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WIPO Coordination Committee

**Seventy-Sixth (50th Ordinary) Session
Geneva, September 30 to October 9, 2019**

REPORT

adopted by the WIPO Coordination Committee

1. The WIPO Coordination Committee was concerned with the following items of the Consolidated Agenda (document A/59/1): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11(ii), 13, 14, 30, 31, 32 and 33.
2. The reports on the said items, with the exception of items 7, 30 and 31 are contained in the General Report (document A/59/14).
3. The reports on items 7, 30 and 31 are contained in the present document.
4. Ambassador François Rivasseau (France) was elected Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee; Mr. Andreano Erwin (Indonesia) and Mr. Li Song (China) were elected Vice-Chairs.

ITEM 7 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

APPROVAL OF AGREEMENTS

5. Discussions were based on document WO/CC/76/3 Rev.
6. Opening Agenda item 7 on Approval of Agreements, the newly-elected Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, Ambassador François Rivasseau (France), thanked Member States for the trust that they had shown in him by electing him as Chair. The Chair announced that there were two agreements for consideration under this agenda item, that is, one with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the other with the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). He then invited the Legal Counsel to introduce the item.
7. Introducing the agenda item, the Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegations to document WO/CC/76/3 Rev. and recalled that, in accordance with Article 13(1) of the WIPO Convention, any general agreement entered into with a view to establishing working relations and cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations shall be concluded by the Director General after approval by the WIPO Coordination Committee.
8. He recalled that there were two such general agreements, as reflected in the working document proposed for approval by the WIPO Coordination Committee. The first agreement was a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish cooperation relations between WIPO and ECCAS aimed at facilitating the use of intellectual property (IP) for the economic, social and cultural development of the Member States of ECCAS; and the second was a Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and COMESA aimed at working in close cooperation and consultation on matters of common interest in order to harmonize their efforts to contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the COMESA Member States.
9. The WIPO Coordination Committee approved the MoU between WIPO and ECCAS; and the Cooperation Agreement between WIPO and COMESA, as set forth in Annexes I and II, respectively, of document WO/CC/76/3 Rev.

ITEM 30 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

REPORTS ON STAFF MATTERS

(i) Report on Human Resources

10. Discussions were based on documents WO/CC/76/INF/1 and WO/CC/76/2.
11. The Chair introduced Agenda Item 30(i) and mentioned that there were two documents under consideration: the Annual Report on Human Resources, document WO/CC/76/INF/1 and the WIPO Staff Pension Committee, document WO/CC/76/2.
12. The Secretariat stated that it was pleased to present the Annual Report on Human Resources which covered the period from July 2018 to June 2019 and that the report covered two main items, namely staff matters that were required to be reported to the WIPO Coordination Committee and others of interest to Member States. It added that, as in the previous year, the form of the Annual Report comprised of a concise Human Resources (HR) Report along with a supplementary HR Brochure, entitled "Staff @ WIPO: Serving the Global IP System", both of which had been made available, in printed format and online in all languages. The Secretariat highlighted that the workforce had remained stable in terms of numbers, whilst productivity had increased again during the reporting period, as illustrated by the productivity in

the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the number of cases filed with the Arbitration and Mediation Center, the number of trainings administered by the WIPO Academy, amongst others. The Secretariat added that, on geographical diversity, 123 Member States were now represented in its workforce, up from 118 during the same period last year. The Secretariat also mentioned that its outreach efforts and engagement with unrepresented Member States had shown positive results and that it now had Focal Points in 36 unrepresented Member States, ensuring that information about WIPO vacancies and recruitment procedures would reach potential job applicants in those countries. Outreach efforts had also focused on universities in unrepresented Member States. The Secretariat stated that, as a result of those efforts, it had received a significantly higher number of job applications from unrepresented Member States. The Secretariat also mentioned that it had enlarged its Internship Program to include three new internship slots allocated exclusively to candidates from unrepresented Member States and that interns now had the possibility to apply for jobs during and directly after their internships. The Secretariat mentioned that gender balance at WIPO stood at 54 per cent women overall and 46 per cent men, and that more work was needed to improve gender balance at senior levels. Among the initiatives, the Secretariat stated that it had an internal development program targeting female professionals at the P4 and P5 levels providing tailored support so that they could successfully compete for vacancies at the higher levels, whilst another coaching program was available to assist women to consider and plan for career choices. The Secretariat further highlighted its participation in the United Nations (UN) system initiative EMERGE which focused in supporting women at the P3 level as well as its female talent pool, which assisted the Secretariat in increasing the number of qualified female external applicants for senior vacancies. With respect to the Organization's strategy to be an attractive employer of choice, it stated that it had launched a pilot program to support its staff members with pre-school day care services in Geneva. Since early September, a partnership agreement with a day care service provider near WIPO was in effect with more than a dozen children of WIPO staff benefitting from this cost-shared service. The Secretariat also mentioned that its new time management system was in place since January 2019 and that it provided options for flexible working arrangements by permitting staff to work staggered and compressed hours. Staff and managers had welcomed this new fully automated system, which had been developed with wide participation of staff and managers. The Secretariat stated that the Organization had established its own Medical Unit during the reporting period and that this had significantly improved the quality of health services provided, both in terms of occupational health, and as regards to services provided directly to staff. The Secretariat recalled that it had participated in the UN Safe Space Survey in 2018 and, as a result of the survey findings, it had launched an extensive awareness and training campaign to improve respect at work and to prevent all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. It added that some elements of the campaign were mandatory and that it would be completed early next year. The Secretariat highlighted that it had also tightened its policy on reporting and dealing with harassment at work, in line with the UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment. The Secretariat stated that, in January 2020, it would introduce the retirement age of 65 for all staff in line with the retirement policy of the UN system. The Secretariat recalled that most UN-system organizations had introduced the retirement age of 65 in 2018 and that the WIPO Coordination Committee had approved a deferral by two years for WIPO in order to allow the Secretariat to make urgent and necessary skills adjustments in its workforce. The Secretariat highlighted that, in particular, this deferral had enabled the Secretariat to strengthen its Asian language capacity in the Patents and Technology Sector. The Secretariat mentioned that the Annual Report provided detailed information on WIPO's Rewards and Recognition Program. Discussions on the topic were also held at the last session of the Program and Budget Committee (PBC), and that the latter had proposed a revised allocation for the Program in the next biennium. The Secretariat underlined that it would make adjustments to the current policy which would reflect that financial rewards would be granted to a limited number of outstanding teams and individual performers. The Secretariat stated that one of the key HR-related topics ahead concerned the Future of Work and that new technologies would significantly impact its workforce in the coming years. It

