Oversight Matters".

12. The Delegation of the Philippines, speaking on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that WIPO had provided invaluable assistance in implementing the deliverables under the ASEAN IP Rights Action Plan 2016–2025. Those had included: strengthening the financial sustainability of IP offices; undertaking the ASEAN collective management best practices research project; developing the ASEAN copyright information network; conducting the feasibility study for an ASEAN patent system; and developing ASEAN

guidelines on the enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPRs) online. ASEAN was grateful for the support provided by the WIPO Division for Asia and the Pacific and the Singapore Office through capacity building activities for IP offices, online IP courses, engagement with IP practitioners and technical assistance. ASEAN welcomed the development of the WIPO-ASEAN Regional Technical Cooperation Implementation and Monitoring Plan for IP 2019–2025, which matched WIPO programs with ASEAN priorities. With WIPO's support, the aim of implementing 75 per cent of the deliverables under the ASEAN IP Rights Action Plan would be fulfilled by March 2023. It was hoped that WIPO would provide support for the new Industrial Design Task Force, which would facilitate the completion of 10 design-related deliverables under the Action Plan. ASEAN member States were discussing updating the 1995 ASEAN Framework Agreement on IP Cooperation to make it more relevant to businesses and more responsive to regional and global developments. Recent IP-related initiatives launched by ASEAN bodies included: the ASEAN Digital Integration Index to examine the scope of IP protection frameworks; the ASEAN Digital Integration Framework Action Plan to enforce IP rights in the digital environment; the ASEAN Agreement on Electronic Commerce to guarantee IP protection in digital settings; the Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution to consider policies and tools in the context of innovation; the ASEAN Innovation Roadmap to facilitate collaboration, commercialization and innovation through the IP system; the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework to accelerate digital transformation, and create a centralized digital portal for IP-related information; and the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap to establish a one-stop IP services and information platform for the ASEAN region. ASEAN looked forward to greater collaboration with WIPO and its Member States to accelerate digital transformation in the ASEAN region using IP.

13. The Delegation of the Czech Republic, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member states, said that it supported the inclusion of item 19 in the Consolidated Agenda. It condemned the unjustified war being waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which grossly violated international law, significantly hindered the work of WIPO and was contrary to the values of the Organization and its Member States. The European Union was ready to discuss the Organization's specific contribution to rebuilding the Ukrainian IP system. The operation of current WIPO external offices may need to be reviewed because of worrying developments in the IP field in certain host countries. The European Union looked forward to hearing the initial results of implementation of the MTSP. The Organization's efforts to reach out to businesses to ensure a swift economic upturn were laudable. There was a need to build on well-balanced and forward-looking IP ecosystems to support green and digital transitions. Concentrating on sustainability, furthering discussions on IP and AI and acceding to WIPO-administered treaties remained high priorities. In that regard, on February 26, 2020, the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications (Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement) had entered into force in the European Union. The European Union was committed to concluding a treaty on broadcasting organizations that took into account technological developments. It was also ready to explore proposals to finalize a DLT. The Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) should serve as a forum for discussion on existing patent law systems and their future harmonization. The European Union stood ready to discuss proposed amendments to the new electoral cycle of officers of the WIPO Assemblies and other bodies. The 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Assemblies should be held in the fall of 2023.

14. The Delegation of Guatemala, speaking in its capacity as Secretary *Pro Tempore* of the Ministerial Forum for IP in Central American Countries and Dominican Republic, said the Forum had been established in 2010, on the initiative of Central American missions in Geneva, enabling their ministers responsible for IP to exchange experiences and formulate coordinated public policies to strengthen and leverage IP as a development tool. As IP had evolved over subsequent years, the Forum's members had directed their efforts towards strategic objectives shared by their respective governments, working through subregional cooperation programs for

the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), the regional network of TISCs and handbooks developed for trademark and patent examiners. The contribution of creative industries to national economies had been a particular focus of the Forum's attention. Project proposals to better harness IP had been elicited from creative industries in various sectors, including the formation of strategic alliances between different sectors. WIPO support and technical assistance had been of critical importance throughout that process. The Forum's seventh meeting, held on March 23, 2022, in Santo Domingo, and concluding its first cycle of activity, had been dedicated to assessing the progress made to date and deciding on future objectives. It had also been an opportunity to explore the region's potential in a challenging new global context. Having agreed on projects to contend with the challenges identified, the Forum would continue calling on WIPO for cooperation and technical assistance in carrying those projects forward.

15. The Delegation of Vanuatu, speaking on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. The presence of the Pacific Islands Forum at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Assemblies reaffirmed its partnership and engagement with WIPO to ensure that the voices of its members were heard and its interests reflected. The Pacific Islands Forum supported multilateralism and recognized WIPO as a critical multilateral organization that should continue to promote and protect IP. The Pacific Island Countries had many SMEs and the Organization's focus on those enterprises was appreciated. IP was critical to the growth of SMEs and their work needed recognition and support. Appropriate policy tools and enhanced IP laws safeguarding SMEs were important to the economic prosperity and sustainability of the region. There were many opportunities for the Pacific Island SMEs and, in that regard, closer cooperation with WIPO was necessary. There was great diversity among the Pacific Island Countries and their IP knowledge needed safeguarding. The Organization's focus on designing impactful projects to benefit key industries was welcome. The Pacific Islands Forum commended the Division for Asia and the Pacific for its initiatives in industries of regional importance, including the *nonu* fruit initiative in Samoa from 2019 to 2020, the *Bilum* weaving initiative in Papua New Guinea in 2021 and the current *kava* crop initiative in eight Pacific Island Countries.

16. The Delegation of Albania, aligning itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Slovakia, on behalf of the CEBS Group, said that it strongly condemned the military aggression and violence of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine. The attack grossly violated international norms, especially the UN Charter, as well as international humanitarian and human rights law. Albania stood in solidarity with Ukraine. Russia should immediately stop all military actions, refrain from using force against civilians, women, and children, withdraw its military forces from Ukraine and fully respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Russian aggression and the destruction of institutional capacities and infrastructure had affected the IP sector and access to knowledge, research and development in Ukraine. Between 2020 and 2021, the General Directorate of Intellectual Property of Albania had made achievements. The Government of Albania approved the national strategy on IP for 2022-2025, which was key to developing the IP sector and for which WIPO had provided technical assistance. Albania had finalized the signing of a cooperation agreement on WIPO Lex judgments during the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the WIPO Assemblies. The agreement had been signed by the General Directorate of Industrial Property and the School of Magistrates of Albania. It ensured that judges in Albania would have access to IP decisions from abroad through personal WIPO Lex accounts and decisions from Albanian courts would be uploaded to the WIPO Lex database. Albania had continued to promote the benefits of IP rights for businesses, start-ups and universities. During April 2022 and on World IP Day, particular efforts had been made to raise awareness and to reach a younger audience. An IP Training Center had been established and the WIPO Academy was providing support for training modules. DL001 and DL101 were finalized and DL302 was being translated and customized. Albania had continued to participate in roundtables on international copyright education organized by WIPO alongside the United

States Copyright Office and the Library of Congress, among others. Albania hoped that its participation would facilitate the drafting of IP awareness-raising policies aimed at teachers and younger generations. Albania had also participated in the Intellectual Property Impact Certificate Course, which provided a general knowledge of IP, promoted creativity and inventiveness, and shared IP teaching skills with participants from developing countries, least developed countries (LDCs) and countries in transition. The course targeted teachers in primary and secondary schools in particular and had been made available through collaboration with the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) and the Korean Invention Promotion Association. In terms of IP outreach, a guide on IP had been drafted and adapted to Albanian legislation to help start-ups. It would be distributed to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a national workshop had been hosted with WIPO's support on June 9, 2022 to launch the guide. Albania had paid particular attention to SMEs, especially during the previous two years. In December 2021, a national workshop had been held in a hybrid format to provide information on law enforcement institutions, prosecutors and the training of judges. WIPO had attended the workshop online and a manual for prosecutors and judges, which included adaptations to domestic legislation for IP rights infringements and criminal offenses, had been presented by Professor Mariana Semini. The manual had been distributed to district courts and prosecution offices across Albania. Albania had signed MoUs with partners at national and international level to promote IP rights and strengthen cooperation. It looked forward to strengthening cooperation with WIPO, particularly with regard to increasing administrative capacity, training staff and providing technical assistance in the legal framework. Albania also looked forward to cooperating with the WIPO Academy on modules and training for trainers. It remained committed to developing the IP system in Albania through collaboration with WIPO.

17. The Delegation of Algeria, speaking in its national capacity, aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the African Group. It welcomed the efforts made by the Director General of WIPO to advance the Organization's work and build its capacity to provide an optimal service to its Member States. Algeria set great store by IP and was of the view that WIPO was best placed in the multilateral system to achieve a more balanced IP system and thereby to contribute to sustainable development through innovation. It should take the lead globally in IP matters by leveraging its comparative advantages, expertise, extensive capacity building experience and development-oriented activities. The vision recently adopted by WIPO to help small businesses and start-ups with the marketing of their products and thereby fostering their development and increased competitiveness was welcome. The Organization should make publications, studies and information material, especially on topics regarding small businesses and start-ups and on the fostering of innovation, available in Arabic. That would enable a broader audience in the Arab region to benefit from its IP-related knowledge and expertise. Other areas of the Organization's work, such as AI, green technology and copyright in the digital environment, were commendable. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the importance of health issues. WIPO needed to take a more active stance in the IP debate with regard to fair and equitable access to vaccines and COVID-19 tools. Over the previous two years, Algeria had made significant advances in its policy on supporting innovation by setting up a range of institutional and financial mechanisms to foster entrepreneurship and support innovation and scientific research, in particular for start-ups and entrepreneurs. Algeria would be hosting the Africa Disrupt salon towards the end of 2022. It is expected to be the biggest technology event in Africa and will bring together leading innovation and new technology actors. The WIPO Algeria Office played an important role in supporting IP protection and promoting innovation across a broad spectrum of national stakeholders.

18. The Delegation of Angola aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. Angola had launched various initiatives to diversify its economy and make the country a more attractive market for investors. It attached particular importance to raising awareness of the importance of IP and promoting a culture of protecting IP rights. Work had begun in 2022 on implementing the Industrial Property Automation System

(IPAS) with the technical assistance of WIPO, with a view to modernizing IP services in line with international standards. Work was being done to create local conditions conducive to the digitization of processes and to enable their migration to that new tool. Angola was also working towards accession to protocols administered by WIPO, such as the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (Madrid Protocol). Angola would request technical assistance in that regard at the appropriate time. The Delegation welcomed the support provided by WIPO in the staging of seminars on patents and technology transfer, and for judicial bodies, as well as in-person and online training provided to Member States. The training had enabled Angolan technicians to improve their skills, meet user expectations and become spokespersons on the importance of IP as a driver of development. Angola would welcome continued training support, in particular on patents. The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) had a key role to play in implementing the WIPO DA, which all WIPO bodies should take into account in their respective activities. Technical assistance, capacity building and technology transfer were all key issues for developing countries. Angola continued to hope that the work of the IGC would lead to the creation of an international instrument on the matter.

19. The Delegation of Antigua and Barbuda, expressing support for the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of GRULAC, said that the country was unwaveringly committed to working with WIPO to create a modern IP regime and thanked the Organization for continuing to coordinate meetings and workshops throughout the uncertain times of the pandemic and for providing administrative and technical support. In view of the importance IP to national development plans and goals, the Government had embarked on an aggressive legislative and administrative agenda designed to ensure that domestic IP laws keep abreast with global developments in the sector. Accordingly, a process had begun for the review and reform of the Trade Marks Act, the Copyright Act, the Geographical Indications Act and the Protection of New Plant Varieties Bill. Reformed copyright legislation was expected to be enacted in 2023 to supplement the deficiencies in the current Copyright Act. In addition, the country hoped to accede to other copyright treaties and appreciated WIPO's continued and palpable support in that regard. The Government was also working to establish a more robust geographical indications system, with a view to making the world-renowned Antigua black pineapple and Barbuda logwood honey the country's first ever registered geographical indications. The work of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) had been integral in bolstering the national food supply chain in light of the current situation. UPOV's leadership in protecting breeders' rights and the assistance provided to countries to develop their legal and institutional frameworks to support local producers were valued. Antigua and Barbuda was exploring ways to boost economic growth through the creative industries, in particular through music, sports and folklore. Public awareness campaigns, training and other national initiatives had heightened interest in learning about and protecting IPRs. The country enjoyed horizontal cooperation in patent application examination with other offices in the region. Moreover, the recent signing of an MoU between the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and WIPO, aimed at strengthening the regulatory architecture to support the protection and monetization of intangible assets and other forms of IP, played an important role in mitigating the adverse effects associated with the evolution of digital technology. The Government worked consistently with national entities to ensure greater appreciation and understanding of IP throughout all sectors, including through discussions regarding the establishment of an IP unit within the police force, and through officer training in copyright protection and enforcement. The website of the Antigua and Barbuda Intellectual Property & Commerce Office (ABIPCO) was also being redesigned to ensure current information and user-friendly applications for public awareness of IPRs. The Delegation commended WIPO on the World Intellectual Property Day initiative to celebrate the tenacity, innovation and commitment of young people and had hosted an exciting online campaign in 2022 to celebrate the pursuits its young people in AI, architectural technology, microbiology, robotics, meteorology and information technology (IT). The inclusion of three inspiring Antiguan

and Barbudan businesses (The Local App, Project Jaguar and Packed Grocery Delivery) in the World Intellectual Property Day Youth Gallery underscored that exemplary work. A video series entitled “Conversations on Intellectual Property” had explored IPR use among local entrepreneurs and businesses and had also underlined its tangible operational benefits. Due to the series, an immensely successful robotics and programming exercise for children had been held in May 2022 in partnership with Splash Robo Club. The event had exposed children’s desire to engage in innovative activities in science, technology, arts, engineering and mathematics. The Government was working steadfastly to include IP incrementally in school curricula, and youth engagement had been critical in raising greater IP awareness. In closing, the Delegation thanked the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular the Section for Caribbean Countries, for their efforts and continuing support for national and regional IP initiatives and commended the work of the SCCR, the SSCP and the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT).

20. The Delegation of Argentina aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of GRULAC. The COVID-19 pandemic was not over and global efforts to implement health solutions and stimulate economic recovery were ongoing. The WTO had made significant progress in that regard by passing an agreement on the waiving of patents for COVID-19 vaccines for developing countries. Discussions on whether to extend the waiver to treatments and diagnostics were continuing. The pandemic had underlined the need for a balanced, flexible and inclusive IP system that both protected rights and facilitated access to health and nutrition and the transfer and dissemination of knowledge and technology, in line with domestic policies aimed at promoting public interest in sectors of national importance. WIPO could contribute significantly by strengthening its cooperation with WHO and WTO and supporting efforts to implement the waiver of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). The Organization’s unprecedented surplus should be distributed with due regard for the development dimension and in accordance with the SDGs and the 45 DA Recommendations. The Delegation appreciated the cooperation, technical assistance and capacity building activities provided by WIPO, from which it had benefited enormously, as well as the training activities for human resources from developing countries. The Delegation was grateful for the support received from the Director General, his entire team and all WIPO divisions, in particular the Division for Latin America and Caribbean. It hosted a master’s degree program in IP that attracted students from all Latin American and Caribbean countries, had launched phase III of WIPO Green, was a member of the Latin American Intellectual Property and Gender Network and had more than 30 TISCs across its territory. The Director General should continue working towards an inclusive and balanced innovation system that took the needs of developing countries into account. The issues of gender, access to health and the use of IP by MSMEs should be chief among the Organization’s priorities.

21. The Delegation of Armenia said that Armenia had recently deposited its instruments of accession to the Marrakesh Treaty, and had incorporated the provisions of that treaty into a draft law on copyright and related rights. In addition, the Intellectual Property Office of Armenia was currently developing a long-term strategy for the IP sector with the support of a WIPO expert group. The strategy was due to be submitted to the Government for approval by the end of 2022. The Delegation sincerely hoped that the many activities planned jointly with WIPO but cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic would be carried out in the near future. It looked forward to continuing its cooperation with the Organization and contributing to IP development for many years to come.

22. The Delegation Australia said that COVID-19 continued to have a significant and devastating impact on communities around the world, affecting both lives and livelihoods. It was of paramount importance that WIPO and the broader international IP system continue to respond actively and decisively to the pandemic. WIPO had done crucial work, including in partnership with WTO and WHO, in that area. Australia condemned in the strongest terms the

illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and continued to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. It called on Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and for WIPO and its Member States to consider all options for supporting Ukraine and its innovation and IP system. Innovation continued to play an important role in the well-being of all people, and IP remained key to the innovation process. The appetite for innovation had been clearly evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, with applications for patents, trademarks and design rights in Australia all reaching record highs in 2021. Patenting by Australian SMEs had reached its highest level in at least a decade, with strong growth in patents for computer and audiovisual technology, as COVID-19 forced organizations to digitalize their operations. Trademarks – used by businesses to announce new offerings – had surged for household products and telecommunication services in line with the shift to remote working. In the spirit of continually strengthening support for creative and inventive endeavors, Australia looked forward to working with WIPO and Member States to simplify the international IP system, making it more accessible to innovators, creators and businesses, especially SMEs, and to make IP an everyday asset for the benefit of everyone, everywhere. It welcomed the continuation of cooperative and constructive discussions within WIPO committees and working groups. The Delegation strongly supported ongoing improvements to the PCT and the Madrid Protocol, as well as work towards a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations. It continued to urge Member States to join the Marrakesh Treaty, to spread its clear humanitarian benefits. The Delegation remained committed to working with WIPO and Member States to ensure that the international IP system continued to fulfill its social and economic purposes and serve innovators, creators and businesses, as well as the broader public.

23. The Delegation of Austria aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Germany, on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic, on behalf of the European Union and its member States. In particular, Austria supported those parts of the statements condemning the unprovoked and unlawful aggression of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine. In that regard, the Delegation was pleased to note the addition of the agenda item “Assistance and Support to Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System”. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through the Trilateral COVID-19 Technical Assistance Platform that had been launched alongside WHO and WTO as part of the WIPO COVID-19 response package. It was hoped that the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the WIPO Assemblies would be held in the fall of 2023 to avoid clashes with other meetings of senior bodies at international organizations. With regard to the reports of the IAOC, the Director of IOD and the External Auditor, the Delegation was pleased to note the positive financial results that WIPO had achieved and the uninterrupted first-class service that it had provided, despite the circumstances. The Delegation would follow the recommendations of the PBC, particularly with regard to approving the Annual Financial Report and Financial Statements 2021 and the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations and Rules (FRR). The proposal for a new electoral cycle of officers of the Assemblies and other bodies of the Member States of WIPO was well founded and reasonable. It hoped that decisions leading to a more unified overall governance structure would be made. Regarding the work of the SCCR, the Delegation wished to make progress towards convening a diplomatic conference to conclude a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations in the near future. The Delegation was pleased to note the reports and progress of the SCP, the CDIP, the IGC, the Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS) and the SCT. Regarding the SCT, it hoped that solutions would continue to be sought so that a diplomatic conference on the adoption of the DLT could be convened. The basic text had remained stable since 2014 and it would benefit designers around the world by simplifying and harmonizing design application and registration procedures. Regarding the Madrid System, Austria was ready to adopt the proposed amendments to the rules of the regulations under the Madrid Protocol and it welcomed the proposed extension of the period for early payment of renewal fees from three to six months prior to the expiry date of an international registration. As a member of the Budapest Union for the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of



Patent Procedures (Budapest Union), the Delegation supported including space for e-mail addresses and telephone numbers in the forms relating to the Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure (Budapest Treaty) and the Regulations under the Budapest Treaty. The Delegation also supported the proposed amendments to the Regulations under the Budapest Treaty.

24. The Delegation of Azerbaijan said that the effectiveness and ease of using the global IP system were considered in relation to its capacity to anticipate and react to the challenges of the age. The strengthening of efforts and collaboration under the coordination of WIPO was the foundation underpinning the construction of a sustainable future for IP. The fundamental aim, according to the Director General, was to contribute to building a world where innovation and creativity was supported by IP for the good of everyone. In the present post-conflict period, Azerbaijan was actively engaged in mine clearance and the reconstruction of areas destroyed by occupation. The IP sector played an important role in the work of creating smart villages and towns. The functional transformation of IP into an essential element of economic well-being was becoming increasingly urgent. It would contribute considerably to the development of innovation ecosystems at the national level. The Center for Analysis and Coordination of the Fourth Industrial Revolution had been established by presidential decree, and the creation of the IP Agency's Center for Commercialization and Technology Transfer served the same purpose. To develop a national strategy, issues such as the redesign of IP through the harmonization of legislation, the economy and sociology, and the interaction and cross-fertilization of patent and copyright law were being explored. In terms of the efficiency of the Agency's activities, the new institutional structure for IP in Azerbaijan, which had been unified in a single department and created to reduce transaction costs, was extremely important. The digitization of the Agency's activities had enabled research to be conducted on the protection of new objects, their modes of use and their applications in the field of life sciences and AI, as well as on redefining the role of exclusive rights to create outcomes of intellectual activity rather than act as a limiting instrument.

25. The Delegation of Bangladesh aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India, on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. Innovation- and technology-driven sectors had been playing an increasingly prominent role in the global economy. IP was recognized as the powerhouse of growth and development since it protected and encouraged innovation and creativity. The Delegation welcomed continued efforts by WIPO to mainstream development in all its activities, with particular focus on developing countries and LDCs. The world economy was still recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and job creation, business entrepreneurship and investments were needed to support sustainable recovery. IP should play a pivotal role in that process and should not be a hindrance to affordable and equitable access to vaccines in the context of the current and future pandemics. A number of LDCs, including Bangladesh, were in the process of graduating from the LDC category and required special assistance to overcome their IP-related challenges during the transition. While the Graduation Support Package was welcome, WIPO should consult the graduating LDCs about the Package. In that regard, it was necessary to define the specific deliverables, timelines and WIPO focal points. The deliverables should be tested in a few pilot countries in different regions.

