



**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Mr Stuart Harold Comberbach,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zimbabwe at the
Opening Session of the 2023 WIPO Assemblies**

Thank you Chair,

Zimbabwe joins other countries in extending our gratitude to the Chairperson of the Assemblies, the Vice Chairs, the Director General, Mr Daren Tang and the WIPO Secretariat for the excellent preparations and documentation for the 64th session of the Assemblies of WIPO. We have full confidence in your guidance and leadership, as we tackle the work before us.

Zimbabwe associates itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Ghana on behalf of the Africa Group.

Chair,

In the Zimbabwe National Development Strategy 1 (2021-2025) blueprint, intellectual property and innovation are identified as key enablers for socio-economic development as we proceed toward attaining Zimbabwe's vision "Towards a Prosperous & Empowered Upper Middle-Income Society by 2030". I am pleased to inform that the establishment of innovation hubs at our state universities has spurred Zimbabwe's industrial modernization programme and seen the Government registering over 500 patents in various fields.

Improvement in the innovation and IP ecosystem is evidenced by the improved rank of 107 for Zimbabwe in the 2022 WIPO Global Innovation Index from a previous rank of 113 in 2021.

Noteworthy, is that Zimbabwe continues to implement a raft of measures, which include a process to establish an autonomous deeds,

companies and intellectual property authority. This process is designed to improve and enhance efficiency in our IP ecosystem.

Chair,

During the past year Zimbabwe continued to work with WIPO in data sanitisation and validation. Once complete, the exercise will enable the intellectual property office database to be accessible through online platforms. In February 2023, WIPO facilitated a Workshop on Access to Technology for Innovation and the Development of Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs) in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, Zimbabwe continues its successful partnership with WIPO, ARIPO and the Government of Japan for the Master in Intellectual Property (MIP) programme offered at Africa University in Mutare, Zimbabwe.

Chair,

On normative issues, I assure you that Zimbabwe is a very strong proponent for disclosure requirements and the protection of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and genetic resources and supports convening of diplomatic conferences in 2024 on genetic resource protection and the design law treaty.

Zimbabwe prioritises implementation of the forty-five WIPO Development Agenda Recommendations and we appreciate the increased budgetary allocation for the 2024-2025 biennium to developmental programmes in WIPO.

Finally, Zimbabwe indeed recognises the outstanding work of the African Bureau and the WIPO Academy in fostering capacity building and technical assistance on the African Continent.

I thank you.

(2 minutes)