26. The Delegation of Barbados supported ongoing efforts by WIPO to lead in the development of a balanced and effective international IP system that enabled innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. In 2021, Barbados had pressed ahead with efforts to foster creativity and innovation in spite of challenges facing it. In addition to its public education IP awareness program, it had pursued partnerships with other departments and organizations to promote IP as a tool for cultural and economic development. Barbados had made significant progress with regard to amending its copyright law in order to align it with the WIPO Internet Treaties. Barbados was preparing to accede to the Marrakesh Treaty. The Delegation commended the WIPO standing committees on their work and looked forward to continuing the

discussion on the proposal for the protection of country names by the SCT. The technical assistance provided by WIPO to strengthen the capacity of the Barbados IP office and further develop the country's economy was greatly appreciated.

27. The Delegation of Belarus said that meetings such as those of the Assemblies were important for consolidating efforts to build a stable and balanced global IP system. It welcomed the assistance provided by WIPO in strengthening cooperation between it and Belarus and looked forward to broadening that interaction. The Government of Belarus was working to foster an environment in which the creative potential of individuals and the country as a whole could thrive and to strengthen the national IP system. The key areas in the system targeted for improvement were set forth in the country's IP strategy and State program for innovative development. Through their implementation, Belarus aimed to foster inventive activity, expand the network of technology and innovation support centers and raise the profile of IP rights in schools and universities. The Delegation was interested in taking part in the WIPO Inventor Assistance Program and joining the Lisbon System. The national IP system had the potential to be a true driver of accelerated economic development in Belarus and a tool for improving its people's social well-being. However, the regrettable use of unilateral coercive measures by a certain group of countries as a policy tool for exercising pressure was not only stifling national capacity for innovation and hindering achievement of the global SDGs. It was also provoking retaliatory measures, including in the area of IP. That dangerous trend could undermine the efforts of WIPO to build a balanced and effective IP system for the benefit of all. The Delegation urged its partners to respect the mandate of WIPO, which was a specialized Organization and a uniquely apolitical platform for professional dialogue in the interests of all users of the global IP system. The Delegation would fully support efforts made to that end by the WIPO leadership and Member States.

28. The Delegation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic on behalf of GRULAC. The Delegation had been gratified by the Director General's high degree of involvement with the Member States and the new initiatives for women, youth, indigenous peoples and SMEs. The COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated the essential role of IP in economic as well as social and cultural development – and the need to combine it with more equitable access to technology and knowledge for developing countries. Access to vaccines had been a particularly urgent need in recent years, but so had access to medical and diagnostic expertise. By opening access more equitably to all, Members would be making a commitment to life: placing the lives of people everywhere ahead of profits for the few; striving for a more balanced IP system and deepening multilateral cooperation to that end – particularly the tripartite coordination seen in recent years among WIPO, WTO and WHO. The WIPO DA and the formulation of inclusive capacity building projects remained crucial priorities for developing countries, which had been prevented during the pandemic from pursuing development more actively. Additional priorities for the Delegation included the Organization's norm-setting agenda, to protect GRs, TK and folklore in particular; continued work on copyright and related rights and legislation to prevent the unfair appropriation of designs. The Delegation remained deeply committed to working within WIPO to advance these efforts and generate renewed flows of technical and capacity building assistance.

29. The Delegation of Botswana aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The healthy financial position of WIPO reflected the role of IP in creating and distributing innovations aimed at combating the COVID-19 pandemic. In February 2022, the country's national IP policy, developed in 2017 with WIPO support, had been approved by the country's parliament and would soon be implemented. WIPO was also providing support for the model IP office project, which would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of IP service provision online. It hoped that, with the easing of restrictions related to COVID-19, the standard-setting work of WIPO committees could resume fully, allowing progress to be made on the proposed DLT and the work of the IGC to be finalized. The

Delegation would continue to work with Member States to promote IP as a tool for development to address the socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

30. The Delegation of Brazil said that its Government continued to invest in IP as an expression of economic freedom, an instrument for fostering innovation, and a tool for stimulating creativity, enhancing competitiveness and promoting socio-economic development. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, 40 per cent of planned initiatives under the national IP strategy for the period 2021–2023 had been carried out. The National Congress was giving urgent consideration to the country's possible accession to the Hague System. As part of its modernization drive, the National Industrial Property Institute (INPI) had greatly reduced the number of pending patent applications and launched new services, such as its INPI *Negócios* (INPI Business) program and Brazilian geographical indication seals, designed to promote national production and ensure its control and traceability. The country's ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII) had improved and Brazilian start-ups had raised more than US\$ 9.6 billion in 2021, an increase of 174 per cent over the previous year. The WIPO IP Diagnostics tool was being adapted for Brazilian users. WIPO had also provided assistance for projects in support of the development of small producers, such as the registration of a collective trademark for an association of agro-extractive producers in the National Forest of Tefé, in the Amazon rainforest. In 2021, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security had approved a broad new national plan to combat piracy for the period 2022–2025, the main pillars of which were institutions, protection, training and education. Between 2019 and 2021, numerous arrests had been made, hundreds of websites and applications offering infringing content had been shut down and search and seizure warrants had been executed in 12 states across the country.

31. The Delegation of Burkina Faso aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Burkina Faso, convinced of the importance of IP to socio-economic and cultural development, had carried out numerous initiatives to create an ecosystem suited to the strategic use of IP by different economic actors. In order to do so, after having strengthened the institutional and legal framework by creating the National Committee for Geographical Indications and Collective Marks and the Mobile Brigade for Financial Monitoring and Fraud Suppression, Burkina Faso, with the assistance of WIPO, had adopted a national IP development strategy and action plan. In view of the importance of IP to promoting and enhancing local products, the Government had engaged in a process of labelling certain local Burkinabe products using geographical indications and collective marks. To that end, in 2022, the country had registered its first protected geographical indication, for *Saponé* hats, the first craft product from an OAPI Member State to be registered as a geographical indication. In addition, there were four collective marks, including "Made in Burkina", a label intended to identify and distinguish products of Burkinabe origin. Although the Burkinabe authorities, with the support of different partners in the field of IP development, had made significant efforts, numerous challenges remained. In that connection, the Delegation called on WIPO to support the implementation of certain strategic activities in its national IP development strategy. Those activities included the promotion of local products through the geographical indications and collective mark systems, the strategic use of IP by SMEs and women, the valorization of research outcomes from universities and research centers, and the strengthening of the activities of TISCs.

32. The Delegation of Cabo Verde said that the recently approved IP policy charter would guide the country's approach, in the framework of the Cabo Verde Ambition 2030 plan, to the strategic use of IP rights in tourism; the blue, green and digital economies; culture and the creative industries; science, technology and innovation; and trade and industry. Cabo Verde had recently acceded to four WIPO-administered treaties and five regional instruments administered by ARIPO. The Institute for Quality Management and Intellectual Property, together with international and regional partners (including WIPO, the European Patent Office (EPO) and ARIPO) had launched various projects to promote IP among young entrepreneurs, set up TISCs and train officials in IP rights enforcement. The IP system had a key role to play in

the Government's plans to promote scientific and technological development and thereby transform the country into a center of innovation and creativity. The IP policy charter provided for the promotion of the most appropriate IP rights for each productive sector, systematic training in IP across the academic and research community and the establishment of IP offices at universities and research institutions. The Government was determined to strengthen the legal framework for IP and the capacity of national institutions to take appropriate action in that regard. It would also pursue efforts to integrate Cabo Verde into the global IP ecosystem and use IP for the country's sustainable and inclusive development.

33. The Delegation of Cambodia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group and by the Delegation of the Philippines on behalf of ASEAN. Since joining WIPO, Cambodia had introduced legislation on IP and acceded to numerous WIPO-administered treaties, most recently the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Berne Convention), which had entered into force in March 2022. The Government had adopted policies to reflect the Fourth Industrial Revolution so as to increase economic efficiency and enable Cambodians to benefit from the digital transformation. Protection of IP was vital to technological development and had a key role to play in agriculture, environment, industry and health, as reflected in the SDGs. The National Committee for Intellectual Property of Cambodia had therefore drafted a national IP policy focusing on seven key areas: agriculture, culture, education and public awareness, health, trade and industry, tourism, and science and technology. The aim of the policy was to strengthen the capacity of Cambodia to become a technological innovator and develop literary and artistic works, handicrafts, GRs, TK and TCEs. The Delegation was grateful for the support and technical assistance of WIPO, notably in connection with the deployment of the fourth version of IPAS, the geographical indication registration of GI Koh-Trong Pomelo, the issuance of a collective mark for Phnom Penh noodles, and the geographical indication applications for Kampot Salt and Kampot Salt Flower.

34. The Delegation of Canada said that it valued the rule of law as the basis for the international system. As such, it strongly condemned the unjustifiable and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and deplored the tragic loss of human life. The Delegation supported the addition of the agenda item on Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System and looked forward to discussing it. Over the previous year, the Delegation had continued to collaborate with WIPO. The Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) successfully delivered the 25th Annual CIPO-WIPO Executive Workshop. Canada conducted research showcasing how Canadian female inventors fared in the field of AI and collaborated with WIPO on publishing research on IP and the mining industries. Canada was pleased to strengthen its partnership with WIPO GREEN. It was also honored to support an indigenous-led seminar on promoting and protecting indigenous arts and cultural expressions in Canada and the WIPO Photography Prize for Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Youth. Domestically, the general term of copyright protection had been extended from 50 years to 70 years after the life of the author. The measure had received royal assent and was awaiting an order in council to come into force. In February 2022, CIPO had become a depositing office for patent applications for the WIPO Digital Access Service. To help Canadian SMEs better understand how to use IP effectively, CIPO had worked with key domestic partners to form the IP Village. The national IP strategy of Canada had invested in the IP ecosystem with programs such as the Indigenous IP Program and IP law clinics. Those collaborative partnerships had helped to reach innovators across the IP ecosystem. The Delegation remained committed to WIPO and Member States and would work constructively to advance the international IP system.

35. The Delegation of Chile said IP was an important driver of its national development and a tool for motivating creativity and innovation, thus contributing to a more diversified and sophisticated Chilean economy. All creative and innovative segments of society stood to benefit from IP, and especially such less traditional sectors as MSMEs, youth, indigenous

peoples and women entrepreneurs. The Delegation therefore supported WIPO's new vision centered precisely on those sectors, widening the scope of IP to innovators in every field, continuously adapting to changing realities, yet keeping its mission always in view. In that same spirit, Chile was pursuing a series of initiatives for those same sectors, including a new support center for SMEs, seminars and statistical reports on gender-related IP issues, and IP training for SMEs, indigenous peoples representatives and museum collection managers. On the legislative front, a modernized regulatory framework now offered new tools for innovators and entrepreneurs, including provisional patents and nontraditional trademarks. The Madrid Protocol had also now been ratified, entering into force on July 4. These advances were testament to the country's own dedication, with indispensable support from WIPO, to harnessing IP for innovation, technology and national development. The Delegation remained committed to WIPO as the leading forum for setting multilateral standards for a balanced IP system.

36. The Delegation of Colombia appreciated the important work carried out by WIPO over the previous year, including initiatives that helped to promote IP as a key tool in the ongoing economic recovery in all regions of the world. The Government, under the leadership of President Iván Duque Márquez, had taken steps to put science, technology and innovation at the heart of national development and the economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation had been established to oversee the science, technology and innovation sector and to formulate, guide and direct State policy in those areas. In recent years, the Government had made efforts to consolidate the orange economy, which promoted better protection for copyright and related rights, incentivized creators to continue their activities and ensured their economic remuneration and material well-being through the appropriate use of their works, thus complementing and contributing to the attainment of WIPO objectives. During the tenure of President Duque, some 75,000 individuals had received technical assistance in matters of copyright and related rights and 351,000 works, acts and contracts granted by the National Directorate of Copyrights had been registered. The Government of President Duque would leave as its legacy four key complementary policies containing 239 proposed actions to boost innovation and productivity in the country, of which IP was a key component. First, the National Policy on Intellectual Property, was aimed at strengthening the generation and management of IP and its use as a tool to encourage creation, innovation and knowledge transfer and boost the country's productivity. It provided for the development of a specific public policy for IP, responding to the need to define IP not as an end goal, but as a tool for creation and innovation, and recognizing new economic, social and technological realities that necessitated the updating of policies more than 10 years old. It proposed strategies for building synergies between IP administration entities and different national entities, including the judicial branch, in order to facilitate the implementation and enhance the effects of policy actions. It was due to be implemented over a 10-year time horizon, with the involvement of 28 entities and the major goal of making the country a regional leader in the innovation performance sub-index of the GII. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for its collaboration in building that policy and for its technical support in moving the policy forward. Second, the Policy on Science, Technology and Innovation, provided a new roadmap for the development of science, technology and innovation in the country over the next 10 years and for addressing major challenges in such areas as knowledge generation; productivity and competitiveness; social equality; and environmental sustainability. The policy had seven axes: talent; knowledge generation; knowledge use; knowledge appropriation; potentiators; dynamizers of the national science, technology and innovation system; and financing. It was a modern national policy that guided a series of actions to address investment shortfalls, seeking a sustained increase in the financing of research and development activities and ensuring the development of the policy in the medium and long term, in order to achieve the goal of investing at least 1 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in research and development. The policy contained 59 actions, involved 20 administrative sectors and provided for indicative investment of around 7,783 million United States dollars. IP tools and the IP system in general would, of course, be instrumental in

attaining the objectives set by the policy. Third, the National Policy on Entrepreneurship, was intended to foster conditions in the entrepreneurial ecosystem for the creation, sustainability and growth of enterprises. It contained 63 actions, involved 25 public entities and aimed to address needs in the areas of skills development; access to and development of financing mechanisms; networks and marketing; innovation and technological development; and institutional architecture. It set out a comprehensive strategy to promote the strategic use of IP in entrepreneurship, including the provision of training and support not only during the registration process, but also for the marketing and global promotion of products. Fourth, the National Policy on the Orange Economy, set out strategies to improve the conditions and capacities of stakeholders and leverage the transformative role of the orange economy in the sustainable development of territories, through the promotion of cultural rights and networking. The policy sought to strengthen cultural and creative sectors in the country over the next six years, laying a particular focus on the promotion and management of copyright and related rights and the IP system in general. Along the policy's four strategic axes, 12 public entities would implement 54 actions between 2022 and 2027. The legacy that the Government of President Duque was leaving to future generations of Colombians would strengthen cultural projects and position the country as an attractive destination for innovation investment. The national policies discussed would provide a road map for the country for the next 10 years for overcoming challenges in the areas of knowledge generation and transfer, sustainable growth, innovation and competitiveness. The Delegation attached great importance to the continued support of WIPO to enable it to devise and implement actions for the development of IP and innovation ecosystem in the country. It was particularly grateful for the hard work of the Assistant Director General, IP and Innovation Ecosystems Sector, which played a decisive role in strengthening initiatives for significant regional development and helping to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the country's business sector. Initiatives such as the GII and the WIPO Indicators were useful tools for analyzing the impact of national IP policies and adjusting those policies as necessary. It was important to continue joining forces to revive the economy, which was still suffering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the notable recovery made over the two years since the crisis began, it was vital to stay on the path towards growth and economic and social development. The IP system was a tool for fostering productive development and resolving the social challenges facing the country through science, technology, innovation and creativity. The Delegation remained convinced that the establishment of a new WIPO External Office on its territory would provide a strong impetus for the enforcement of IP policies in the country and advance the Organization's mission and vision in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, the Delegation wished to see progress made within the IGC towards reaching a consensus on the signing of an international instrument, to strengthen the common principles and legal means for the disclosure of origin of GRs and associated TK. Colombia set great store by the WIPO Green initiative, which aimed to connect seekers of cutting-edge, environmentally sustainable solutions with suppliers of green technologies and services, especially in developing countries. IP played an important role in addressing climate change through the dissemination of green technologies and in promoting innovation in sectors related to those technologies. The COVID-19 pandemic had been extremely challenging for the entire international community. Under the able leadership of Director General Daren Tang and his entire team, the Organization had managed to adapt to changing circumstances and help the Member States to address the complex international situation. However, the invasion of Ukraine had led to further challenges, including spikes in the prices of raw materials – particularly oil, agricultural products and metals – and shortages of fertilizer. Member States must also consider the prospect of slower global growth and recessionary headwinds, which could have devastating effects on emerging economies. The Delegation had full confidence in the Organization's ability to contribute to developing solutions and proposals to mitigate the adverse effects of emerging challenges for all Member States, especially those challenges related to climate change. The Delegation stood ready to contribute to those efforts and to ensure the success of the Assemblies.

37. The Delegation of the Congo endorsed the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group, reiterating the legitimate concerns raised, in particular those concerning equitable geographical representation within WIPO. The promotion of innovation and creativity for the economic, social and cultural development of the Member States also depended on an efficient and balanced international system, which should be safeguarded. In order to better promote and defend industrial property in the Congo, the Government had committed to a number of innovative actions to modernize the national system, including the reform of the administrative status of the national liaison structure with OAPI, with more extensive missions, decentralization at the departmental level and exemption from patent filing fees. In conclusion, the Delegation commended WIPO's efforts to build the capacity of its Member States and, in that regard, was pleased to have benefited from the seminar on the PCT held in December 2021. The Delegation wished for every success in the deliberations.

38. The Delegation of Costa Rica said this session would be an opportunity to evaluate what direction IP should take in the years ahead as an engine for innovation and economic development during the post-pandemic recovery. The Delegation remained committed to participation in WIPO's various committees with particular interest in the following. First, in the SCT to discuss the protection of geographical indications for services and nonagricultural products; and to examine the scope of protection for nation brands and the treatment and promotion thereof. Second, in the SCCR to resume the discussion on copyright limitations and exceptions for libraries, archives, academic and research institutions and others; and to consider possible cross-border problems connected with specific online uses of copyright works, whose protection against technological encroachment had become a critical issue in the global digital environment. And third, in the SCP to continue discussing the quality of patent award procedures, including the processing of opposition proceedings; to examine the available research on patents and access to medical products and technologies; and to receive up-to-date information on initiatives with respect to databases providing public access to information on patents for medications and vaccines, a subject of worldwide interest in recent years. The Delegation remained unconditionally supportive of WIPO and its commitment to maintaining an environment conducive to intellectual property protection.

39. The Delegation of Côte d'Ivoire aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Organization's healthy financial position, despite the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, was commendable and demonstrated that innovation, creativity and technology were more important than ever to daily life. IP was crucial to Ivorian socio-economic development and Côte d'Ivoire continued to implement the institutional reforms initiated several years earlier to better benefit from opportunities in the sector. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire had adopted decrees to broaden and regulate the collection base for royalties of literary and artistic works. They included a decree on remuneration for private copying, a decree on the acts, tools and systems of reproduction used in reprographics and the rate and terms of payment for reprographic reproductions, as well as a decree on the terms and conditions of the resale right. They reflected the desire to protect IP rights owners, particularly the owners of literary and artistic works. They would help Ivorian artists and creators to benefit more from their creations and further national development. The reform of the statutes of the Ivorian Copyright Office to introduce instruments and procedures ensuring good governance was part of the same initiative. The restructuring of the Ivorian collective management organization was intended to provide members with more efficient services and improve results at the professional and the social levels. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire had placed industrial property at the heart of its national development plan. To implement its structural transformation policy of the economy, Côte d'Ivoire would leverage innovation and invention, and it continued to foster a culture of innovation and invention that guaranteed the rights of inventors and innovators. Côte d'Ivoire would harness young people's creativity through activities such as clubs for innovators and inventors in secondary schools, technical colleges, universities and elite higher education

institutions offering science and technology courses. Club members would receive training on invention, innovation, IP and giving value to innovations. The most promising would receive support and guidance from the Ivorian Intellectual Property Office to give value to inventions that met needs and had commercial potential. The Delegation hoped that WIPO would provide valuable support to implement those initiatives, enhance their content and increase their effectiveness. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for its technical assistance, capacity-building and participation in IP activities.

40. The Delegation of Croatia, recalling that all UN Member States were obliged to settle their disputes peacefully and to refrain from threatening the territorial integrity or independence of any State, said that it condemned the unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which had led to an enormous number of human casualties, the destruction of infrastructure and the economic decline of Ukraine. The aggression of the Russian Federation also constituted a threat to global peace, security, prosperity and principles derived from the international legal order. Croatia stood in solidarity with Ukraine and undertook to fully support its innovation and creativity sector and IP System. The Delegation highly appreciated the efforts made by WIPO in the past two years to ensure the implementation of its main programs in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. It hoped that the current Assemblies would mark a return to full-scale operations for WIPO in promoting, developing and strengthening the international IP system as a driver of innovation and creativity. Indeed, innovative and creative solutions were needed now more than ever to address global crises. Croatia had embraced digital transformation and had redoubled its efforts to make the procedures for granting industrial property rights more efficient, consistent and user friendly. In addition, it had taken steps to ensure that data related to industrial property registrations were secure, reliable and publicly available. As nearly all enterprises in Croatia were micro, small or medium-sized, the Government had made efforts to strengthen the capacity of MSMEs to protect and manage their IP, including by facilitating access to the SME Fund of the European Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). The Delegation would continue to make every effort to address the global economic turmoil caused by the military aggression of the Russian Federation. It was also committed to contributing positively and constructively to the success of the Assemblies, and invited other Member States to join forces in achieving the goals of WIPO and upholding the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

41. The Delegation of Cuba said that subjects related to science, technology and innovation featured prominently in its national policies and the national economic development plan 2030. Cuba was facilitating the creation of science and technology parks, high-tech companies and SMEs that prioritized IP management in their development and acted as a bridge between science and the economy. The emergence of new economic operators in the Cuban economy – in particular MSMEs, of which there were already 4,287 – was increasing demand for industrial property management services. In 2022, the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba had approved the Act on Copyright and Performers' Rights, which provided for rights akin to copyright for performers, remuneration rights for the use of creations and products on computer networks, and rights over computer programs and applications and databases. It was grateful for the visit of Director General Daren Tang and his delegation in March 2022, which had included a ceremony for the award of WIPO medals to a group of inventors responsible for three inventions that had made an important contribution to the economic and technological development of the country. The inventions – safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines known as Soberana 01, Soberana 02 and Abdala – had enabled the vaccination of the entire Cuban population with technological sovereignty. The Abdala vaccine had been the first COVID-19 vaccine in Latin America and the Caribbean and marked a major milestone in the history of Cuban technology. The Delegation appreciated the support of WIPO, in particular the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau, in building national capacity with different actors from the national IP system. It also appreciated the support of the IT Technical Division in implementing



IPAS. The launch of the WIPO File tool for the online filing of trademark applications and other distinctive signs was a particular highlight. Cuba was part of the WIPO Global Brand Database.

42. The Delegation of the Cyprus aligned itself with the statements made on behalf of Group B and the European Union and its member states, particularly as regards the condemnation of the Russian Federation for its invasion of Ukraine. The Delegation appreciated the role of IP rights in supporting SMEs and thus helping the global economy to recover from past and current crises and was grateful to WIPO management for its efforts in that area. The national IP office had worked closely with international organizations to increase IP awareness and protection and was committed to strengthening those alliances and forming new ones to highlight the importance of IP rights and technologies such as AI and blockchain. Cyprus was finalizing the transposition into its national legislation of European Union Directives 2019/790, on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market, and 2019/789, laying down rules on the exercise of copyright and related rights applicable to certain online transmissions of broadcasting organizations and retransmissions of television and radio programs. It expected the relevant provisions to enter into force by year-end.

43. The Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea welcomed the accession of many countries to IP-related international treaties over the previous year. Science and technology were key to overcoming challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and environment pollution, and WIPO had taken welcome steps in that regard. WIPO should pay greater attention to improving IP protection systems in developing countries, which did not fully benefit from IP owing to the North-South digital gap and brain drain. Such circumstances were not conducive to achievement of the SDGs. In order to establish a balanced and harmonized IP protection system worldwide, the drafting of the treaties and conventions presently under discussion should take into account the needs and interests of developing countries. WIPO should also give due consideration to morality and ethics within the field of IP to ensure that IP objects contributed to the welfare and development of humankind. The decision to issue a five-year patent waiver for COVID-19 vaccines was a positive step in that direction. The Delegation opposed any attempt to politicize WIPO activities or to transform the WIPO Assemblies into a venue for political confrontation over the situation in Ukraine. The Government had recently announced a focus on developing science and technology to increase economic development; IP protection was vital to such efforts. The country had recently passed new laws on appellations of origin and geographical indications. Information on activities related to science and technology, patents and trademarks was available online, and higher education establishments had begun to teach IP. During the COVID-19 pandemic, science and technology exhibitions had been held virtually; the inventions of workers and professional researchers had been displayed and promptly put into production. The Government would closely cooperate with WIPO and Member States to continue to promote the development of science, technology and culture by further streamlining the national IP protection system.

44. The Delegation of Denmark strongly condemned the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and stood behind Ukraine and its people. It assured customers from Ukraine that it would support them in safeguarding their IP rights, using the maximum flexibility provided for in law to consider requests for extensions, reinstatements and restorations. Innovation was a key driver of economic growth, and research and development were required to ensure sustainable growth and to address the many global challenges facing society at all levels of development. Accordingly, there must be a proper incentive to ensure a return on the significant investment made in research and development activities. In that regard, IP rights were the primary instrument for harvesting the fruits of innovation, fostering development and stimulating the economy, as well as for knowledge-sharing and technology transfer. The IP framework had been instrumental in the rapid development of vaccines against the COVID-19 pandemic. In that context, continuous efforts must be made to ensure that WIPO delivered suitable and cost-efficient IP services so as to provide users with first-rate products. The Delegation applauded

the efforts of WIPO to improve global IP systems, including the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems, and supported the continuing development of IT services for users and IP offices alike. Reliable systems, ongoing dedication to simplification, and cost savings for the benefit of users were crucial to the continued and increased use of those global IP services. Concerning the normative work being done within the WIPO committees, the Delegation acknowledged the progress made despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. The Delegation noted that the next Assemblies were tentatively due to be held on July 3 to 7, 2023. The departure from the long-standing tradition of holding the Assemblies in the autumn was posing significant challenges for Denmark, given the plethora of other international meetings and mandatory events taking place around the same time. It therefore urged the Secretariat to rethink the timing of the 2023 Assemblies. The Delegation remained committed to contributing positively, constructively and pragmatically to the work of WIPO and its various bodies. The efficient functioning of the Organization's global IP services was of the utmost importance for its users, and it wished to ensure that WIPO continued to deliver world-class services.

45. The Delegation of Ecuador appreciated the Director General's report and his management of WIPO. His initiatives to promote IP as a tool for development demonstrated how IP was more important than ever. IP was essential to daily life and it was encountered throughout the day. Examples included the alarm clocks made using an inventive process, the brand of soap used, the appellation of origin of morning coffees, the industrial design of cars, the copyright of the famous artist's painting in the art gallery displayed on our way to work, the chips in cellphones and the varieties of roses in workspaces. Much progress had been made and technology had been fundamental to developing global economies and cross-border knowledge. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 had presented one of the greatest challenges in history. It had seemed impossible to believe that, within a few months of carrying out scientific research, the world would make the first life-saving COVID-19 vaccines through study and technological progress. As a highly diverse country, Ecuador should continue capacity-building and promoting IP in response to rapid technological progress. That progress enabled the creation of appropriate mechanisms to restart the national economy through IP and contribute to the agreements of the SCCR, as well as the work of the IGC on the implementation of a system to protect GRs, TK and TCEs, and the work of the CDIP. Those projects should prompt the creation of tools that worked towards achieving the SDGs. The Delegation remained committed to protecting IP and creating appropriate mechanisms to raise awareness among the public and further its progress.

46. The Delegation of Egypt aligned itself with the statements delivered 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 by providing technical assistance, capacity building and distance learning programs. All of that helped to enable countries, in particular developing countries, to implement their ambitious development plans and achieve the SDGs. Progress on pending 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 so as to narrow the digital and technological divide between developing and advanced countries. It was gratifying to see that the 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 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's role in development and not just its legal aspects. Trilateral cooperation between WIPO, WTO and WHO, and the technical assistance provided by them to Member States to deal with the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic were laudable. They underlined the vital role of IP, the importance of supporting public health research and innovation and the need for the just and equitable distribution of vaccines to countries and peoples all over the world. Egypt was finalizing its first national IP strategy, which was in line with international standards and under which IP and scientific

research would drive comprehensive sustainable development efforts in line with the country's Vision 2030 and the various goals set forth in the *Egypt Human Development Report 2021*. The country had also taken steps and launched initiatives to boost scientific research and foster innovation and creativity. The main objectives and pillars of the national IP strategy were linked to the SDGs in a way that would support the country's innovation ecosystem and facilitate the achievement of its goals in different areas. The Delegation looked forward to working with WIPO to implement the ambitious strategy, through which Egypt aimed to create a unified national structure to link stakeholders with IP institutions effectively. It also planned to foster a suitable legislative environment by carrying out a comprehensive review of the relevant national laws, to raise public awareness of the importance of IP for economic and social development, and to integrate those concepts throughout the education process. Climate change was a major challenge, the impact of which had long been felt in all aspects of life. It hampered development efforts and affected the lives of millions of people. IP had a vital role to play in efforts to address climate change by promoting green technology innovation and prioritizing the problem at the national, regional and global levels. There was a need to invest in and finance the transfer of green technology to developing countries. As Chair of the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), Egypt was keen to cooperate with all partners, including WIPO, to build on the outcomes of previous conferences. The aim was to achieve balance between the mitigation of emissions and adaptation to the negative impact of climate change, and to garner support for technology transfer, capacity-building and the necessary funding to assist developing countries in adapting to the effects of climate change and in fulfilling their nationally determined contributions.

47. The Delegation of El Salvador aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Guatemala on behalf of the Ministerial Forum for IP in Central American Countries and Dominican Republic, as part of its *pro tempore* presidency. The world had undergone profound and unexpected changes, particularly in the previous two years. The current international context was complex. The most urgent needs should be met and priorities should be re-evaluated. In that context, fostering and using IP was increasingly important because IP continued to promote employment and investment effectively. In turn, it contributed to economic and social development in economies around the world. IP was important to El Salvador and the aim of its Government to continue promoting modernization, innovation and digitalization. It was important to note the work undertaken at the Intellectual Property Registry to speed up processes, modernize infrastructure and improve services. That work had been carried out in conjunction with current efforts to improve the IP regulatory framework. There had been a national increase in IP rights. In 2021, a record number of filings for new works and distinctive signs had been made and cryptocurrency finance mechanisms had been created as part of the Government's commitment to financial technology. The Delegation appreciated and shared the Organization's strategic vision of ensuring that all Salvadorians, particularly SMEs owners, young people and women, could enjoy the benefits of IP. It hoped that its strategic partnership with WIPO would endure in order to continue promoting the IP system within El Salvador and the subregion through projects such as EMPI, the TISC and the data systematization project. The Delegation appreciated the Director General's leadership and the excellent results that he had achieved. The Delegation was grateful for his direct involvement in sub-regional activities that had been carried out in the framework of the sub-regional IP forum of Central America and the Dominican Republic. It hoped that WIPO would provide support to conclude agreements and implement specific projects that had been agreed during that forum. The Delegation was grateful to the Director of the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Senior Program Officer of the Copyright Development Division for implementing projects of particular national interest. The Delegation remained committed to continuing its active participation in WIPO work to achieve tangible results, including with regard to normative work. It hoped that Member States would engage in a productive dialog over the coming days to ensure the success of the current session of the WIPO Assemblies.

48. The Delegation of Estonia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Slovakia, on behalf of the CEBS Group, and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states. With the war in Ukraine threatening the existence and functioning of the entire multilateral system, it was important that WIPO could support and show solidarity with all Member States in urgent need of assistance, as Ukraine did. Estonia therefore fully supported Agenda Item 19. The performance of WIPO continued to improve and significant progress had already been made in implementing the MTSP. The Delegation welcomed the efficient management of the Organization's resources, and commended the work of WIPO on innovation. The Government continuously monitored its ranking in the GII, which provided valuable feedback on national efforts. The WIPO initiative on SMEs and start-ups, and the development of relevant tools to support the sector, were also greatly appreciated. The first Technology Transfer Offices (TTO) network had recently been established in the Baltic States as a result of the long-term contribution of WIPO to the region, and Estonia hoped to pave the way for other regional TTO networks. The Delegation was following the WIPO Conversation on IP and Frontier Technologies with interest; it was essential for WIPO to prepare for and adapt to ongoing developments. The Delegation supported the work WIPO was doing to develop and promote the worldwide IP system, and looked forward to contributing constructively.

49. The Delegation of Eswatini aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Eswatini had recently hosted the inaugural joint WIPO-ARIPO (African Regional Intellectual Property Organization) Conference of Heads of Intellectual Property Offices in ARIPO member States, which had identified opportunities for cooperation in IP administration and value-creation in the region. The Directors General of ARIPO and WIPO had attended the Conference and contributed extensively to the deliberations. WIPO had recently assisted Eswatini in reviewing its IP regulatory framework. One of the Government's main priorities in that regard was to achieve a legislative and policy environment compatible with the country's needs and conducive to innovation and creativity. WIPO had also provided technical assistance in conducting a holistic review of the country's IP laws. Eswatini was focused on its institutional capacity for efficient copyright administration, with a view to better leveraging copyright for the country's economic and cultural benefit. Training by WIPO had helped officials to better understand how copyright could contribute to a stronger economy. The country's evaluation and planning for automation of its IP administration processes had benefitted similarly from the support of WIPO and the Organization's partners and networks. The Government was currently assessing automation options with a view to improving the efficiency of its administrative and commercial processes and eliminating bottlenecks for creativity and innovation.

50. The Delegation of Ethiopia aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Ethiopia was implementing its Vision 2030, Pathway to Prosperity, in which it prioritized national innovation and technology policy, in particular with regard to IP. An innovation fund would be set up to support the development and exploitation of IP rights. The Government was preparing a proclamation on TK and cultural expressions with technical assistance from WIPO and considering possible amendments to earlier proclamations on copyright and related rights and on patents. The Government was also working to incorporate the Marrakesh Treaty into national law. It was hoped that Ethiopia would join the Paris and Madrid Systems thereafter. In 2022, the renamed Ethiopian Intellectual Property Authority (EIPA) and WIPO had completed the final draft of a long-awaited revision of the country's national IP policy and strategy, which had been submitted to the Government for approval. The first module of the WIPO Training for Trainers program had been successfully completed at the National IP Academy. Trainees from EIPA, private IP practices, collective management organizations, research institutes and academia had taken part. A national awareness workshop had been held in Addis Ababa on branding and the development of traditional medicine, in collaboration with Gondar University. The WIPO Division for Africa and

the WIPO Academy, through its distance-learning program, had contributed significantly to those activities. Office automation had been improved through digitization, paperless office practices and the expansion of e-service capabilities, with support from the WIPO IP for Business Division. With regard to the workforce of WIPO, more emphasis on diversity was needed in order to address gender and geographical under-representation.

51. The Delegation of Fiji, aligning itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group and by the Delegation of Vanuatu on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, said that it attributed great importance to WIPO as a multilateral institution that protected IP. Its value and significance became even greater in the face of current global challenges. As countries recovered from the COVID-19 pandemic, measures should be taken to ensure that the global economy never faced the catastrophic consequences of ill preparation again. Now more than ever, people's lives should be, and would remain, at the center of work in Fiji and WIPO played a vital role in that regard. The trilateral collaboration between WIPO, WHO and the WTO was crucial. The Delegation looked forward to working closely with the Director General and WIPO to strengthen that collaboration and to contribute to the COVID-19 recovery effort. IP was an important contributor to socio-economic growth and development. As a Pacific small island developing state, Fiji had a wealth of TK and creative talent but it did not necessarily have the capacity to safeguard and protect those resources. Work with WIPO was necessary to introduce safeguarding measures and prevent global forces from draining the unique creation and development prospects in Fiji and in other Member States. WIPO should be mindful of the development aspects of its work and it should give equal consideration to all of its members, irrespective of their level of development. Fiji had benefited from training programs and other WIPO opportunities, which should continue to be provided. It hoped that the lifting of travel restrictions would facilitate the release of a new training package to address knowledge gaps and build capacity in Member States. The Delegation recognized that there were long-standing issues within the normative work of WIPO which affected the development aspirations of Fiji. Those issues, which related to GRs, TK and TCEs, needed to be addressed. Without appropriate mechanisms and WIPO support, Fiji stood to lose a great deal. The Delegation appreciated the WIPO Academy courses and the scholarships for the distance learning program. Over the years, there had been 20 participants from Fiji and it hoped that that participation and collaboration would continue in order to bridge capacity constraints when dealing with IP issues.

52. The Delegation of Finland said that the WIPO Assemblies highlighted the strength of the multilateral system, which had met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine posed a new and significant challenge to the multilateral system with humanitarian and economic consequences. SMEs, creators, innovators, youth, indigenous peoples and politicians in developed and developing countries could and should use and benefit from IP. WIPO played a vital role in sharing knowledge and promoting discussions on those issues. The Delegation valued its longstanding and close cooperation with WIPO, which had recently led to the development of its copyright infrastructure. That development had been a high priority for Finland and other Member States, organizations and companies and it had been an ambitious and multifaceted endeavor. Finland was a strong advocate of innovation. It appreciated the Director General's efforts regarding the WIPO Ministerial Forum on Innovation and looked forward to participating in discussions. The Finnish Patent and Registration Office (PRH) was due to celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an independent administrative office and the first patent in Finland had been granted 180 years ago. It was crucial to ensure that society and future generations of right holders could continue to benefit from the efficient operation of the IP framework. The recently published Finnish IP strategy contained 15 measures covering the areas of responsibility of several ministers and ministries. The measures included improving skills with regard to IP and related areas and making use of quality data management. It was important to continue embracing new technologies and to tackle the challenges posed by AI within the IP system. In line with the IP

strategy, updates were being made to national patent legislation through close collaboration between ministries, agencies and relevant stakeholders. Finland wanted to become the world's most effective environment for experimenting with and developing sustainable solutions to societal challenges. To remain at the forefront of innovation development, it was necessary to increase research and development spending to four per cent of GDP by 2030. It was an ambitious goal that required significant investment from the public and private sectors. It was important to ensure that other aspects of the research, development and innovation environment promoted innovation and that the IP rights system functioned properly. More attention needed to be paid regionally to the importance of IP rights for indigenous peoples and work was underway to ascertain how the current IP system could better serve the interests and needs of the Sámi.

53. The Delegation of France first thanked WIPO for its renewed efforts to deal with the successive crises since 2019 while ensuring its mission to protect and promote IP. The Russian Federation's tragic invasion of Ukraine had shaken not only Ukrainians, but also the region and the world. France therefore asked the Organization to show solidarity with and commitment to the Ukrainians in the area of IP. At a time when the world was threatened with irreparable fractures, it was essential to join forces. Strong, effective multilateralism was more necessary than ever. Multilateral organizations, such as WIPO, needed to contribute to solving the crisis. WIPO and its Member States must continue with both cooperation and their normative work, in particular the protection of broadcasting; the protection of GRs, TK and folklore; the protection of designs; and the promotion of geographical indications. Universal acceptance of the IP system was essential for the system to adapt to global and social evolutions. The second priority was to put IP at the service of human development. Innovation should serve the growth strategies of the LDCs, or those in transition, to contribute to their development. As a priority, it should allow the distribution of essential goods related to health-care access and to food security. Innovation should be for all and open to all, including young people, women and small businesses, regardless of geographical origin and the level of economic development of the country. France actively supported innovation, especially the implementation of solutions for medical research and for the fight against climate change. Its ambitions for the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session were in line with those set out in the WIPO Convention, namely, to encourage creative activity, to promote IP throughout the world and to make the joint administration of the Unions more efficient.

54. The Delegation of the Gambia aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Under its IP policy and strategy for the period 2018–2023, the Gambia was giving priority to activities such as office automation and drafting new IP legislation for 2022. Assistance by the WIPO Division for Africa in promoting IP among member States of ARIPO and the Masters IP distance-learning program of the WIPO Academy, which was being offered at the Africa University in Zimbabwe, were both welcome. IP experts from the Academy had assisted the Gambian Registrar General's Office. The WIPO Connect program would help to enhance the country's creative industries. Two TISCs had begun operating and a third was planned for the University of the Gambia. A capacity-building workshop on enforcement would be held in September 2022 for legal officers, judges, magistrates, prosecutors and private legal practitioners. It would address the application of basic IP laws to combat piracy, counterfeiting and IP infringement in general. Legislation would be passed by the end of 2022 to merge the Industrial Property Office and the Copyright Office, thereby streamlining IP administration. The Gambia would welcome assistance from WIPO with its plans to upgrade IPAS in use at the Industrial Property Office, which would be carried out with a view to enhancing the efficiency of its examination, notification, publication and registration processes.

55. The Delegation of Georgia fully supported the statement made by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group. The past two years had been challenging for the global economy and the IP environment. However, with the support of international partners, the

Intellectual Property Center of Georgia (IPCG) had adjusted its processes and maintained its high level of service for applicants. By digitalizing its databases and utilizing WIPO online tools, the IPCG had successfully transitioned to hybrid and remote working. Convinced that IP protection started with education, Georgia was grateful to the WIPO Academy for its support with educational initiatives and its joint programs. The IPCG was due to roll a number of educational programs over the next year – including a distance-learning program for judges, aimed at enhancing knowledge of IP rights in the judicial system – and had initiated discussions for the establishment of a master’s degree program in IP, in collaboration with the WIPO Academy. Georgia set great store by the geographical Indications system and had submitted a proposal to host the next Worldwide Symposium on Geographical Indications. In addition, it attached particular importance to improving geographical representation within WIPO, to increase the number of WIPO employees from unrepresented or underrepresented countries such as Georgia. The IPCO looked forward to hosting the WIPO Director General, Mr. Daren Tang, in the fall of 2022 and discussing with him future cooperation activities and the role of WIPO in strengthening educational programs in Georgia and protecting IP rights in the region. The Delegation particularly thanked the Division for Transition and Developed Countries for its outstanding support and its active engagement in implementing joint programs. Lastly, the Delegation remained committed to achieving consensus on complex agenda items at the Assemblies.

56. The Delegation of Germany, speaking in its national capacity, fully supported the statements made on behalf of Group B and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states, especially as regards the condemnation of the Russian Federation for its unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine. In that regard, it supported the inclusion on the Assemblies agenda, an item on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation considered IP an important instrument for addressing current global challenges, including in the areas of health, economic recovery, climate change and sustainable development. Having been actively involved in discussions on patents and health, it strongly supported the trilateral cooperation among WIPO, WHO and WTO on matters of public health and encouraged WIPO to continue to strengthen its contribution in that arena. It welcomed the continued efforts of WIPO to assist Member States in managing the COVID-19 pandemic but considered that the Organization could play a more active role in developing IP-based solutions – such as patent pools, pledges, and licensing structures – to ensure fairer global access to vaccines and other medicines. In addition, WIPO should contribute actively to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in close cooperation with other Geneva-based institutions. In that regard, the Organization may wish to join the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) to improve its multilateral cooperation with other UN entities and partners and to stimulate new thinking on the role of IP in implementing the SDGs. The Delegation supported further international normative development aimed at simplifying and harmonizing the existing international IP framework for the benefit of stakeholders. As the deliberations within the SCCR had demonstrated, the international harmonization of legal concepts in that field was complex and required time and dedication on all sides. The Delegation therefore welcomed the decision to hold two regular SCCR sessions in 2023 and considered that the Member States must continue to respect the traditional consensus on the allocation of time between SCCR agenda items. The Delegation remained committed to improving the protection of broadcasting organizations by reaching a consensus on an international treaty. In order for the treaty to be successful in the long term, its scope should encompass the technical developments that had taken place in the meantime. The discussion on further technologies, especially deferred transmissions, was therefore welcome, and the revised draft text prepared by the SCCR Vice-Chair and facilitators provided a sound basis for future work. With regard to limitations and exceptions, while the Delegation firmly believed that there was no need for a legally binding international instrument for such matters, it was keen to share national experiences and learn more about other Member States’ legal



concepts. It was also interested in sharing views on other issues such as resale rights and challenges for copyright in the digital environment. Turning to patent law, WIPO and in particular the SCP must heed the call of patent system users around the world for the further development, harmonization and improvement of that system. With regard to AI, the sharing session on the use of AI in examinations of patent applications, held during the thirty-third session of the SCP, had been useful, and the sharing session on the patentability of inventions using AI and by AI, due to be held at the thirty-fourth session of the SCP, would doubtless be equally beneficial. The Delegation was particularly eager to continue work on issues of patent quality, including opposition systems, and the confidentiality of communications between clients and their patent advisors. Further work in that area was beneficial to all countries, irrespective of their level of development, since it would enhance the credibility, reliability and stability of the international IP system. The Delegation welcomed the ongoing efforts of WIPO to modernize the infrastructure of the PCT and other WIPO services to keep them working efficiently and noted with appreciation that the PCT System had continued to perform well during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the German Patent and Trade Mark Office (DPMA) had processed 6,900 international applications in the national phase, of which approximately 88 per cent had been filed by applicants from outside Germany. The DLT remained a pending issue. The Delegation regretted both the rejection of the proposal made at the 2019 WIPO General Assembly to resolve the issue of the disclosure requirement and the continued lack of consensus on the convening of a diplomatic conference. Like other European Union member states, it remained convinced that such a requirement was not relevant to industrial designs and that its inclusion in the DLT would contradict the aim of simplifying and harmonizing design registration procedures; however, it was open to considering any reasonable and constructive proposals in that regard. With respect to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement since the accession of the European Union in 2019, the European Commission had filed applications for the registration of 137 European Union geographical indications. The recent submission of a proposal for European Union-wide protection for non-agricultural products, expected to enter into force on January 1, 2024, would likely increase the attractiveness of the Lisbon System. There was a broad consensus among Member States to continue work within the IGC. While recognizing the importance of that work, the Delegation noted the lack of progress made during the current biennium and thus proposed placing a stronger emphasis on the working methodology of the IGC. Indeed, a great deal of work had still to be done to reach consensus on a *sui generis* instrument that accounted for the interests of holders of TK, GRs and folklore without harming the functioning of the international IP system. The Delegation supported the continued implementation of the 45 DA Recommendations in a balanced and consensus-driven manner and noted with appreciation the positive developments in the execution of DA projects. It was pleased to note that the CDIP had agreed on a sub-topic for the International Conference on IP and Development for 2023, focusing on IP and innovation for sustainable agriculture, and looked forward to participating in the twenty-ninth session of the CDIP. The DPMA had continued its successful cooperation with WIPO, although the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic had severely restricted its interactions with the Organization and regional and national IP offices. However, following the recent lifting of restrictions, international activities were due to resume as normal. In cooperation with WIPO and the Albanian General Directorate of Patents and Trademarks (GDPT), the DPMA was conducting training for patent examiners in the area of supplementary protection certificates.

57. The Delegation of Ghana aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. WIPO's MTSP had influenced the level of importance Ghana now assigned to IP regimes and modernization efforts. These included amendments to IP laws, the enactment of implementing regulations to simplify national IP procedures and processes, and accession to IP treaties of key interest to Ghana, including the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement among many others. Pleased with WIPO's improved financial situation and continuing fiscal prudence, even in the face of COVID-19, the country hoped to see progress in the negotiation of broadcasting issues, adoption of the DLT and work of the IGC. It



hoped that the IGC in particular would focus on and accelerate the development of an international legally binding instrument. The country also looked forward to the continuing establishment of TISCs and to further cooperation with WIPO in the Organization's capacity-building activities. In areas where consensus had been elusive, transparent and flexible cooperation would be needed from all delegations. The Delegation pledged to engage constructively in that process.

58. The Delegation of Greece, aligning itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B, and the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that, in spite of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and market volatility, prudent management of resources had ensured positive financial results for WIPO. The PCT and Madrid Systems remained robust, contributing to the Organization's surplus. Efforts should continue to ensure that the IP system delivered high-quality services and was easily accessible. IP played a pivotal role in technological and economic development and required a balanced system and an enabling environment. The Greek IP system had continued to support innovation and creativity, fostering an environment conducive to growth. Patent filings before the Hellenic Industrial Property Organization (OBI) had increased by 20 per cent, mainly because the OBI had subsidized a 33 per cent decrease in the search fee with a view to facilitating access to the patent system. Following a transition period to allow for the transfer of competence from the Ministry of Development and Investments, trademark filings before the OBI had started on May 17, 2022. To manage IP titles effectively and facilitate access to the IP system, it was essential to digitalize the filing procedure and improve IT infrastructure. Activities and educational programs had been organized to raise awareness of the importance of IP rights and their enforcement. Thessaloniki and Mykonos had joined the "Authenticities" network of the EUIPO to combat counterfeiting. The Hellenic Copyright Organization (HCO) was devoted to protecting rights holders and it had made a significant contribution to the updating of national laws to tackle digital piracy. Since December 2021, the Committee for the Notification of Copyright and Related Rights Infringements on the Internet had blocked access to 608 domain names and 587 IP addresses for live streaming of televised sports events. Access had been blocked to 590 domain names to protect copyright and related rights. The Committee was fully supported by IT and legal experts from HCO and Greece was an official contributor to the WIPO Building Respect for IP (BRIP) Database. The HCO had continued to provide hybrid and in-person educational programs on the lawful use of protected online content. It was also running a new project, "Respect", alongside Spain and Cyprus to communicate the principles of copyright law. The HCO was constantly enhancing the Greek portal of the European Union "Agorateka" initiative, which provided creative content legally to combat piracy and protect copyright and related rights. The Interagency for Market Control had worked alongside Greek IP enforcement authorities to combat counterfeiting. Between August 2020 and June 2022, almost 35,000 inspections had been carried out, resulting in the seizure of some 455,000 counterfeit items and fines amounting to around 4,300,000 euros.

59. The Delegation of Guatemala aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic on behalf of GRULAC, and reiterated its commitment to contributing constructively to the various items on the agenda. IP was key to national development as it was through human creativity, innovation and technology transfer that knowledge could be converted into intangible assets that generated wealth. Guatemala had worked on multiple lines of action that promoted the use and benefits of the IP system, which had been aimed at academia, SMEs, the creative industries and, in particular, female and young creators. In addition, the TISC and IP Registry had developed a training plan for both the national and subregional levels with the aim of promoting the development of scientific and technological research and innovation so as to create new models of business and entrepreneurship. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO, the Director General, the Director of the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean and her team, and the Senior Program Officer of the Copyright Development Division for the effective support and assistance the country had received in

building its technical capacities, and developing projects and continuing training for the National IP Office and sectors involved in the various aspects of IP.

60. The Delegation of Guinea aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group, and remained committed to the development of IP for the benefit of everyone, everywhere. Guinea was deeply grateful to WIPO for continuously supporting the advancement of IP in the country, a prime example of which was the TISC project. The Government had taken measures at the national level to embed IP in the country. For example, to encourage the development of the handicrafts sector, it had recently passed an act prohibiting the importation of designs that counterfeited traditional Guinean textiles. The assistance of WIPO was required to strengthen the development of IP, particularly for ensuring universal access to technical information, promoting industrial designs, strengthening the promotion of local products through geographical indications, and incorporating IP into training programs.

61. The Delegation of Hungary, aligning itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member States, supported WIPO in its efforts to develop a balanced and effective international IP system and foster innovation and creativity worldwide. IP was central to the economic development strategy of Hungary, the aim of which was to protect and promote sustainable development, job creation, business growth and innovation. Hungary offered programs to help SMEs to use the IP system in order to launch their innovations and products on domestic and foreign markets. Assistance provided by WIPO in that regard was greatly appreciated. IP should be seen by companies as a key economic asset in the conduct of their business. The Hungarian Intellectual Property Office (HIPO) also supported domestic investors, research and development specialists and innovators. Hungary wished to develop and extend its digital and user-friendly services in order to attract more users to the IP system. Companies should be able to rely on the broadest possible geographical coverage in the Organization's international registration systems. Further strengthening international cooperation would lessen administrative burdens and cut costs. Regional cooperation, such as with the Visegrad Patent Institute (VPI), also provided important incentives. Hungary had ratified the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement in 2021 and hoped that more States would follow suit. It was committed to modernizing and strengthening the international protection provided to broadcasting organizations and to adopting a DLT.

62. The Delegation of Iceland appreciated the inclusion of item 19 in the Consolidated Agenda. It was as yet unknown what consequences the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation might have. IP matters must be addressed urgently at the international level. On November 4, 2021, the Icelandic Intellectual Property Office (ISIPO) had marked its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary by holding a hybrid conference entitled "IP and sustainability: innovation for a brighter future". The theme had been inspired by WIPO work on sustainability and green technology and the theme for World IP Day in 2022 ("IP and youth: innovating for a better future"). ISIPO had benefited from WIPO webinars over the previous year and was constantly seeking ways to introduce digital and user-friendly solutions and services. The increase in Madrid e-filings was welcome. In 2021, trademark filings had risen by 7 per cent design filings by 53 per cent. Patent filings, however, had decreased by 26 per cent. International trademark and design filings continued to be stable but PCT filings had decreased by 52 per cent. ISIPO was exploring ways to raise awareness and promote use of the patent system. In fall 2021, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation had been established to enhance prosperity and create knowledge-based jobs. Its aim was to make knowledge the country's largest export sector. The Delegation welcomed the initiative to convene IP ministers for a ministerial forum. ISIPO and the University of Iceland had chosen the theme of World IP Day in 2022 to strengthen their cooperation and enhance IP rights education at the University. The Delegation welcomed the Organization's efforts to focus on innovators and creators, empower

women in IP, share success stories and promote use of the system. The Delegation looked forward to cooperating on future awareness-raising projects.

63. The Delegation of India, speaking in its national capacity, was in favor of building a more inclusive IP community for young people, women, SMEs and start-ups. The country's IP landscape and innovation ecosystem had shown significant growth over the previous decade thanks to its transition to a knowledge-based economy and society. Domestic filings of IP applications had improved remarkably over the previous decade and the number of patent applications had increased by 46 per cent over the previous five years. The country's development strategy was based on supporting knowledge, innovation and sustainability. The absence of an international framework for protecting GRs, TK and TCEs had led to misappropriation and bio-piracy of genetic resources and biodiversity in many Member States. It was essential to finalize an international legal instrument to enable balanced and effective protection of GRs, TK, TCEs. The conclusion of the design law and broadcasting treaties was also essential. The Delegation stood ready to host a WIPO external office to lead development of the international IP system in the region and to promote IP services and values. It was also committed to providing effective support services to other developing countries. Equitable geographic representation across all WIPO functions and committees should be given due consideration.

64. The Delegation of Indonesia aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts had led to higher inflation, job losses and the disruption of global supply chains in critical sectors such as food and energy. However, the pandemic had also instituted positive change in society and within governments and institutions, including WIPO. The Organization's recent performance was encouraging, and its commitments related to the COVID-19 response package were welcome. The Director General's renewed focus and the Organization's MTSP would ensure impactful IP policies for underserved communities such as youth, SMEs and women. The Delegation remained committed to collaborating with WIPO and leveraging innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. It looked forward to implementing the country plan for technical cooperation in collaboration with WIPO, as well as other initiatives related to the creative economy, brands and designs, SMEs and start-ups. Indonesia continued to advocate for an effective and balanced global IP system. In 2018, it had joined the Madrid System, and in 2020, it had ratified the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances and the Marrakesh Treaty. Furthermore, in 2022, it had deposited its instruments of accession to the Budapest Treaty. Regarding the normative agenda, the continuation of substantive negotiations within all WIPO committees was welcome. The Delegation would continue to contribute actively to all negotiations aimed at establishing balanced international IP rules and norms. It called for open, inclusive and intensive negotiations in order to bridge gaps, particularly with regard to the draft treaties on the protection of GRs and broadcasting organizations and the proposed DLT. The Delegation remained committed to hosting a diplomatic conference for the adoption of the DLT. Lastly, it looked forward to welcoming all delegations participating in the World Conference on Creative Economy to be held in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2022.

65. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) said that IP featured prominently in national policies, laws and development plans and underpinned the knowledge-based economy developed by the Government over recent years as part of efforts to promote sustainable development. The Supreme Leader of Iran (Islamic Republic of) had designated the current year of the new Iranian calendar as the year of "Production: Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating", attesting to the importance of knowledge-based technologies to the country. The State Organization for Registration of Deeds and Properties had established a partnership with knowledge-based companies to benefit from their innovative capacities in the area of registration services. Over the past year, Iran (Islamic Republic of) had taken important steps to implement its IP policies, including joining Madrid e-Filing; drafting new legislation on industrial property protection to bridge gaps in accordance with international commitments; developing a

single window for the commercialization of inventions; and defining and implementing joint projects with WIPO, including an IP summer course and a workshop on enabling the IP environment to strengthen business competitiveness through brands and designs. Cooperation between Iran (Islamic Republic of) and WIPO had grown in recent years and had the potential to continue doing so. In that vein, the Delegation was ready and willing to host a WIPO External Office. According to the World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021 report, Iran (Islamic Republic of) was among the top three countries globally for trademark applications and among the top 20 countries for industrial design and patent applications. Nevertheless, unilateral coercive measures imposed on Iran had adversely affected the development of its IP system. Specifically, those measures impeded bank transfers between Iran (Islamic Republic of) and WIPO and thus prevented inventors and IP rights holders from enjoying WIPO international services through the PCT and Madrid and Lisbon Systems. WIPO should act promptly to enable Iranians to enjoy their full IP rights. A development-driven, balanced, effective and inclusive IP system would aid the development of innovation, the commercialization of IP and the creation of jobs, thus facilitating investment growth and sustainable development in the Member States. Accordingly, the Delegation attached great importance to the effective implementation of the WIPO DA and the mainstreaming of its recommendations into the Organization's work and activities. The Delegation supported all WIPO initiatives aimed at facilitating the transfer of technology to developing and LDCs, thus promoting their social and economic growth and their ability to overcome global challenges. Regarding negotiations on the WIPO normative agenda, the establishment of one or more legally binding instruments on TK, GRs and cultural expressions was a priority. The Member States should conduct those negotiations constructively and in good faith with a view to convening a diplomatic conference and resolving that longstanding issue. Lastly, the politicization of WIPO as a UN specialized agency was concerning. The Organization should focus on its mandate to lead the development of a balanced and effective international IP system that enabled innovation and creativity for the benefit of all, and should avoid engaging in issues of a political nature that might jeopardize its mission and affect its ability to fulfill its mandate.

66. The Delegation of Iraq said that its Government shared the view of those Member States that saw IP as a multifaceted tool of development. WIPO had a pivotal role to play as an effective coordinator, motivator and supporter of national efforts to strengthen IP rights. The Organization had inspired faith by its handling of the COVID-19 crisis and innovations and inventions had been seen as a lifeline and means of restoring humanity to prosperity. Mutual support and cooperation were essential to overcoming crises. The need to resort to a vote on whether to adopt the Consolidated Agenda for the current series of meetings had set a troubling precedent. It was to be hoped that all such hindrances could be overcome so as to move forward in enhancing the development benefits arising from investment in the protection and promotion of IP rights. WIPO had a key role to play in supporting countries as they strove for development and prosperity and to overcome the crises afflicting the world. Energy, food and public health crises were having an adverse impact on economic stability and sustainable development. A number of countries had suffered economic and social shocks. WIPO should continue to exercise its mandate and work to promote innovation and inventiveness as a means of dealing with such unprecedented challenges and crises. The Government was pursuing efforts to enhance its national legal framework for the protection and promotion of IP rights. Legislation would be enacted in 2023 on the establishment of a national IP center, with a view to consolidating the work of all the competent government agencies in a single, fully functional entity. Iraq had acceded to the Patent Cooperation Treaty, effective from April 30, 2022, and the IP rights of Iraqi inventors had thus been secured worldwide. IP activity in the country in 2021 had been positive and encouraging. The Delegation looked forward to fuller involvement by WIPO in the country through its various programs and projects. The Delegation had formally requested support for its efforts to be included in the GII and to benefit from capacity-building programs through the Division for Arab Countries and various other divisions and sectors of the Organization.

67. The Delegation of Israel, noting that IP was an important driver of economic growth and a tool for supporting innovation and creativity globally, welcomed the efforts of WIPO to foster a balanced and well-functioning global IP ecosystem for the benefit of all. The GII, the latest version of which was due to be published soon, provided highly relevant guidance for policymakers. Moreover, the work of WIPO to promote diversity, inclusion and equality was broadening access to innovation and IP. Developments in the area of IP and gender were particularly welcome. The Delegation continued to support the Director General and his team in delivering the Organization's new vision, work program and budget and the MTSP. It was an active user of the international systems of WIPO and was among the top-ranking countries globally for the number of PCT applications made per capita and by women. In 2021, the number of patents, trademarks and designs filed in Israel had increased by 18.5, 10 and 25 per cent, respectively. Since most IP applications in Israel were filed through WIPO international mechanisms, the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems, the Delegation was grateful for the ongoing efforts of WIPO to improve its registry systems, including through the use of advanced technologies. Simplifying the filing process would doubtless help to engage more actors and increase the number of participants in those systems. The Delegation expected WIPO to play a leading role in guiding discussions and encouraging creativity and innovative solutions in the field of emerging technologies, such as AI, in which Israel was an important international player. Lastly, the Delegation supported the statements made by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B.

68. The Delegation of Italy said that it aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B. Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic had continued to hamper the work of WIPO and its Member States. However, it had also helped to put IP in the spotlight as never before. WIPO activities for the protection of IP played an important role in strengthening the competitiveness of companies, in particular SMEs and start-ups, and in supporting the activities of research centers and academia. The Delegation attached great importance to extending WIPO outreach activities to a wider range of innovation stakeholders, including young people. Enhancing the protection of industrial property rights encouraged investment in research and innovation and fostered technology transfer, promoting the implementation and commercialization of research results and turning ideas into products. Almost half of GDP and around a third of jobs in Italy were attributable to IP rights, since intangible assets were central to the competitiveness of Italian companies in a number of strategic sectors, including the Made in Italy brand. The Delegation was therefore committed to harnessing and building respect for all forms of IP in the global market and protecting assets both offline and online. In that regard, the Government was shortly due to approve an important reform of the national IP system to strengthen IP protection, streamline administrative procedures and facilitate access to improved databases and digital tools that promoted the wider use of the WIPO Digital Access Service. With regard to the PCT, as of 2020, applicants could obtain protection in Italy *via* the national route. The activities of Italy in the multilateral field aimed to promote more broadly the culture of innovation, highlighting the positive role of industrial property rights in supporting the post-COVID-19 economic recovery and the green and digital transformation in response to growing energy and environmental challenges. In that perspective, the Delegation was unwavering in its support for the WIPO work program on the ongoing normative agenda and on the reinforced portfolio of business support initiatives and services. Likewise, the Delegation was committed to promoting and expanding the international registration system for geographical indications and IP rights closely linked to national and local identity and cultural heritage. It therefore welcomed the recent accessions of Member States to the Lisbon System, which would pave the way for further geographical enlargement of the system in the near future. The Delegation hoped that WIPO would implement targeted promotional initiatives and increase the allocation of resources to that end.

69. The Delegation of Jamaica supported the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic on behalf of GRULAC. As it celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> year of independence, Jamaica recognized WIPO as instrumental in its national development, especially with regard to the preservation and protection of its rich cultural legacy. It was pleased to have collaborated with WIPO the previous day to host its national reception and showcase the role of IP in an exhibition. The Delegation was delighted to have acceded to the PCT, the Madrid Protocol and the Hague Agreement, further boosting the Jamaican IP ecosystem. The Delegation was pleased to note that the Head of the Jamaican Intellectual Property Office (JIPO), Ms. Lilyclaire Bellamy, had been elected Chair of the IGC. The Delegation appreciated the recognition that it had received for its contribution to the IGC and would advance its work. It would engage with the SCT regarding the proposal on country names. Developing countries, including Jamaica, should harness young people's energy and ideas as a critical part of the economic development strategies to leverage IP and ensure economic development. In that regard, WIPO should consider hosting a conference on IP and youth, drawing on the best practices of other international organizations with a view to connecting young people and providing them with a platform to discuss IP and innovative solutions to global issues. The Delegation was pleased to be participating in the pilot project to support women entrepreneurs through IP.

70. The Delegation of Japan said that it appreciated the condolences offered by Member States on the passing of the country's former Prime Minister. Japan welcomed the aim of WIPO to lead the development of the global IP ecosystem under its MTSP. Enhancing user-friendliness was essential to further developing the IP ecosystem, and, by working with the WIPO Japan Office, Japan could help to improve WIPO services by gathering the views of international applicants in the country. Japan welcomed WIPO efforts to raise awareness of IP among younger people, and to expand support for SMEs, start-ups and universities. Japan would continue to make voluntary contributions to WIPO to develop IP infrastructure. With regard to emerging technologies, Japan would use the expertise of the Japan Patent Office (JPO) to cooperate with WIPO and other Member States to create an international environment that allowed IP to be utilized and protected appropriately. Japan had the largest number of WIPO GREEN partners in the world, and JPO was working with WIPO and other global stakeholders to expand that network, while also supporting the initiative through voluntary contributions. Japan was actively promoting efforts to achieve carbon neutrality. JPO had published the Green Transformation Technologies Inventory, which enabled Japan to analyze technological trends related to carbon neutrality. Japan would continue to cooperate with WIPO and actively contribute to the development of the global IP ecosystem.

71. The Delegation of Jordan said that the prime role played by IP in economic advancement and scientific, literary and creative progress had a direct impact on people and societies. Its role was fundamental in the case of developing countries. The Organization's work, training and awareness-raising programs were highly valued in Jordan, as were the vision of the Director General, his team and the Secretariat, and their desire to facilitate people's understanding of IP and its benefits in their daily lives. An IP project for Jordanian women entrepreneurs had been launched in May 2022 under the direct guidance of the Director General and supervision of the Deputy Director General, Regional and National Development Sector. The project was an ideal platform for exchanging information and experiences and strengthening cooperation frameworks on the protection of industrial property rights with key relevant bodies and international institutions. Its aim was to establish a support system to facilitate the registration, management and marketing of industrial property rights for collective trademarks by associations, institutions and SMEs run by women. Jordan, in cooperation with WIPO, WHO and WTO, had organized a regional meeting on IP, public health and international trade at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. With WIPO, the country had also launched version 4 of the IPAS. The Industrial Property Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Industry was the first office in Jordan to roll out IPAS 4 systems for users. The Delegation looked

forward to further cooperation with the Organization, including through the Asia and the Pacific Group.

72. The Delegation of Kenya aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Commending the Director General's vision and WIPO's strong performance, especially in 2021, the country would continue to support the implementation of the MTSP. The Delegation appreciated the support provided by WIPO in the areas of capacity-building, office infrastructure and data evaluation. TISCs had gained prominence and were now embraced by many academic and research institutions in the country as a means to provide IP information. The Delegation was keen to enhance its partnership with WIPO with a view to increasing the contribution of innovation to its socio-economic development. IP was key in unlocking the potential of SMEs and youth enterprises and enabling them to integrate into the regional and global value chains. The Delegation welcomed emerging topics and strategies to enhance its robust investment framework for IPRs, which was anchored in a comprehensive legal regime in line with international standards. The Delegation would continue to work with WIPO to provide more impact-based support to all its national IP offices and other stakeholders in line with its national DA and treaty obligations. WIPO's DA should be streamlined to make IP more useful for developing countries, thus creating a more inclusive and balanced IP system. Lastly, with respect to WIPO's normative agenda, the work of the IGC and the work on the DLT had not been concluded.

73. The Delegation of Kyrgyzstan said that it was carrying out several projects jointly with WIPO. The State IP and Innovation Development Program for the period 2022-2026, which had been drafted with the help of WIPO and local and international experts, had been approved. Its main aim was to create conditions conducive to the establishment of a balanced and effective national IP and innovation ecosystem by 2026. The Delegation hoped that WIPO would provide all possible support in order to implement the program. In May 2022, a regional seminar on the establishment of a national system of protection for geographical indications had been held jointly with WIPO. New legislation had been drafted on the introduction of geographical indications as a new type of IP asset in the country. The Kyrgyz authorities were also studying the feasibility of Kyrgyzstan acceding to the Lisbon System. In terms of WIPO cooperation with national IP offices, it would be worthwhile to hold some meetings of the relevant WIPO committees and their working groups at the IP offices of Member States, taking into account regional specificities and the principle of geographical representation. The establishment and running of WIPO external offices in Member States should be determined in a balanced and informed manner by the relevant WIPO committees and working groups, based on a careful analysis of the needs of given regions or groups of countries, their level of development and other specific characteristics. WIPO should fully support and assist IP offices in Member States where IP academies had not yet been set up.

74. The Delegation of Lao (People's Democratic Republic of) aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the Philippines on behalf of the ASEAN and by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. The support of WIPO was vital to the national IP system, including in developing an IP strategy, IP diagnostic studies and an online filing system, and in providing capacity-building for officials and SMEs. WIPO had also helped the country to implement the Madrid Protocol and the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement, and to prepare for accession to the Hague Agreement, the WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT) and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (WPPT). Further support to that end would be highly useful. Ongoing work included implementing the Enabling the IP Environment Project, establishing a TISC and working on the graduation package for the LDCs, as well as carrying out outreach activities to disseminate information about IP. The country had also benefited from WIPO's support for deliverables under the ASEAN IP Rights Action Plan 2016–2025. It was hoped that the national IP strategy would be finalized by the end of 2022, and that accession to the Hague Agreement and WCT would take place as soon as possible so as to allow local businesses to explore international markets and to encourage foreign

businesses to invest in product development by providing easier access to the country's IP system. Building on its past work and with support from WIPO, the national IP office was implementing a new initiative to train SMEs and other actors on how to use IP tools to increase their competitiveness and add value to their products and services. The country was also exploring mechanisms to protect its GRs, TK and TCEs.

75. The Delegation of Lesotho aligned itself with the statement by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation was pleased that the mandate of the IGC had been extended and looked forward to progress in its work. The country hoped to see progress as well toward concluding the discussion on limitations and exceptions to the protection of broadcasting organizations and completing work on the draft DLT, taking into consideration the concerns of developing countries. In the area of technical assistance, programs for developing countries had been prevented by COVID-19 from being fully implemented, a factor WIPO should consider in formulating its future workplan and considering the allocation of additional resources to activities in those countries. The Delegation welcomed the COVID-19 packages WIPO had developed and would be paying special attention in deploying them to the needs of SMEs, women, youth and local and indigenous communities, which had been less served in the past. The Delegation hoped to benefit also from the packages WIPO had developed specifically for LDCs. The Delegation welcomed the Director General's new strategic direction and outreach to a wider audience, including women, universities, research institutions, youth and SMEs, an approach expected to contribute constructively to job creation in developing countries. Areas in which the Delegation had continued to benefit from WIPO's assistance included the deployment of IPAS 4.0, expected to go live soon; the establishment of TISCs, accompanied by a WIPO-assisted training program for TISC host institutions; the application of new technologies to modernize the country's legislative framework, with model provisions to serve as a baseline for progress; and the fulfillment of the country's obligations under various treaties. Areas in which the Delegation was seeking additional technical assistance included training in application processing under the Madrid System; support in dealing with a backlog in data capture; development of a national IP strategy and policy, together with institutional policies for universities and research institutions; and strengthening for the country's collective management organization (CMO). The Delegation also looked forward to collaborating with WIPO and ARIPO in outreach activities to empower universities and research institutions, SMEs, women's groups and communities in general.

76. The Delegation of Lithuania, aligning itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group, stood in full solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. It condemned in the strongest possible terms the unprovoked and unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which grossly violated international law and had a detrimental effect on the IP landscape. The Delegation was convinced that cooperation and solidarity between Member States was key in mitigating the harm done to the innovation and creativity sectors and the IP system in Ukraine. WIPO endeavors to work closely with Member States to achieve tangible results in the use of IP were commendable. The Delegation had participated in two WIPO projects: WIPO Lex-Judgments and WIPO ALERT. It was pleased to note that the long-term WIPO technology transfer project in the Baltic States had resulted in the signing of the Baltic Technology Transfer Offices Network Cooperation Agreement on March 25, 2022, which would lead to future cooperation. In terms of progress and prosperity, human potential was an indispensable asset in Lithuania. Lithuania had the highest share of female scientists in Europe, with more than half of scientists and engineers being women. It applauded WIPO's efforts to close *the gender gap, which remained one of the most pressing global issues*. The Delegation appreciated the open and collaborative approach of the leadership of WIPO and the Division for Transition and Developed Countries. The Delegation remained committed to continuing its successful cooperation and dialog with WIPO.



77. The Delegation of Madagascar fully aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of the African Group and LDCs. The Delegation welcomed positive developments in global health care and in particular the collaborative efforts of countries to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, primarily through technology transfer and the provision of support to the most vulnerable countries to build their capacity to facilitate access to care, medicine and vaccines. Research conducted by researchers and laboratories in Madagascar had yielded a number of inventions for which patent protection had been sought at the national level. The Delegation was grateful to WIPO for the series of initiatives it had implemented to build capacity in such areas as drafting and examining patent applications. That training had continued to bear fruit, and patent examiners had continued to enhance their skills through distance-learning courses delivered by the WIPO Academy. As a result, examinations of national patent applications were more advanced and the processing times for those applications were much improved, without any negative impact on the quality of the patents issued. The Delegation was also grateful for the enduring and effective collaboration between its industrial property office and WIPO. The regional online training workshop on the Madrid System for selected African users had helped to clarify a range of technical, logistical and procedural points and to strengthen relations between the Malagasy Industrial Property Office (OMAPI) and the International Bureau (IB). The Delegation wholeheartedly supported the continuation of such WIPO activities that promoted IP protection and stimulated discussion among Member States. It also welcomed the collaboration between WIPO and other international, regional and national IP organizations, including in the examination of patent applications and the promotion of international registration systems. It was keen to see that cooperation continue to protect the interests of stakeholders in the IP system, in particular researchers and economic operators. Lastly, the support and assistance of WIPO continued to be instrumental in providing the country with a strong and sustainable technological base, including *via* technology transfer, the exchange of best practices in the processing of applications for the registration of intangible industrial property assets, and the capacity-building of law enforcement agencies and the judiciary.

78. The Delegation of Malawi aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Director General should strive for a more equitable geographical representation of African Member States, particularly in senior positions. The lack of progress by the IGC was disappointing. After the long hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Malawi had expected a greater sense of urgency to move towards the adoption of an international legal instrument on those assets. There was also a need to complete negotiations on protections for broadcasting organizations. The apparent lack of political will to do so was regrettable. In Malawi, agricultural productivity and marketing had been identified as two of three fundamental pillars for efforts to transform the country from a low-income to upper-high-income country by 2063. IP, innovation, and creativity were critical in both areas and the Government was committed to building a balanced and effective IP system. An autonomous IP office would be established and the Patents Act and Designs Act were being reviewed to that end. The commitment of WIPO to supporting Malawi in that process would be evidenced by a high-level conference on IP, Innovation and the Malawi Vision 2063, which was planned for September 2022. It hoped that the inaugural WIPO Ministerial Conference would be held soon and become a regular event. Such a conference would be of great value for countries now building their IP systems but needing political will and support to do so effectively. It would also provide greater impetus for the Organization's norm-setting work. The support of WIPO had been valuable for Malawi in a range of areas: the digitization of its IP office; the development of its TK strategy; the commitment to establish additional TISCs; the selection of Malawi as one of three African countries to benefit from IP clubs in secondary schools and, generally, activities conducted under the Organization's MTSP, in particular for young people, women, SMEs and business start-ups. The Government had also worked successfully with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in observing World Intellectual Property Day and highlighting the role of young people in IP. The event had shown that young people were eager

to take their place in future innovation but also faced challenges that WIPO, together with UNDP, should seek to address.

79. The Delegation of Malaysia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group and by the Delegation of the Philippines on behalf of ASEAN. The support and technical assistance Malaysia received from WIPO and its Member States was greatly appreciated, and it was hoped that cooperation would continue to be a priority in the WIPO Program and Budget. The Parliament of Malaysia had recently adopted a new law on geographical indications, and amendments to the existing patent and copyright laws. With the assistance of the Division for Asia and the Pacific and relevant industries and sectors, Malaysia had acceded to the Budapest Treaty and the Marrakesh Treaty; the latter had entered into force in June 2022. The Government was continuously improving its IP service delivery system; a competency framework and training curriculum had been developed as part of efforts to improve the skills of IP examiners. With the cooperation of WIPO, the Government had been reviewing the national IP policy and a new version was awaiting internal approval. As a participant in the WIPO project on IP and gastronomic tourism, the Government had completed its scoping study and IP analysis, and a national seminar on IP and gastronomic tourism had taken place in Malaysia in June 2022. The Delegation looked forward to the next phase of that project and to continued cooperation with WIPO in the next biennium.

80. The Delegation of Mexico said that the manner in which WIPO had strengthened its work, even during the most difficult stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, was widely recognized. It was pleased to learn that WIPO had healthy finances and surpluses thanks to an increase in income from the payment of patent and mark fees. It welcomed the strategic vision of the Director General and his determination to continue to promote specific actions to boost the use of IP in the interest of developing and strengthening the ecosystem worldwide. It recognized the strength and efficiency of WIPO, which had enabled the continued implementation of activities and projects of interest. Mexico promoted the creation of an increasingly broad and democratic IP culture whose benefits would reach ever more people. Under that approach, it had carried out a diagnostic study on the knowledge and use of IP among MSMEs in Mexico to design a national IP strategy for MSMEs. Furthermore, together with the members of the Pacific Alliance, it was working on a draft guide with the support of WIPO. With regard to gender, progress had been made on the project to boost the role of women in innovation and entrepreneurship, which was in its final stage, and a number of Mexican women had been invited to take part in a pilot course on IP for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Mexico was participating in a study on the valuation of intangible IP assets that aimed to enable the owners of those assets to use them as instruments and support in financial negotiations. It was also conducting a study to allow more Mexican businesses to benefit from the Madrid Protocol and use it as a key tool in exportation, and was making progress towards ratifying the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement. As a result of the Director General's visit to Mexico the previous March, the country had signed an MoU on participation in the WIPO Academy training program for diplomats. It was collaborating with WIPO to identify actions for the "Seda de Cajonos" geographical identification for silk from the state of Oaxaca as part of the package of services and support related to COVID-19. The country was convinced of the need to protect the creativity of indigenous communities. It was therefore working on preparing a training and mentorship program on the various forms of IP, including collective forms, and, with the support of WIPO, on the "Original" program as part of efforts to recognize the creative works of native peoples and communities. Lastly, on July 7, 2022, Mexico had ratified the Beijing Treaty. When the Treaty enters into force, it would become part of the system that protects actors and musicians working on films, television series and all kinds of audiovisual works beyond national borders.

81. The Delegation of Mongolia, aligning itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, said that the COVID-19 pandemic had

created challenges and opportunities that had required policymakers to develop long-term socio-economic recovery policies, including in the IP sector. In that vein, Mongolia had improved its IP legal framework to promote the digital transformation of IPRs management and the commercialization of IP for the benefit of the Mongolian economy. Despite budgetary restrictions, the Government of Mongolia had continued to recognize the importance of IP and had supported the Mongolian IP Office by increasing the number of staff members, even when COVID-19 restrictions had been in place. The increase would strengthen the capacity of the Mongolian IP office in terms of IP administration, promotion and enforcement. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of national trademark, patent and industrial design applications had increased by 10–20 per cent in 2021. That increase had been thanks to WIPO's assistance with IPAS, which had enabled work to continue remotely and had ensured business continuity. Work in the IP field was well supported internally and externally. Mongolia had finalized documents with WIPO which it was ready to sign, including a cooperation agreement for the development of IP office business services and an MoU on the development of an IP curriculum for institutions of higher education.

82. The Delegation of Montenegro condemned the unprovoked and unjustified aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which had shaken the foundations of the rules-based international order, in the strongest possible manner. The ongoing commitment by WIPO to adapt to the constantly changing global environment and respond adequately to global IP challenges, as well as its support for Member States in terms of protecting IP rights, were welcome. Such support included the development of a balanced and efficient international IP system. Cooperation between Montenegro and WIPO continued to deepen. Representatives of the Directorate for the Internal Market and Competition, in the Ministry of Economic Development and Tourism, which was the leading body in the national system for the protection and enforcement of IP rights, had attended webinars, seminars, meetings and conferences organized by WIPO. WIPO had provided support for the drafting of amendments to the Copyright and Related Rights Act and Ministry representatives had received training in the field of collective management of copyright and related rights. WIPO was conducting support activities relating to the country's accession to the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks (STLT), had organized a visit by Ministry representatives to the IP Office of Serbia and was assisting with the drafting of the country's national IP strategy for the period 2023–2026. That document was being examined by WIPO and the European Commission and its finalization was expected shortly. Aware of the scale of challenges facing the global community, the Delegation was grateful to WIPO and its Division for Transition and Developed Countries for their cooperation and understanding of the country's IP rights protection and enforcement needs.

83. The Delegation of Morocco said that it had adopted a new development model aimed at transforming and upgrading the economy. The model prioritized intangible assets such as patents, trademarks and designs, which were instrumental in achieving the objectives set. Morocco had recently acceded to four international treaties that would enter into force in the near future, namely the Beijing Treaty, the SCT, the Hague Agreement and the Locarno Agreement Establishing an International Classification for Industrial Designs. In 2021, applications of Moroccan origin filed with the Moroccan Industrial and Commercial Property Office (OMPIC) for the registration of patents, trademarks and designs had risen by 10, 16 and 12 per cent, respectively. Morocco attached particular importance to the normative agenda and encouraged Member States to demonstrate flexibility and reach consensus on outstanding issues in order to accelerate the negotiation process and make much-needed progress in a number of areas. It set great store by multilateralism as a catalyst for enhancing international relations and considered WIPO an essential economic actor owing to its competencies, attributes, expertise and dynamism.

84. The Delegation of Mozambique aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Delegation acknowledged the assistance it had

received from WIPO in building institutional capacity, modernizing and automating its industrial property rights registration system and assessing local products, such as *Cabrito de Tete* (a goat breed) and *Zambézia* aromatic rice, for registration as geographical indications. A priority under the five-year plan of the Government of Mozambique for the period 2020–2024 was to foster and consolidate the country's industrial property system, with a view to boosting economic competitiveness. That required a new IP policy and a review of the country's IP strategy, for which Mozambique counted on the support of WIPO. Key pillars of the national industrialization program, which had been launched in 2021, were innovation and creativity. Its aim was to add value to local production and reduce imports.

85. The Delegation of Namibia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. Namibia continued to prioritize the implementation of strategic projects as defined in its national IP development plan under the country's MoU with WIPO. Namibia was currently implementing projects in the following areas: the finalization of draft copyright legislation; the development of green hydrogen, oil and gas; the post-pandemic role of the IP Office; youth, women and innovation; and the creation of an IP and innovation ecosystem conducive to business growth, especially for SMEs. The Delegation supported WIPO's commitment to attaining gender parity in the Organization, starting at the executive management level, a priority indicative of the importance the institution attached to inclusivity. The same effort should be directed toward the representation of Member States in the Organization's staff and governing bodies. The Delegation remained committed to sustainable cooperation and multilateralism in the interests of the collective.

86. The Delegation of Nepal aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. With the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing, the role of WIPO remained crucial to ensuring a balanced, inclusive and effective global IP system, promoting innovation and creativity and achieving the SDGs. WIPO initiatives and programs to build capacity and develop expertise, aimed *inter alia* at young people, women entrepreneurs and SMEs, were welcome. The proposed Graduation Support Package, under which technical assistance would be provided in order to building and strengthen the IP rights system in LDCs after graduation was welcome. Such support would help LDCs to implement smooth transition strategies. Nepal was due to graduate from LDC status in 2026 and continued support by WIPO would be vital to sustaining that graduation. All regions should be represented equitably in the Governing Bodies of WIPO and long-standing normative issues must be resolved.

87. The Delegation of New Zealand said that the unprovoked and illegal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation had caused widespread humanitarian damage, resulted in the senseless deaths of innocent people and negatively affected innovation, creativity and the cultural environment. The actions of the Russian Federation undermined the principles that brought the Member States together. New Zealand stood with the international community in condemning President Putin's unjustified and illegal attack on Ukraine, which had very real implications for global peace, security and economic stability. The Delegation supported the continuing mandate of the IGC, whose work was of great importance to Māori people. It looked forward to contributing to the progress of meaningful and workable solutions in that forum, and supported making the Chair's Text the main working document on GRs. On June 24, 2022, New Zealand had celebrated Matariki, the first public holiday for Te Ao Māori ("Māori World View"). In addition, 2022 and 2023 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Māori Trade Marks Advisory Committee and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Māori Patents Advisory Committee, respectively. The work of these committees helped to minimize the risk of the Government inadvertently registering trademarks that would likely cause offense to Māori people, or granting patents where the commercial exploitation of the invention would likely be contrary to Māori values. The Plant Varieties Rights Bill and accompanying regulations were due to be enacted in the near future. Once enacted, the Bill would provide for the participation of Māori people in the plant variety rights examination process for new varieties belonging to indigenous plant species. It would also provide for the creation of a Māori Plant Variety Committee, which would

have decision-making powers. The Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ) had continued to grow despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Filings of both trademark and patent applications, including *via* the Madrid and PCT Systems, stood at record levels. To cater for that growth, New Zealand continued to expand its patent, trademarks and hearings teams. The increased number of filings indicated that, in spite of economic pressures and business disruptions, New Zealanders continued to innovate and design for the future. New Zealand, like the rest of the world, was transitioning to the next phase of the recovery, in which IP would play an important part. IPONZ was currently undertaking a strategic capability review to identify the medium- to long-term requirements for making IPONZ future-focused while supporting ongoing operations. The review defined the ideal capabilities that IPONZ should have and the degree of change required to develop them. It would ensure that IPONZ had the best skills and capabilities to continue providing high-quality and robust IP rights, offer world-class services to its customers and leverage international and domestic opportunities.

88. The Delegation of Nigeria, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group, said that Nigeria had continued to prioritize the promotion and protection of IP rights to further social and economic development, as well as the strengthening of the innovation capacity of young people. In that regard, the Delegation welcomed the Director General's MTSP and it looked forward to cooperating with WIPO to implement it. Despite the setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria had continued to consolidate its effort to reform the copyright law. On April 6, 2022, the Nigerian Senate had passed a copyright bill, which was awaiting approval from the House of Representatives. The reform would implement some of the treaties that Nigeria had recently ratified, including the Marrakech Treaty, and it would meet stakeholders' expectations that the law reflect current realities and facilitate regulation. The trademarks office of Nigeria was collaborating with the EUIPO as part of its IP rights innovation project in Africa. Nigeria was doing so with regard to its geographical indication protection system and the completion of its automation project. The rapid progress that the WIPO external office had made in Nigeria was commendable. The Delegation remained ready to work with participants at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the WIPO Assemblies.

89. The Delegation of Norway attached particular importance to improving the ability of Member States to monitor the finances and administration of WIPO, and welcomed continued efforts and cooperation to that end. It also welcomed the continued focus of the IB on securing the best available global services under the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems. Smooth systems, ongoing dedication to simplification, and cost savings for the benefit of users were crucial to the continued and increased use of those global IP services. The continuous progress made by the working groups under those systems in improving regulations, guidelines and practices was commendable. The Delegation was committed to working on global services in the interest of existing and future users. Furthermore, it continued to support the work within the SCCR towards a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations. The Delegation stood ready to contribute positively and constructively to the success of the Assemblies.

90. The Delegation of Oman welcomed efforts by WIPO aimed at fostering greater cooperation, coordination and exchange of knowledge between Member States in terms of services, support for realizing IP and the implementation of related policies in line with the best and latest practices. The Government of Oman attached great importance to IP and went to considerable lengths to support innovation. It had signed an agreement on the establishment of TISCs and was running an ongoing project on women and innovation in cooperation with WIPO. The project was emblematic of the Oman 2040 vision for the country's future. In that vision, targets were set out based on the idea of fostering innovation with a view to achieving development, economic prosperity and the protection of IP rights through the relevant laws and policies. The Government had deposited its instrument of accession to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement in accordance with Decree No. 19/2021. It was continuing to develop its IP system by updating legislation and supporting the digital transformation of all its services.

91. The Delegation of Pakistan said that, following the country's accession to the Madrid Protocol in 2021, the country's efforts were now being geared towards acceding to the PCT. WIPO had provided support to establish 47 TISCs in the country. The role of IP and innovation during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic had brought WIPO into the global limelight. In order to ensure that WIPO remained relevant, it was essential both to develop a balanced IP regime capable of dealing effectively with pandemics and to expand the Organization's innovation support role, especially in developing and LDCs. WIPO must keep pace with fast-evolving technological and economic developments and overcome the normative deadlock, in particular by adopting an international instrument to protect GRs, TK and folklore. A one-stop legislative advice service should be established to address the lack of IP skills and knowledge, particularly with regard to legislative matters, which prevented accession to WIPO-administered treaties. The Delegation appreciated new projects such as the Young Experts Program (YEP) but more should be done to ensure that the workforce was equitably distributed across all geographical regions. An external review should be conducted, with a view to preventing politicization and distractions, on the need for existing external offices and the rationale behind establishing new ones. Only an independent, transparent and external review could ensure objectivity and political neutrality and the Delegation looked forward to developing the terms of reference for that review through an inclusive and transparent process.

92. The Delegation of Panama said that the activities of WIPO were central to the economic recovery from COVID-19. The pandemic had demonstrated how innovation could create new opportunities. In that regard, the Directorate General of the Industrial Property Registry of Panama (DIGERPI) had taken measures to enable it to continue operating at the most critical moments. The Delegation attached great importance to IP and the improvement of the IP environment and appreciated all WIPO programs that promoted capacity building and innovation and strengthened entrepreneurship, women's leadership and youth participation. DIGERPI, together with WIPO, was working on a draft bill on technology transfer and was taking steps to complement the IP policies of universities and national research centers, which were the main generators of knowledge in the country. It was currently implementing IPAS for filing applications and processing registrations for various industrial property rights. IPAS would modernize DIGERPI, reduce processing times and improve the quality of publications and the examination of applications. DIGERPI was due to launch a project for the recognition as a denomination of origin of the pinta'o hat – a national handicraft inscribed in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Panama had deposited its instruments of ratification of the Beijing Treaty in March 2022 at the VII Ministerial Meeting of the Central American Sub-Region and the Dominican Republic. It was grateful to the Director General for his participation in that meeting and to the WIPO Secretariat for its organizational support.

93. The Delegation of Paraguay reiterated its trust in the multilateral system of promoting and protecting IP. It actively supported WIPO initiatives aimed at making progress and increasing levels of protection in areas of concern. Under the present Government, the country had made significant technological progress in fulfilling the aims of its national digital agenda. Such achievements had been made possible through the effective cooperation of WIPO, with its IPAS, which was being successfully implemented in the national IP office. The Delegation had the firm aim of continuing to increase its participation in all decision-making bodies, and, to that end, it had ratified two WIPO-administered international treaties that were of particular importance to optimizing the services provided. In the same vein, it aimed to incorporate three other treaties into its domestic legislation, which was a clear illustration of the country's political will to continue to support the use of IP as a development tool for States. It reiterated its intention and desire to continue to be a stakeholder in the system, which aimed to establish innovation and creativity as pillars of global economic development.

94. The Delegation of Peru said it firmly believed that the IP system had a positive economic, social and cultural impact on countries. In the area of distinctive signs, the Delegation was

continuing to strengthen its collective marks program, which had a strong social dimension in that it perpetuated customs, practices and ancestral knowledge. Over the past year, 4,793 collective marks had been awarded at no cost to the beneficiaries, most of whom were individuals with limited resources. In the area of inventions and new technologies, a total of 39 TISCs were distributed across 14 regions of Peru. In addition, Peru was continuing its work in relation to the Inventor Assistance Program, with 16 solicitors providing *pro bono* services. Over the past year, 6,681 collective knowledge registers had been created for the benefit of 76 indigenous communities. In the area of copyright and related rights, a series of high-impact actions were being rolled out to combat Internet piracy. Peru had recently issued a series of injunctions to block access to 147 illegal digital piracy websites. In addition, at the current Assemblies, it would be depositing its instruments of accession to five treaties, including the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement – clearly demonstrating its commitment as a country and its work in relation to international standards. Lastly, Peru was shortly due to approve its national IP policy, providing a clear roadmap for the development of its IP ecosystem, which would be launched at a meeting with its peers from the Latin America region, to be held in Lima in October 2022. As co-organizer, Peru was immensely looking forward to welcoming Director General Daren Tang to the meeting.

95. The Delegation of the Philippines, speaking in its national capacity, said that the national rates of patent and trademark filings in the first half of 2022 had increased compared to 2021. To mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines in 2022, IP awards had been given to Filipinos whose innovations had made a significant impact in their fields and society. The Government had launched programs to increase the involvement of female inventors and designers, including female-led SMEs, in innovation, including by waiving fees for eligible applicants to ease the financial burden of securing IP. Fees would also be waived under a forthcoming program aimed at increasing youth awareness and participation in IP, following on from a forum where young Filipinos had showcased their inventions. The Government had also begun to prepare for accession to the Hague Agreement. To contribute to combating the COVID-19 pandemic, nine patent search reports referring to relevant drugs and medicines had been made available on the website of the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines (IPOP HL) to facilitate research and development. In 2021, the first Philippine International Copyright Summit had taken place, and the Philippines, as one of three pilot countries, had successfully completed the Development Agenda Project on Enhancing the Use of IP for Mobile Applications in the Software Sector. On IP administration, the Philippines had automated its core processes with the issuance of electronic certificates for inventions, utility models and industrial designs, and IPOP HL had been ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the World Trademark Review IP Innovation Ranking 2021. All processes, from filing to dispute settlement, had been digitized and efficiency in core processes had been enhanced, with fast average turn-around-times and a reduction in the backlog of applications. In that regard, the Delegation hoped to continue its partnership with WIPO on the deployment of the IPAS. The Government sought to maximize opportunities for industries by providing a legal framework for geographical indications; 23 potential geographical indications had already been identified. The Delegation was grateful for the support of WIPO in registering the Bikol Pili collective mark. On IP education, the country was set to sign a tripartite MoU with WIPO and De La Salle University on the joint offering of a Master's program in IP management and innovation. The IPOP HL Learning Activities Workspace, the first learning management system in South-East Asia, had been launched to provide on-demand access to IP courses and programs. On the protection of IP rights, the Government had issued the Joint Administrative Order for Online Business regulating all forms of e-commerce, and had strengthened the reporting procedure for IP rights violations by harnessing social media and increasing collaboration with stakeholders in the pharmaceutical, motion picture and retail industries to combat counterfeiting and piracy. A digitalized piracy monitoring system for certain websites had also been deployed to collect data to combat piracy. Efforts to build respect for IP and raise IP awareness through higher



educational institutions and local governments were ongoing. The Delegation looked forward to continued collaboration to ensure that the IP system served the greater good.

96. The Delegation of Poland fully aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group, and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states. In light of the Russian Federation's unprovoked attack on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, joint efforts were necessary to help to restore the Ukrainian IP and innovation system. In an era of global challenges, innovative and user-oriented solutions were urgently needed to drive socio-economic development worldwide. Sustainable designs that protected the natural environment were one of the best instruments for achieving that goal. In that regard, young Polish designers were not only continuing the rich traditions in domestic design but were also successfully applying them to digital services and using virtual- and augmented-reality solutions for business development. The Delegation praised WIPO's important focus on raising IP awareness among young people and women and appreciated the excellent support and cooperation provided during the preceding year, in particular by the Regional and National Development Sector and the Division for Transition and Developed Countries. The Delegation reaffirmed its commitment to working with WIPO and its Member States to improve the global IP system for the good of all.

97. The Delegation of Portugal aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegations of the Czech Republic and Germany, respectively, on behalf of the European Union and its member States and Group B, and reaffirmed its support for the people of Ukraine. The Delegation had supported the inclusion of item 19 in the Consolidated Agenda of the current meetings and condemned the unjustified military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Delegation welcomed the positive financial and operational performance of WIPO, in particular the broadening geographical coverage of the various systems administered by it. Environmental sustainability and discussions on IP and AI were matters of priority for Portugal. Other key areas included IP awareness-raising, especially among SMEs and young people, the enforcement of IP rights and initiatives aimed at combating gender inequality. The work of the SCP was important for developing a balanced and efficient patent system. New technologies played a key role, both in the examination process and as patentable inventions. As part of the implementation of WIPO Standard ST.26, the recent launch of the WIPO Sequence tool would be vital for the quality of patent applications relating to genetics. The Delegation welcomed the decision by the SCT to hold an information session on the protection of geographical indications for non-agricultural products and for services. Recent accessions to the Lisbon Agreement were welcome and Portugal would soon ratify the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement. WIPO had provided welcome support for the first Lusophone Conferences on Industrial Property, which had been held recently in Lisbon, and had helped to disseminate a study on patents and fire control, which had been the result of years of fruitful cooperation with the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office.

98. The Delegation of Qatar welcomed the spirit of cooperation in which WIPO had endeavored to assist Qatar with policy development and its IP institutions and, in particular, with the drafting of its national IP strategy, the timeframe of which coincided with that of the Qatar National Vision 2030. The country's modern IP legislative framework reflected global best practice and was anchored in the numerous instruments of the Organization to which it had acceded. The Delegation was well aware of the key role played by IP rights as a fundamental pillar of the national economy and so it had gone to great lengths to forge a legal framework capable of providing the utmost protection for IP rights. In that regard, having been designated as the host country for the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) World Cup in 2022, Qatar had passed a series of laws on the protection of trademarks and copyright and related rights linked to the Federation. The Delegation supported the proposal by the Arab Group on the use of Arabic across the spectrum of the Organization's work and in all IP deposit and protection systems, in order to broaden access to the benefits of IP throughout the Arab



region. The Delegation supported ongoing negotiations aimed at drafting universal protection instruments, in particular those being conducted by the SCCR. In that regard, the Delegation stood ready to host a diplomatic conference and encouraged WIPO to continue promoting cooperation among its Member States.

99. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea said that innovation would be a driving force in overcoming the challenges facing the global economy. In recent years, the Government had enhanced protection for the IP of digital products and had amended legislation to prohibit the unauthorized online transmission of digital goods with trademarks, allow protection of digital graphic images, and prohibit the misappropriation of data and the misuse of portraits and names of famous persons. In 2021, the Government had signed an MoU with INTERPOL to conduct joint investigations and tackle cross-border copyright infringement cases. It had also established a copyright council working on the metaverse and non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and had published guidelines on NFTs and copyright. The Government had upgraded examination and trial services, and established separate patent examination guidelines to protect emerging technologies. Additionally, an image search system utilizing AI for trademark and design examinations had been introduced. In 2021, the Republic of Korea had registered the world's fourth highest number of applications under the PCT, as well as the highest growth among the countries with the five highest figures. The country's advanced copyright system had enabled its creative industries to flourish and achieve global recognition; as a result, the country had been ranked fifth in the 2021 WIPO GII. Strong international cooperation and solidarity would be needed to mitigate the increasing IP divide between countries in the digital, post-pandemic era. The Delegation had carried out projects to share its experience through its WIPO Funds-In-Trust (FIT), the second largest amount of voluntary contributions among Member States. In particular, working with WIPO, an interactive toolkit of e-learning content targeting SMEs, especially in developing countries, had been developed. A pilot IP training course for female leaders would be launched in late 2022. The country had been supporting the WIPO Accessible Book Consortium (ABC) since 2015, and worked to raise copyright awareness among young children through the educational animated series "Pororo, The Little Penguin", which had been translated into nine languages.

100. The Delegation of the Republic of Moldova aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Slovakia, on behalf of the CEBS Group. In June 2022, the Republic of Moldova had become a candidate to join the European Union. That achievement was the culmination of efforts to which the State Agency on Intellectual Property (AGEPI) had contributed, but it had been overshadowed by the invasion of neighboring Ukraine by the Russian Federation. The Delegation was deeply concerned about the bombing the previous day of the city of Vinnytsia (western Ukraine), near the Moldovan border, and it mourned the innocent people who had died. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the war on its border, the Delegation continued to provide high-quality IP services. Efforts were being made to harmonize IP legislation with the provisions of European Union directives and WIPO treaties. New copyright legislation was currently before Parliament.

101. The Delegation of Romania aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states, and by the Delegation of Slovakia, on behalf of the CEBS Group. The SCT should focus on meeting the needs of Member States. There was a pressing need for consensus on holding a diplomatic conference to adopt a DLT. Finalizing a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organizations was also a priority. Romania supported the efforts of the SCP to strike a balance between the interests of the general public and those of users of the industrial property system. WIPO was to be commended for putting respect for the proposed amendments to the Hague, Madrid and Lisbon Systems on the public agenda. That would contribute to the development of IP databases and an international registration system. The excellent financial performance of WIPO was welcome. Romania had participated in a virtual regional roundtable on the mapping of national IP office support services for SMEs. Roundtable discussions on international

copyright education held between June 2021 and April 2022 had been fruitful. Romania would organize seminars in fall 2022 on topics including designs, trademarks, teaching IP, communications with the public and IP in the digital environment. The Delegation stood ready to host a WIPO external office in Bucharest.

102. The Delegation of the Russian Federation, speaking in its national capacity, said that the IP system in that country worked in strict compliance with its international obligations, thereby ensuring that the interests of applicants were protected. Convenient IP services using advanced technologies, including AI, were being developed. National laws were constantly being updated and international cooperation played a key role in the process. IP was a mechanism that allowed scientific and creative ideas to take shape. The main objective of WIPO was to coordinate the development of a balanced and effective international IP system that fostered innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. It was regrettable that the Organization was being used by some States as a platform for politically motivated statements unrelated to its mandate. The world economy was struggling to recover from the pandemic. Unilateral, illegitimate restrictive measures only served to exacerbate the situation, with adverse consequences for the global economy and users of the IP system. Russian applicants faced discrimination and violation of the principle of national treatment. In the member States of the European Union, it had been decided simply to freeze applications from the Russian Federation, making it impossible for rights holders to perform basic legal operations. The authorities in the United States of America, disregarding the interests of its own applicants, had terminated an agreement under which the Federal Service for Intellectual Property (ROSPATENT) had been recognized as an international search authority and international preliminary examination authority. Whether or not legal protection could be obtained was unjustifiably being linked to issues of a political nature, citizenship or the applicant's affiliation to a particular jurisdiction. Such discriminatory measures were contrary to international law and engendered legal uncertainty to the detriment of the global IP system. The provision in draft decisions of the Assemblies enshrining the unacceptability of politicizing IP should be reinforced in order to ensure stable operations and to provide IP protection in line with legal procedures rather than political considerations. The role of WIPO as a central platform for discussing international approaches and standards regarding IP should be maintained. The Delegation stood ready to engage in constructive work to ensure scientific, technical and cultural progress.

103. The Delegation of Samoa aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of Vanuatu on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, and by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. Support by WIPO had enabled Samoa to accede to the Madrid Protocol, the PCT, the Lisbon Agreement and the Hague Agreement. The Delegation appreciated the work that had been done on the branding of *nonu*. The country had benefitted from the Madrid fellowship program and interventions to build the capacity of the Samoan IP office and registries. That work should be maintained and expanded in order to regain momentum in areas where it had been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The establishment of new registries presented an opportunity to support the private sector, which consisted almost entirely of MSMEs. There was much potential in sectors such as e-commerce, business innovation, youth entrepreneurship, IP education, research, TK, GRs and folklore. The Delegation looked forward to working with its partners, including the Division for Asia and the Pacific, to promote IP as a tool for economic development, in particular in small island developing States.

104. The Delegation of San Marino said that it was particularly grateful for the support of WIPO with new and ambitious projects aimed at developing its national industrial property services. Since San Marino had begun developing its IP system more than 20 years ago, its national IP office had grown thanks to the valuable support of WIPO in the area of IT. However, a great deal had still to be done to strengthen competencies and services. San Marino was taking tangible steps towards concluding an association agreement with the European Union, aimed at improving integration with the European single market and developing a comprehensive and

reliable IP system. In that context, the support of WIPO was required to implement new IT infrastructure and sophisticated services for evaluating intangible assets, and to draft a new copyright law, following the signature by San Marino of the Berne Convention. IP was an important tool for development and growth. It facilitated research and development and helped society as a whole to find new solutions to emerging challenges. This was particularly true in the context of climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy and food crises connected with the war in Ukraine. In that regard, San Marino stood in solidarity with Ukraine and called for the respect of its sovereignty and the territorial integrity. It condemned the invasion by the Russian Federation and appealed to both parties to find a peaceful solution through diplomatic channels. The Delegation remained committed to cooperating with WIPO and the Member States to ensure the success of WIPO initiatives.

105. The Delegation of Saudi Arabia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. Ongoing discussions on a DLT were welcome and the Delegation stood ready to host a diplomatic conference on its adoption and a WIPO external office to foster development of an IP ecosystem in the country and the broader region. With its recent accession to the Nairobi Treaty on the Protection of the Olympic Symbol, Saudi Arabia had now acceded to 12 WIPO-administered treaties. Work on the drafting of a national IP strategy and national IP policy was nearing completion, which underlined the country's efforts to bring its IP legislation and policies up to date. With a view to enabling the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) to implement its strategy, raise awareness thereof and enforce it, the country's fatwa committee had issued a statement enshrining IP rights and underscoring the inadmissibility of their infringement. Training programs had been conducted for specialist IP judges and procedural instructions on the enforcement of IP rights and the observance of World Intellectual Property Day, with the slogan of "Your ideas are our future", had been issued. Some 75 entities had been involved in a dozen awareness-raising events staged around the country. The content of those events had received more than six million views online. There were now 44 TISCs around the country and more than 21,000 people had benefited from IP Academy training. SAIP had worked on incorporating the WIPO Academy DL-101 course as a foundation subject in Saudi Arabia and launched an IP policy pilot guide for universities and research centers. The Authority had recently marked the granting of its 10,000<sup>th</sup> patent and filings had increased by 30 per cent. SAIP now employed 87 patent examiners and it planned to increase their number to 100 by the end of 2022. It had simplified procedures for accessing patent databases and the exchange of data with its partners, pending the day when SAIP became an international searching and preliminary examining authority under the PCT. Arabic should be adopted as an official language of the Madrid and Hague Systems. The proposal before the Budapest Union regarding the issue of forms prepared under the Budapest Treaty in the six official languages of the UN was welcome.

106. The Delegation of Serbia associated itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group. With the support of WIPO, Serbia had recently launched a new study on establishing effective links between national IP strategies and the innovation ecosystem. The results of the study would provide a clear overview of the innovation system in Serbia, including its advantages and disadvantages. In the course of 2021 and 2022, the Intellectual Property Office of Serbia had continued its productive cooperation with WIPO. For instance, it had actively taken part in the consultation process on new WIPO projects, and had continued to implement two bilateral cooperation agreements with the Organization – one on the development of business systems for improving the Office's electronic systems, and the other on the promotion of the alternative dispute resolution in the field of IP. In October 2021, Serbia had held the Tesla Fest International Conference on Innovation and Intellectual Property, in Novi Sad, with the support of WIPO. In addition, in November 2021, mediators and judges in Serbia had attended a virtual workshop on mediation, and, to celebrate the 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Intellectual Property Office of Serbia, five WIPO medals had been awarded to creative and innovative authors and inventors in the country. In the course of 2022, Serbia had organized a

seminar on resale rights, and experts from Serbia had participated in a WIPO regional seminar on trade secrets for Central European and Baltic States. The Delegation highly appreciated the ongoing support of WIPO and looked forward to continuing its fruitful cooperation with the Organization.

107. The delegation of Sierra Leone recognized the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic had posed to WIPO and other multilateral organizations. WIPO played an important role in supporting countries around the world and the Delegation welcomed efforts to return to pre-pandemic levels of activity at WIPO. Through the Office of the Administrator and Registrar General (OARG), Sierra Leone prioritized the development of a functional IP framework to harness the innovation potential of its young and increasingly well-educated population and to help that population participate in the creative industry. IP was becoming central to the Government and the private sector. Efforts were being made to harmonize IP laws and to draft regulations on copyright, patents, industrial designs and trademarks. The Delegation recognized the steady support that WIPO had provided in that regard. It was particularly grateful for WIPO's assistance in drafting the legislative framework, which included providing technical and financial support to the OARG to improve the functioning of the Sierra Leonean IP office. Other support that had been provided at universities in Sierra Leone was appreciated, including online training, search courses and an introduction to TISCs. It also noted the review of the Intellectual Property Development Plan. The President of Sierra Leone, Mr. Julius Maada Bio, valued IP as he had demonstrated at the State opening of Parliament when he had acknowledged the appointment of Mr. Lansana Gberie as Chair of the TRIPS Council.

108. The Delegation of Singapore aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group and by the Delegation of the Philippines on behalf of ASEAN. WIPO offered Member States a valuable platform to collaborate, build trust and create partnerships to overcome global challenges. The Division for Asia and the Pacific and the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) had delivered targeted activities, such as capacity-building, digitalization and data management, that were suited to the needs of the region. The Delegation was committed to collaborating with WIPO and Member States to deliver tangible outcomes. Singapore had participated actively in the work of WIPO in areas including economics, analytics, IP financing and IP dispute resolution, as part of efforts to enhance the global IP ecosystem based on mutual trust and understanding. In view of technological developments, it was important for IP offices to help businesses to protect, manage and harness their IP and intangible assets for growth; such assistance was particularly vital to SMEs, young people and women. IPOS supported the growth of innovative businesses through IP and AI, as guided by the Singapore IP Strategy 2030. In 2022, the Government had passed amended IP legislation and launched a new e-services platform to improve business-friendliness and operational efficiency. In recognition of the increasing importance of the digital economy, the country had embarked on policy reviews in areas such as trade secrets and frontier technologies, including AI and blockchain. Singapore continued to explore initiatives to support businesses in their use of IP and IA.

109. The Delegation of Slovakia, speaking in its national capacity, aligned itself with the statements made by the CEBS Group, and the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states. It acknowledged ongoing efforts by WIPO to secure the best available global services under the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems. It was pleased to note that the working groups under those systems continued to make progress on improving rules, guidelines and practices even in challenging times. The Delegation was committed to working on global services in the interest of existing and future users of the systems. Regarding the normative agenda, the Delegation hoped that the current session of the WIPO Assemblies would lead to the convening of a diplomatic conference on the adoption of the DLT, since the basic text had been stable since 2014. Designers around the world would benefit from the simplification of design application and registration procedures. Regarding copyright and related rights discussed at the SCCR, the Delegation looked forward to

concluding positive and reasonable recommendations at the current session of the WIPO Assemblies, particularly on the topic of broadcasting. Doing so would help to finalize the text of the treaty on the protection of the broadcasting organizations and lead to a diplomatic conference in the near future. The Delegation appreciated ongoing efforts by members of the Lisbon Union to eliminate the budget deficit. Slovakia was participating in discussions held by the Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Lisbon Union. The Delegation was pleased to note the ongoing work of the SCP with regard to that issue. IP commercialization and collateralization was an important topic and the Delegation was ready to engage in further deliberations on how to make progress in that area. The activities of the CDIP were important and the Delegation supported WIPO activities to provide technical assistance. The invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation had led to a tragic loss of human life, the destruction of infrastructure and the hindrance of work in areas dealt with by WIPO. Slovakia stood in solidarity with its neighbor, Ukraine, and supported rebuilding Ukrainian IP infrastructure and the IP ecosystem under the new agenda item “Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System”. The Delegation highlighted the assistance and ongoing support provided by the Regional and National Development Sector and the Division for Transition and Developed Countries. It looked forward to deepening its collaboration with those bodies and making activities for new ideas and projects even more dynamic. In that regard, the Director General’s support and cooperation in organizing “Hydrogen Technologies in Transport: Ready for the Future”, an international conference that had been held in Bratislava, was greatly appreciated. The Director General’s visits to Member States were important for the promotion of the IP agenda among entrepreneurs and politicians. They highlighted the importance of IP for innovation, growth, job creation and the success of SMEs. The Director General’s readiness to visit regional centers in Slovakia was also appreciated as it demonstrated that innovation and creativity were not limited to capital cities. Slovakia had cooperated with WIPO in the field of mediation and the MoU that had recently been signed created a solid basis for a strong and fruitful cooperation. The Delegation would continue to cooperate with WIPO in order to develop an international IP system, promote innovation and encourage creativity for the benefit of all countries.

110. The Delegation of Slovenia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegation of the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and its member states and by the Delegation of Slovakia on behalf of the CEBS Group. It welcomed efforts to build a well-balanced IP ecosystem for SMEs, to raise awareness of the importance of IP rights among the younger generations, to increase the representation of women and to explore the potential of AI and frontier technologies. In 2022, Slovenia was marking 30 years of WIPO membership, which provided an opportunity to encourage creativity and innovation, promote an effective and internationally competitive IP protection system, develop culture and industry, increase competitiveness and improve quality of life. Slovenia was providing tangible support to SMEs and focusing on young entrepreneurs, innovators, start-ups, creators, women and IP empowerment for the benefit of all. Digitization and AI were of interest to Slovenia and it continued to support WIPO in the exploration and development of those fields. It stood in solidarity with Ukraine and was prepared to help the rebuild the IP ecosystem and infrastructure in that country under Agenda Item 19.

111. The Delegation of South Africa aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group, and appreciated the new dynamic vision set forth in the WIPO MTSP. The Delegation considered IP as a driver of innovation and creativity and embraced technological innovation as a tool for sustainable economic growth and development. During the COVID-19 pandemic, innovation had been key in the rapid development of life-saving vaccines and other medical products. Sadly, however, the fruits of that innovation were not always available to developing countries. Thus, as part of the recovery from COVID-19, a developmental and inclusive IP system must be fostered to ensure unhindered and universal

access to health, education and other vital goods and services. The long-lasting benefits of the IP ecosystem were dependent on the creation of new regulations and the updating of old ones. In that regard, the Member States must expedite discussions on the proposed DLT and finalize work on an international legal instrument on GRs, TK and folklore. In modernizing the IP ecosystem, WIPO must prioritize the DA and the SDGs.

112. The Delegation of Spain aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B, and supported the addition to the agenda of the Assemblies of the item on “Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System”. The country welcomed WIPO efforts to develop a balanced and effective global IP ecosystem that promoted innovation and creativity. It therefore supported the firm commitment of WIPO to develop IP, innovation and creativity ecosystems in Member States, and to help innovators and creators, universities, researchers and businesses, especially SMEs, to harness IP to bring their ideas to the market. In 2022, Spain welcomed and participated in efforts to guide young inventors, creators and entrepreneurs to drive change to build a better and more sustainable future for all. It hoped that, during the Assemblies, everyone could take the necessary steps to continue strengthening public policies to promote and protect IP and industrial property linked to the SDGs, which guided the actions of Member States. It also welcomed efforts in the area of gender and IP, as well as on internal and external diversity and inclusion. The Delegation was satisfied by the progress made in modernizing the international registration system, and asked the Secretariat and Member States to pay particular attention to the development and proper functioning of the PCT, Madrid and Hague Systems. In relation to the SCP, the country’s main interest had always been in improving the quality of patents and it had worked actively to conduct studies on aspects related to substantive patent law, such as, previously, inventive activity and, at present, descriptive sufficiency alongside the Delegation of Brazil. In addition, with the Delegation of France, it had successfully made the relationship between patents and emerging technologies part of the Committee’s work. The proposals discussed by the SCT, for their part, reflected the varied concerns of delegations, and, above all, the will to align positions on issues of particular relevance, such as country brands and the tools Member States have to protect. In terms of industrial designs, of particular note was the desire for harmonization, both in the majority support of delegations for the recommendations proposed under that item to protect graphical user interfaces, and in the creation of a database for the temporary protection of industrial designs at international trade fairs and exhibitions. Regarding geographical indications, beginning discussions on geographical indications for services, as well as artisanal and industrial activities, had facilitated understanding of the current development and scope of the issue. The country also firmly supported the work of the SCCR and considered it essential to make progress towards a consensus to enable the convening in the near future of a diplomatic conference on the adoption of a broadcasting treaty that reflected the technological developments of the twenty-first century. In addition, the right to participation or “*droit de suite*” was a highly relevant issue and should be included in the Committee’s standing agenda. Furthermore, it was fundamental to continue efforts to strengthen the work of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE) to combat infringements of IP and industrial property online. The Delegation remained firmly committed to the governance of the Organization, as illustrated by its active participation in all committees and working groups, as well as its informal activities and participation in all kinds of events. It was pleased to have entered into a new MoU with WIPO on the establishment of a new fund that would enable joint projects of interest to all parties to be undertaken, in line with the MTSP adopted in 2021. The country was grateful to all Member States for their support for its presidency of the PBC in 2023, a year of unquestionable importance in terms of the budgetary work to be carried out. It hoped that, as a certain degree of normality was being regained and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were being overcome, it would be possible to return to the in-person forums that had existed before the pandemic to discuss the various aspects of IP and industrial property and to make decisions for the future. The Delegation would participate actively, taking into account the cross-cutting

issues that guided all of the activities of WIPO, a true example of technical and effective multilateralism and dialogue.

113. The Delegation of Sri Lanka aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. Given the unprecedented economic and social challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the programs launched by WIPO to help Member States to rebuild, such as the COVID-19 package and the creative economies project, were welcome. Sri Lanka had been working in close cooperation with WIPO in a number of spheres for many years, including strengthening national IP and development systems and capacities. The Technology and Innovation Support Centre Program and the Enabling IP Environment Project were currently being implemented successfully in the country, while the IP Diagnostic Tool had been launched. Sri Lanka had joined the Marrakesh Treaty in 2016 and had adopted a new Geographical Indication Registration Law in 2022. The country was currently working with WIPO to upgrade IPAS in the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) and to digitize NIPO IP documents. Technical support had been sought for drafting a legal framework that would enable access to the Madrid Protocol. Similarly, assistance had been sought under the COVID-19 package for technical support and skills- and capacity-building initiatives. The Delegation appreciated the online copyright and creative industry programs provided by WIPO during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Sri Lanka intended to access the WIPO Internet Treaties in the next biennium. The Delegation said that the country was facing a grave economic crisis and thus relied on its multilateral and bilateral partners, including WIPO, to step up cooperation and support national stakeholders, including businesses, SMEs, women and young people, in using IP for development, especially in the tourism industry.

114. The Delegation of the Sudan aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria on behalf of the African Group. The Division for Arab Countries and the Division for Least Developed Countries of WIPO had provided ongoing technical assistance to develop and support 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 in-person and online workshops had been held over the previous year. The most important of the meetings had taken place in June 2022 between the Minister of Justice, Muhammad Sa'id al-Halu, and the Director General of the Organization, Daren Tang, who reviewed the roadmap of expected goals and aspects of bilateral cooperation between the two sides. Discussions had turned on the importance of GRs and geographical indications, how to protect them as contributing factors to economic development, and how the Sudan could reap the economic benefits of its rich cultural and geographical diversity. A whole section on geographical indications had been added to draft trademark legislation and the Sudan had been included in an awareness-raising program on GRs. In 2021, the Sudan had also taken part in a virtual WIPO IP training program for LDCs. Projects presented by participants from the Sudan had focused on raising awareness of IP among young people and government institutions for women's affairs. 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. 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 the current year. In the near term, efforts would be concentrated on establishing a national training center and a number of TISCs. The Sudan was keen to draft a comprehensive national IP strategy and to roll out an IP policy for universities, institutes and research centers.

115. The Delegation of Sweden, aligning itself with the opening statements delivered by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of the Czech Republic, on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that it strongly condemned the unjustified military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the importance of IP for innovation. New vaccines had been created

in record time, day-to-day work had been carried out online and IP had become crucial. For that progress to continue, it was important to explain how IP could generate innovation and benefit all. WIPO had provided welcome support to the Swedish Intellectual Property Office (PRV) with regard to hosting advanced international training programs financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation. That the WIPO Assemblies might continue to be held in July instead of early fall was a source of concern, as they would coincide with the meetings of other governing bodies of related organizations. There should be a better gender balance in senior posts at WIPO and greater opportunities for women in the Organization's Secretariat.

116. The Delegation of Switzerland, aligning itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the Czech Republic, on behalf of Group B, said that it wished to draw attention to three key points. First, Switzerland supported the inclusion of an agenda item on the Assistance and Support for the Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System of Ukraine. In such difficult times, helping colleagues from Ukraine to rebuild their innovation infrastructure was an imperative and a matter of solidarity and multilateral cooperation to which Switzerland attached particular importance. Second, it must be borne in mind that the normative agenda lay at the heart of the WIPO mandate. In spite of the current international situation, Switzerland welcomed the efforts of WIPO to continue its normative work, such as its recent amendments to the Regulations under the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement. As a contracting party to the Geneva Act since late 2021, Switzerland was now in a position to engage more actively in the development of the Lisbon System to enable it to fulfill its potential as a vital international instrument for the benefit of all stakeholders. Third, the proper functioning of WIPO registration systems and their attractiveness to users depended on, among other things, reliable protection titles. In that regard, Switzerland acknowledged the vast potential of AI on the one hand, and, on the other, users' observations that the development of inventions by machines was increasingly becoming a reality, such that inventors were no longer certain to be able to claim protection. It was unclear whether existing IP rules were ready for such a reality, or whether they should be amended to avoid any legal ambiguity that might discourage investment in new technologies. Switzerland was keen to discuss the situation with other Member States and to find out more about their domestic approach.

117. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic said that it greatly valued the level of support and cooperation provided to Member States by the Organization and its bodies, in particular the Division for Arab Countries. The Division had invested considerable effort in making a success of projects and programs undertaken in the Syrian Arab Republic. The country's Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection was heavily focused on IP and making the most of the programs made available to it by the Organization. That had played a key role in the success of a range of programs and initiatives. They included: the AI-Basel Creativity and Invention Exhibitions, which had been held in Damascus and for which WIPO had contributed prizes for exhibition winners; the publication of a series of guides for SMEs adapted to the country's circumstances (*Making a Mark*, *Looking Good* and *Inventing the Future*); and the provision in 2022 by WIPO of two medals for SMEs and universities. Two important projects to establish a TISC and a national IP training center had been launched in coordination with WIPO. They represented a major achievement for the Syrian Arab Republic in the midst of the difficulties it continued to face. A first round of training had been conducted successfully for IP trainees in May 2022 with the cooperation of WIPO experts. A second round would start in September and October 2022. The Syrian Arab Republic continued to roll out programs designed to foster an IP culture. They were aimed at raising awareness of the importance of IP among universities, schools, SMEs and the trade and business sector, and at encouraging them to support creativity. In that context, a series of key WIPO information brochures and publications had been prepared with summaries in Arabic focusing on how to use the Organization's free patent information services and on training in the use of global patent databases. Under the WIPO DA, there had been a particular focus on publishing *Identifying Inventions in the Public Domain* and the accompanying guide on their use in Arabic. That would help people greatly to benefit



from patent information and employ it to develop new and useful technologies. In 2022, the Ministry of Internal Trade and Consumer Protection had launched a new youth competition designed to encourage their use of patent information in order to obtain new patents capable of providing solutions in response to current needs and challenges. Those efforts by the Syrian Arab Republic to underpin its system of support for innovation and creativity had played a major part in the success of the student inventor, Hikma Jabouli, in winning the WIPO first prize, which she had been awarded during celebrations to mark World Intellectual Property Day.

118. The Delegation of Tajikistan said that, in 2014, with the assistance of WIPO, the country had developed a National IP Development Strategy, which had been used to address related issues until 2020. The Government was actively working to implement institutional transformation and structural reform, create market infrastructure and establish a favorable climate for innovation in the country. At present, all such work was organized under the country's National IP Development Strategy 2030. The Government was promoting intellectual activity as a lever for economic development through the establishment of a robust regulatory framework to protect IP rights and create conditions conducive to boosting innovative activity and strengthening the IP system. Tajikistan was a party to 26 WIPO-administered international agreements on IP and was planning to accede to the Lisbon Agreement. In that connection, the President and the Government provided significant support for the functioning of the IP system as an essential part of innovation, in particular by creating the National Council for IP Coordination and Development. In addition, a representative of Tajikistan was Chair of the Administrative Council of the Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), which was an important organization for countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States and invested heavily in the regional development of IP.

119. The Delegation of Thailand associated itself with the statement made by the Delegation of the Philippines, on behalf of ASEAN, and looked forward to working closely with WIPO and its Member States to build strong IP ecosystems at the regional and global levels. National efforts continued in digital transformation for the delivery of timely and quality services. The landscape created by the pandemic encouraged office automation for data management and the adoption of technologies such as AI for patent and trademark searches. Given that access to user-friendly tools for customers remained a priority, Thailand supported updates to the PCT and Madrid Systems to facilitate the electronic filing of IPRs. A sound IP ecosystem would help the country to escape the middle-income trap and get back on track to strong and sustainable growth. It was therefore focused on IPR commercialization and management and the promotion of business opportunities arising from new technologies, including non fungible tokens, and encouraged companies, in particular SMEs and start-ups, to maximise the value of their IP and align IP strategies with their business. Thailand also worked closely with domestic companies and universities to ensure that national R&D met market needs and created new demand, with IP strategies being taken into account at the earliest stage. The copyright law had been amended to ensure full IPR protection and enforceability, which had enabled Thailand's accession to the WIPO Copyright Treaty the previous day. Laws on patents and geographical indications would be revised to provide stability and efficiency for businesses and to help individuals and communities, as well as businesses, to benefit from them. The Delegation remained committed to making further progress in development, especially in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and supported the continued implementation of the 45 DA Recommendations, in line with WIPO's MTSP.

120. The Delegation of Togo said that IP was a driver of growth that contributed to the development of States and the well-being of society. Accordingly, the national development plan for 2018–2022, reflected in the Government roadmap for 2020–2025, included the development of agricultural growth poles and industrial parks, the first of which were now in operation. Such initiatives would be underpinned by high-quality infrastructure and an adequate industrial property system. The support provided by the WIPO Secretariat in the area of geographical indications was greatly appreciated and had enabled Togo to carry out a number

of activities in relation to the registration procedure for Kovié rice, which was produced mainly in Zio River basin in the country's maritime region. Togo was confident that the value of that product would quickly grow for the benefit of its citizens. Togo was also rich in GRs, TK and folklore and required assistance to enhance its value. Development, including the need for technology transfer, lay at the heart of the country's concerns. It was for that reason that Togo was shortly due to begin updating its requirements and defining its priorities in the area of technology transfer. The adoption of the WIPO DA was thus crucial for the achievement of the country's objectives, as well as for the strengthening of multilateral cooperation on IP matters.

121. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago, expressing support for the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of GRULAC, said that the country was preparing draft amendments to legislation in order to accede to the Geneva (1999) Act of the Hague Agreement. It was also seeking to extend the term of copyright to life plus 70 years, up from 50 years, and had obtained guidance on accession to the Patent Law Treaty (PLT). Grateful for WIPO initiatives that had helped to shape the local IP ecosystem and to develop strong national IP policies and strategies, the Delegation was committed to the growth of the IP environment domestically and in the Caribbean. It had been one of the three countries chosen to participate in the mobile application project of the CDIP, which it had successfully completed. The benefit to local software developers and co-creators in the application development sector was already evident. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago had joined the ABC after its accession to the Marrakesh Treaty. The acceleration of service digitization was a positive result of the pandemic. As the WIPO FILE project advanced, Trinidad and Tobago was preparing to go fully online with trademark post-filing processes and forms and would progressively add the other types of industrial property. It had also joined the ePCT system and had implemented the electronic submission of PCT applications. With IP enforcement remaining a priority, a manual for IP prosecutors had been produced using local experts, and the establishment of an IP enforcement unit within the police service was being discussed. Amendments to the Copyright Act and the Trade Marks Act incorporated modern enforcement provisions reflected in the manual. The Trinidad and Tobago Intellectual Property Office (TTIPO) also participated heavily in the Cabinet-appointed Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force. Following the successful launch of the flagship National IP Training Center of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (NIPTC), anchored by a library focused on IP research, the country looked forward to delivering additional courses with its partners later in 2022. The WIPO diagnostic tool was heavily utilized by Trinidadian and Tobagonian SMEs in preparation for those courses. Trinidad and Tobago continued to collaborate with its neighbors to strengthen IP in the Caribbean, and with partners outside the region through respective MoUs signed with the Chilean Institute of Industrial Property (INAPI) and IPOS. It looked forward to concluding an MoU with Canada soon to further strengthen the TTIPO's capabilities. Appreciative of the many WIPO initiatives involving the TTIPO, the Delegation looked forward to continuing that partnership for the regional promotion of IP, from the ground upwards, and to supporting the Director General to fulfil the MTSP. It hoped for the successful conclusion of discussions concerning a broadcast treaty, in view of the burgeoning commercial activity in that vital area of cross-border trade, and of those concerning an instrument for the protection of GRs, TK and cultural expressions.

122. The Delegation of Tunisia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. Tunisia attached the greatest importance to IP as a means of promoting innovation, which was the prime driver of economic development. The Horizon 35 national strategy to reboot industry, which had been drafted recently by the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy, contained a comprehensive action plan to foster skills and a culture of development and innovation. Another aim was to weave young people, start-ups and creative women into the economic fabric of the country. Cooperation projects between Tunisia and WIPO had witnessed a boom, with numerous structural programs across the spectrum of IP-related areas, for which the Delegation was especially grateful to the Organization and its Director General. Key among those initiatives were the national industrial property strategy; the

adoption of IPAS, which enabled access to virtual services for applications, registration and opposition with regard to any element of industrial property; the establishment of a Masters diploma in IP; and the launch of an IP innovative office project. Three national IP Olympiads had been held with a view to disseminating IP culture among students and start-ups. The Delegation invited all Member States and participating Organizations to attend the 2022 Competition. Tunisia had been selected to represent Africa as part of the WIPO model project on registering collective marks. The project would contribute to the development of the country's northwest by nurturing a system for the production and marketing of local honey and essential oils. The National Institute for Standardization and Industrial Property (INNORPI) strove to conclude partnership agreements with its counterparts in the field of industrial property in order to exchange experiences and information.

123. The Delegation of Türkiye said that the COVID-19 pandemic had underscored the importance of effective communication and close collaboration among individuals, institutions and nations. In the face of such global challenges, the balanced evolution of the international IP system was more important than ever. IP offices played a vital role in adapting to the fast-changing innovation ecosystem. In that regard, the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office (TURKPATENT) was taking steps to strengthen its capacity to respond to stakeholders' needs, which were becoming increasingly diversified. According to the WIPO Indicators 2021 report, Türkiye ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the world for resident patent applications, seventh for trademark applications and fourth for design applications by origin. In addition, Türkiye was among the most active users of the PCT and the Madrid and Hague Systems, as both an origin and a designated country. Türkiye continued to implement treaties and regulations with a view to ensuring effective copyright protection. For instance, on September 27, 2021, the Government ratified the Marrakesh Treaty, which was due to enter into force in the near future. Türkiye had every faith in the administration of WIPO and in the Organization's guidance on its ongoing and future agendas. In that respect, while associating itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Germany on behalf of Group B, Türkiye wished to underline its full support for handling the work of technical and specialized committees in a transparent manner. Finally, Türkiye believed that the decision-making process regarding the selection of host countries for WIPO External Offices should be inclusive, objective and transparent in accordance with the Guiding Principles regarding WIPO External Offices.

124. The Delegation of Turkmenistan said that promoting and developing IP, fostering innovation and protecting the interests of applicants, inventors and rights holders were key to development. The IP system was evolving in line with policy documents that reflected those principles. In December 2020, the President of Turkmenistan had approved that country's IP system development program for the period 2021–2025, which had been drafted with the assistance of WIPO, and its related implementation action plan. The latest trends in science and technology, and how to leverage them for the benefit of the country's economic development priorities and national cultural, literary and artistic traditions, had been taken into account in those documents. One aim of the country's national socio-economic development program for the period 2022–2052, which had been adopted in February 2022, was to ensure the comprehensive and sustainable development of knowledge- and innovation-driven economic sectors, combining environmentally friendly technology and requiring the consistent implementation of new and more efficient market-based management methods. The program would enable significant development of the country's IP system. Turkmenistan was a party to 15 international IP treaties and was keenly aware of the importance of building national capacity to implement them effectively. In that regard, the expertise of WIPO in organizing specialized seminars was key. The signing of a service agreement between the Ministry of Finance and the Economy and WIPO would help to stimulate innovation, invention and creativity and to accelerate the transition by scientific bodies and higher education institutions to a market-based environment. With the cooperation of WIPO, a TISC was to be opened in Turkmenistan. It

would foster the integration of knowledge and technology into the country's economy and help to develop the domestic market as new IP assets requiring protection emerged.

125. The Delegation of Uganda aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. On January 28, 2022, Uganda had acceded to four WIPO-administered agreements: the Berne Convention, the WCT, the WPPT and the Beijing Treaty. This had represented a key milestone for the country's participation in the global IP system, contributing to the country's cultural development and enabling Ugandan authors, performers and producers to enjoy wider protection internationally and on the Internet. The country had benefitted as well from WIPO TISCs, with over 50 per cent of local patent and utility model applications now coming from TISC institutions. In 2022, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of TISCs in Uganda had been increased to 30. WIPO-supported projects were also currently under way in the areas of appropriate technology, the role of women in innovation and the use of IP by women entrepreneurs. The latter project had provided IP training to over 80 women, and over 50 had successfully used IP to protect business assets.

126. The Delegation of Ukraine said that the unprovoked, unjustified and brutal aggression by the Russian Federation, supported by Belarus, against Ukraine had had tragic consequences in all areas of civil and economic life, including in relation to IP. The full-scale invasion had meant, above all, loss of life and livelihoods. Just that morning, while Member States had discussed whether to adopt the Consolidated Agenda of the Assemblies, dozens of people had been killed by Russian missiles in the city of Vinnytsia (central western Ukraine). The national IP system had suffered greatly from the economic destruction. Many people were working from shelters, often risking their lives and health. The destruction of infrastructure had had a major impact on innovation activities: the number of national applications to register IP assets had fallen by half; most cultural events and activities had been cancelled; television, audiovisual and musical production had dropped dramatically; and most types of royalty payments had stopped. In May 2022, the country's only plant gene bank, with more than 160,000 varieties, species and hybrids from around the world, had been deliberately destroyed by Russian missiles in the city of Kharkiv. More than 2,000 educational facilities in the country, including 43 universities, had been shelled and five completely destroyed. Some of them had hosted TISCs, while others had been centers of scientific innovation. The task of WIPO was primarily to contribute to better understanding and cooperation among Member States for their mutual benefit on the basis of respect for their sovereignty and equality. As a result of the war, all IP cooperation activities between WIPO and Ukraine, including with regard to awareness-raising, capacity-building and training of trainers, had been suspended. Support for the development of deep tech and innovative start-ups was under threat. In line with UN General Assembly resolution No. ES-11/1, the international community must respond to the aggression by the Russian Federation and provide Ukraine with support immediately. It should remain united and strong in its resolve to preserve the basic norms and principles of international law. The Russian Federation must stop its military aggression against Ukraine immediately and fully respect its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

127. The Delegation of the United Arab Emirates aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. The United Arab Emirates was taking tangible action as part of its transition to a knowledge- and innovation-based economy. Over the past year, it had made a number of changes to the legislation governing industrial property rights, providing ample flexibility in the areas of patents and industrial designs; trademarks, introducing specific provisions on geographical indications; and copyright and related rights, allowing the operation of collective societies for the first time and providing for the launch of the Emirates Reprographic Rights Management Association. The United Arab Emirates was party to a number of important treaties and agreements, such as the Madrid Protocol; the Budapest Treaty; the Strasbourg Agreement Concerning the International Patent Classification; and the Nice Agreement Concerning the International Classification of Goods

and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks. The Government had recently launched a national strategy for cultural and creative industries. It would work closely with WIPO to implement that strategy through various projects and initiatives. As harnessing the benefits of WIPO systems and services was in the interest of all Member States, the Delegation urged the Member States and the WIPO Secretariat to work towards making those systems and services truly multilingual. Lastly, discussions on the normative agenda needed to be open and dynamic in order to overcome the challenges currently facing creators, inventors and authors.

128. The Delegation of the United Kingdom said that the continuation of hybrid meetings would strengthen WIPO's convening power and was vital in bringing together Member States, stakeholders and the general public, in particular young people. Many challenges remained as the world emerged from the pandemic, in which the international IP framework had played a positive role. The invasion of Ukraine showed disregard for human life, as well as international law, and had an impact on deliberations during the Assemblies. The United Kingdom stood in solidarity with Ukraine, WIPO and its membership in ensuring that innovation and creativity benefited all. New technologies in rapidly developing areas, such as AI, the metaverse and blockchain, presented exciting opportunities for innovation and creativity ecosystems. National and international IP frameworks must be continually reviewed to ensure fitness for purpose. The United Kingdom was pleased to contribute to WIPO's commendable work on future technologies, with AI inventorship being a priority. Considering the increasing value of intangible assets owned by industry, including IP, WIPO's work would help businesses to gain access to finance in order to share the benefits of their innovation and creativity. The Delegation was confident in the Director General's approach to WIPO's organizational culture, accountability and responsibility and commended the progress made to date. It remained supportive of both WIPO's continuing digital transformation for improved customer experience, and the refocusing of its activities on positive impact in the real world, for communities and businesses globally.

129. The Delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. Among various other activities and programs, WIPO was currently cooperating with the country's Government in implementing two projects: one to equip businesses with diagnostic tools for the effective use of IP; the other to create an IP ecosystem conducive to innovation. The Government was confident both projects would enhance the use of IP and foster innovation and development in the country.

130. The Delegation of the United States of America aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Germany, on behalf of Group B, condemned the unprovoked and unjustified war being waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and expressed solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Collaboration within WIPO to support innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship would help to solve the world's biggest challenges, including climate change, world hunger, illness and disease, and to stimulate job creation. The rapid development of safe and effective vaccines for COVID-19 was attributable to international collaboration and harmonization, the ability to hold IP and the willingness of funders to underwrite the cost and risk of developing new vaccines across countries. Recent measures taken by the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) included a new pilot program for climate change mitigation and extension of pilot programs for cancer immunology and COVID-19. It was accelerating the examination process for patent applications in those areas in order to encourage investment and the search for solutions. The Delegation was committed to ensuring broader access to the global IP system, to educating more young people, women and under-represented groups to become users of the IP system and to empowering and supporting all future innovators.

131. The Delegation of Uzbekistan said that, with the assistance of WIPO, in 2022 the country had adopted a law on geographical indications and had acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty. Uzbekistan was in the final stages of acceding to the STLT and had launched a national IP

development strategy for the period 2022-2026. The IP strategy was based on the effective legal protection and strong legal enforcement of IP rights, which was a government priority. The aims of the strategy included improving public administration in the field of IP, developing IP-related legislation, enhancing the creation and registration of IP objects, strengthening the system of enforcement of IP rights, implementing and improving IP-related information and communication technologies, creating a society and legal culture with respect for IP, and developing international cooperation in the field of IP. Uzbekistan was working on acceding to more international treaties so as to expand its national legislation and harmonize it with international standards. Work was underway on acceding to the Beijing Treaty and the Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations (Rome Convention).

132. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of GRULAC. The Delegation hoped that its cooperation with WIPO would continue to evolve and enable new challenges to be tackled so as to implement innovative projects that promoted IP as a tool for economic growth and sustainable development in the country. It was important that the new approach taken by WIPO retained a focus on ensuring a fairer and more equitable system for developing countries. The country hoped to continue creating a robust system of protection for innovation through a strategy and informed use of IP rights for all types of businesses and public bodies. It was working on innovative and forward-looking initiatives to that end, and was committed to continuing to participate in a proactive and responsible manner. At present, innovation and creativity had a great power for change. Broadly speaking, the goal was an IP rights system that contributed to the overall efficiency of the system so as to derive varied benefits through the development of a number of crucial fields, such as tourism, science and technology, as well as, in humanistic and cultural terms, TK, among other areas. To that end, the country was addressing issues fundamental to IP, namely copyright and geographical indications, and was looking to improve its normative and legislative framework and provide greater flexibility in the registration and use of patents and marks. The country had acceded to various important conventions and treaties such as the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, the Berne Convention, the Rome Convention and the Marrakesh Treaty, and had modernized and enhanced the process of professionalizing its civil servants. The country supported a balanced and effective IP system that enabled its creators and innovators to overcome difficulties, achieve their objectives and easily access the international market. In addition, it aimed to improve registration processes and rights application systems, and raise public awareness of the system. Overall, it aimed to improve the existing legal and social structure, as well as cultural aspects related to the design and enjoyment of IP. To that end, the country continued to make progress on the legislative agenda and to work on the draft industrial property act and draft copyright act, together with the National Assembly, in addition to work on the review of international treaties to which the country had acceded or planned to accede. The country was focused on developing national legislation and bringing IP closer to the public. It believed that those proposals of work would serve to deepen direct relations with WIPO. It was committed to an advanced, balanced and sustainable IP system that acted as a tool for development, and had collaboration programs on innovation, manuals on trademarks, patents and licenses, among other instruments, that could be integrated into all areas of society and produce clear improvements. The search for consensus and multilateral agreements, discussions with relevant sectors and treaty links were fundamental to creating the conditions for development, creativity and equal participation in society.

133. The Delegation of Viet Nam said that its Government was actively engaged in implementing WIPO initiatives to contribute to the post-pandemic recovery and support actors in the IP ecosystem, especially SMEs, start-ups, women and young people. The Government was working to foster a domestic culture of IP and innovation, and, with the support of WIPO, it had developed a national innovation index and revised its IP legislation, among other activities. Viet

Nam would continue to be a proactive and responsible member of WIPO; the recent visit of a former Vietnamese President to WIPO in 2021 had represented an important milestone in collaboration between WIPO and Viet Nam. The Delegation was inspired by the approach of WIPO to developing a balanced and innovative global IP ecosystem. It looked forward to collaborating with WIPO to build a sustainable IP ecosystem that enhanced the knowledge base and economic growth of Viet Nam.

134. The Delegation of Zambia aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group. Zambia assigned great importance to IP as a key to economic growth, stronger technological capacity and enhanced competitiveness. The Government of Zambia intended to continue leveraging its cooperation with WIPO and other partners to achieve meaningful progress to those ends. In collaboration with one such partner, the EUIPO, Zambia had made its trademark data more accessible worldwide through integration with the EUIPO “TM View” tool, a step expected to increase the number of trademark applications received. Similarly, support from WIPO for the National Training Program on Intellectual Property for Youth Innovation had enabled Zambian youth innovators and researchers to network, share best practices, benefit from mentorship and ultimately contribute to the transformation of IP assets into marketable, innovative products and services. Believing WIPO could do still more to help develop such capacity, as well as ICT infrastructure and IP policy more generally, the Government of Zambia welcomed the Organization’s initiative for 2022–2031 to enhance WIPO deliverables in LDCs. Zambia looked forward to focused implementation of the new deliverables as prioritized by each country.

135. The Delegation of Zimbabwe, associating itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Algeria, on behalf of the African Group, said that a harmonious balance between sustainable development and IPR protection needed to be created through sufficient, effective limitations and exceptions. Although IP had been conducive to the expeditious creation of vaccines against COVID-19, IPR flexibilities and exceptions also played a key role in ensuring the equitable, safe and affordable supply of medicines, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics to developing and LDCs. In that regard, Zimbabwe continued to make steady progress in COVID-19 vaccinations despite the imposition of unilateral coercive measures on the country. The pandemic had also exposed the shortcomings of the current international copyright system in relation to ensuring access to educational material for underprivileged children in times of crises, and efficient and less costly sharing of research material to address global challenges in health, extreme poverty, malnutrition and food crises, climate change and natural disasters. The Delegation therefore unequivocally supported the draft work program on limitations and exceptions proposed by the African Group in the SCCR. The national IP office had been restructured as the semi-autonomous Companies and Intellectual Property Office of Zimbabwe, which was integral to promoting IP as a tool for innovation, artistic and cultural expression and technological development, especially among young people. In view of the remarkable interest and uptake in IP studies in Zimbabwe, the capacity-building support spearheaded by the WIPO Academy was appreciated, in particular the Madrid Fellowship and the Master’s in Intellectual Property jointly offered by WIPO, the ARIPO and Africa University. The implementation of the 45 WIPO DA Recommendations was a priority, and the Secretariat should streamline the DA in all its work. Moreover, a workable solution should be agreed for the long-outstanding issue of convening a diplomatic conference on a DLT. The inter-sessional work on the expansion of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the PBC was welcome. Any expansion of those Governing Bodies must be in line with geographical equity and balance. The work of the IGC should be expedited in accordance with its mandate, and the Division for Africa should continue to receive more budgetary and administrative support. The Delegation stood ready to work constructively with WIPO to achieve common objectives.

136. The Delegation of Palestine aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of India on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. Strong IP systems helped to stimulate economic growth, increase competitiveness, create jobs and safeguard cultural heritage.

However, the ongoing occupation of Palestine by Israel continued to prevent Palestinian citizens from fully exploiting their innovative capacities. Nonetheless, with the support of WIPO, Palestine continued to make every effort to improve its IP and innovation ecosystem, laying a particular focus on training and capacity-building, awareness-raising campaigns, TK and TCEs and the role of women and youth in IP. The Delegation was committed to maintaining and further developing its cooperation with WIPO.

137. The Representative of OAPI said that WIPO was crucial to promoting IP and furthering development. WIPO and OAPI had similar aspirations and ideals with regard to their broad and supportive cooperation. In 2021 and 2022, achievements had been made regarding that cooperation, confirming their mutual desire to promote IP assets. Major initiatives had been undertaken. The OAPI IT system had been upgraded through the digitalization of technical archives and the extension of the IPAS module. Draft laws had been produced on the protection of TK, TCEs and GRs for OAPI Member States. The WIPO IP diagnostic tool had been adapted to SMEs in the OAPI legal context. A Master's program in patent engineering had been introduced and the Nairobi strategic plan for the development of copyright and related rights in Africa had been adopted. The OAPI Member State Ministerial Conference had been organized and had concluded with a ministerial declaration containing a commitment by Member States to promote geographical indications and adhere to international and related instruments, particularly the Lisbon System. IP played a key role in the trade of goods and services. In that regard, OAPI would actively participate in negotiations to create an IP protocol in the African Continental Free Trade Area. OAPI had met negotiators from its Member States to agree on how best to harmonize and integrate the IP system and procedures so that the interests of rights holders would be protected and rights holders could participate in the development of African States. The work of the current session of the WIPO Assemblies would give rise to serious and occasionally lively debates in the pursuit of common ideals. In that regard, special attention should be paid to negotiations to agree on the text of one or several instruments for the effective protection of TK, TCEs and GRs. WIPO could provide significant help to conclude that agreement. It would need to listen to Member States, note their concerns and suggestions, and offer solutions. Delegations should be determined, open-minded and cooperative to resolve pending issues. It was hoped that the current session of the WIPO Assemblies would result in concrete and realistic solutions that would contribute to the sustainable development of the Organization's work.

138. The Representative of ARIPO said that WIPO and ARIPO had undertaken a number of joint activities over the previous year under the framework for cooperation between WIPO, ARIPO and OAPI. Initiatives carried out had been aimed at supporting African universities and research and development institutions in commercializing IP, and thereby facilitating cooperation between academia and industry. Implementation of the IP schools club, which was being piloted in Botswana, Malawi and Zambia, was progressing well. Moreover, the inaugural Heads of IP Offices Conference for ARIPO Member States had taken place in Eswatini in June 2022, and Cabo Verde had become a Member State of ARIPO in July 2022.

139. The Representative of EAPO welcomed the fact that the current Assemblies were being held largely in person but said that the adoption of unilateral illegitimate measures in the field of IP was a source of concern. EAPO had been the object of hostile acts by the USPTO and the EPO. EAPO had eight member States and administered a regional patent system. Its mandate was unrelated to political issues between States. That those offices had suspended cooperation showed a lack of understanding of the status of EAPO as an international organization. The various "freezes" unleashed against EAPO were contrary to international law, were destructive and represented a failure on the part of the States involved to live up to their obligations. The member States of EAPO had significant scientific and technical clout and constituted an important element of the global IP system. EAPO aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegations of the Russian Federation and Belarus with regard to the unilateral illegitimate measures relating to IP that had been adopted by a number of States.



Restrictive measures were destroying the current arrangements, causing legal uncertainty for the global IP system and casting a shadow over the exercise by rights holders of their legitimate rights and interests.

140. The Representative of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office) said that the current Series of Meetings of the Assemblies was being held at a time of new challenges for all and the emergence of AI technology. The international IP system and its instruments continued to play a pivotal role in spurring research centers and development and innovation institutions around the world to develop innovative products and services that would contribute to improving quality of life, increasing social well-being, preserving the environment and addressing the factors behind climate change. In that context, the Representative hoped that the flexibility and exceptions built into the relevant international treaties could be fully leveraged to achieve the effective regulation of the related IP rights. The member States of the Council were paying greater attention to the innovation system, the overall IP environment and the protection and enforcement of related rights, including through the TRIPS Agreement. It saw a need to update systems, laws and procedures relating to the various classes of IP and to boost the knowledge and skills of the actors concerned, including judges and enforcement officials. That had stimulated pioneering work and high-quality output. The Representative 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.

141. The Representative of the All-China Patent Agents Association (ACPAA), noting that the organization's membership included more 29,000 patent attorneys and more than 4,000 patent agencies, said that it would continue to enhance its professional training and international communication services and strengthen its participation in international IP communication and cooperation in order to improve the global IP service system. Given that, in recent years, China had been the third largest user of the Madrid System and among the top 10 users of the Hague System, Chinese should be added as a working language of both systems so as to broaden their application and thus promote global brand protection and industrial design innovation.

142. The Representative of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) said that, as the largest agency for promoting foreign trade and investment in China, CCPIT had been an IP pioneer in China, having attended WIPO meetings for the first time in 1973. CCPIT welcomed the launch of the Organization's MTSP for the period 2022-2026 and its efforts to empower young people, women and SMEs in terms of IP. WIPO should further improve its global IP service systems, enhance their user-friendliness and coverage and, in particular, adopt the use of Chinese and other official UN languages in the Madrid and Hague Systems. As a representative of the Chinese business community, CCPIT stood ready to strengthen exchanges with WIPO in the above-mentioned areas and to serve as a bridge of communication between WIPO and Chinese users.

143. The Representative of the Inter-American Association of Intellectual Property (ASIFI) said that ASIFI 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 and IP protection in the Americas, and improve the knowledge and professional practices of its members. Throughout its history, ASIFI 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. 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. Despite the accessibility of IP, there remained a lack of

awareness in the Americas of its importance to protecting, enhancing, developing and monetizing projects. ASIPI had therefore 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. It had grown exponentially over the previous year and provided numerous advanced courses with the participation of regional experts and academics. In view of the potential to build synergies, ASIPI stood ready to develop joint courses with WIPO to continue benefiting its members and the broader IP community. ASIPI was pleased to participate in discussions on country brands and the means of recognizing and protecting them under the SCT, and stood ready to collaborate to reach consensus on the topic. 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.

144. The Representative of the Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA) said that the Association was focusing on fostering innovation and creativity among SMEs and start-ups and on helping ambitious entrepreneurs to boost their competitive edge and transform their creations into successful and sustainable businesses. It was doing so through such programs as the Emirates IP leaders program, which was run jointly with WIPO and focused on talented young people. The Association sought to empower women in the realization of their IP- and innovation-related socio-economic and cultural achievements through an annual conference entitled "Emirati women – standing out and innovating".

145. The Representative of the Health and Environment Program (HEP) said that it was a pleasure to attend the Assemblies in person after two long years of lockdowns and remote working as a result of COVID-19. That period had demonstrated that human health was vital and that creativity and innovation in IP was necessary to preserve it. As the Director General had stated in his speech, the focus on initiatives and support for producers generated added value, thereby contributing to job generation and, in turn, socio-economic development, which was HEP's goal. In conclusion, the Representative wished all WIPO Member States and observers a pleasant meeting.

146. The Representative of the Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA) said that JIPA supported the vision of WIPO, as expressed in the MTSP. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the growth of data and the emergence of new technologies were transforming society and the economy, making it necessary to examine the state of the IP system. The Representative saluted WIPO efforts to provide a platform for stakeholders to share expertise and discuss issues of international importance, and reaffirmed the commitment of JIPA to working with WIPO.

147. The Representative of Knowledge Ecology International (KEI) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted serious flaws in the IP system. During a public health emergency, no company should have a monopoly over inventions, data, biological resources and manufacturing knowledge required for countermeasures. Some countries had regulated or eliminated such monopolies; others should do the same. Countries with limited resources could seek technical assistance from WIPO to find legal ways and means of ensuring that treatments were affordable and widely available – such as the granting of compulsory licenses

or the use of competition law to remedy excessive pricing. To that end, KEI would like the Secretariat to organize a technical workshop on States' practice with regard to the compulsory and voluntary licensing of medical technologies, including the application of Articles 30, 31 and 44 of the TRIPS Agreement. KEI opposed any further work on a broadcasting treaty, given the clear confusion over the objectives of such a treaty, and any proposals to provide effective perpetual rights to broadcasters for content that they did not create, own or license.

148. The Representative of the Intellectual Property Latin American School (ELAPI) said that the school had engaged in serious and regular work with WIPO since the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Assemblies. It had participated in the work of standing and intergovernmental committees and in experts' and other meetings. It would continue to do so in order to represent newcomers to the IP sector in Latin America. The Representative stood ready to cooperate with WIPO bodies.

149. The Representative of the Third World Network (TWN) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted inequalities in access to medical products and the limitations of IP in facilitating access to them. In addition to patents, copyright, industrial designs and trade secrets could also hinder efforts to scale up the production and distribution of medical products and technology. Innovation could take place without the need for IP rights and many innovative processes, particularly the development of monoclonal antibodies, had moved away from the logic of patents. However, WIPO remained caught in the old paradigm and continued to provide an outdated narrative that did not reflect reality. WIPO should stop promoting that narrative and Member States should introduce measures to counter it.

150. The Director General said that IP should be perceived as key to global growth and development. Interest in IP was not confined to IP specialists. Rather, it was relevant to innovators and creators on the ground and should be used to connect with people at the grassroots level, support entrepreneurs and innovators and help people to move their ideas to the market, share their heritage and change lives through their innovations. In addition to increases in the number national IP filings, many delegates had reported a growing interest in IP among political leaders. In that context, WIPO intended to hold a ministerial forum on innovation. Increasingly, IP was becoming a cross-cutting issue involving different parts of government, society and the economy. WIPO would step up its engagement with Member States through virtual platforms and by initiating innovative avenues, such as theme-based discussions, for deepening dialogue. With regard to the delivery of support, workshops and seminars would be supplemented by more projects on the ground, which were likely to have a longer-lasting impact. Member States were invited to come forward with ideas for ways in which WIPO could provide them with such practical support. The proposal by the Delegation of Jamaica for an international conference on IP and youth was welcome.

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