stressed that it would need to embark on a process of transformation of its workforce, using a range of means, including retraining, rotation and hiring of new talent. The Secretariat added that, for some of the talents it would need to bring on board, it would be recruiting in highly competitive global employment markets, particularly in the information technology (IT) field, where there were significant global skills shortages. The Secretariat emphasized that it was therefore important that it remained an employer which could offer a competitive benefits package and an excellent working environment. The Secretariat highlighted that only if these conditions were met would it be able to attract and retain staff with the skills and the competencies needed to manage the technology-related challenges ahead.

13. The Delegation of Croatia, speaking on behalf of the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS) Group, thanked the Secretariat for having prepared and presented the Annual Report on Human Resources. The CEBS Group stated that HR were key to the good administration of the Organization as they directly contribute to its efficient performance. The CEBS Group was pleased to note the workforce had remained stable with its core component of regular staff representing around 70.2 per cent of the workforce, whilst its flexible component represented around 29.8 per cent. The CEBS Group also mentioned that the Annual Report showed increased productivity in particular by the PCT and the Madrid System, which was extremely important as they were the top two global registration services of the Organization and also the main source of its revenue. The CEBS Group commended the efforts to achieve gender balance, especially among management staff and stated that, notwithstanding the issue of merit-based recruitment, the Group appreciated the efforts to ensure equitable geographical representation as it definitely was not among the over-represented Groups. The CEBS Group was pleased to note that during the last PBC, consensus was reached by Member States on the Rewards and Recognition Program and mentioned that rewards certainly contributed to enhancing staff motivation.

14. The Delegation of China thanked the Secretariat for the information contained in the Annual Report on Human Resources and appreciated the Secretariat's efforts to improve geographical representation, gender balance, diversity, recruitment, awareness and working conditions as well as the positive results of those efforts. The Delegation noted in particular the Internship Program for youth as well as the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Program. The Delegation mentioned that IP services was spreading progressively and that there was an increased demand for such services, therefore the Secretariat would need to consistently adapt to this new situation in order to ensure the provision of high quality and prompt IP services. The Delegation hoped that the Secretariat, from a long-term standpoint, would adopt reasonable HR planning and policy in order to satisfy the rapidly developing IP demands and business needs and to promote the sustainable development of the Organization, whilst increasing its future competitiveness. The Delegation urged the Secretariat to make further efforts to improve the representation of developing countries.

15. The Delegation of Canada, speaking on behalf of Group B, congratulated the Chair on his election and thanked the Secretariat for having prepared the current edition of the Annual Report on Human Resources. It welcomed the continuous improvement of this report, which had established its role as a key source of information on HR to Member States. Group B appreciated the transparency that the Report provided on key issues such as the implementation of the UN system-wide action plan on gender equality and the employment of women or UN-SWAP as well as the Internship Program, which had been underlined by recent reports of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). Group B emphasized that effective HR were critical to achieving the Organization's mandate and objectives and that this was reflected in the percentage of personal costs and the overall expenditure of the Organization, noting that from that perspective, appropriate administration and the forward-looking plan of HR were important in the Organization. Group B mentioned that it supported the training and outreach efforts underway to address harassment, including sexual harassment, and that it noted with concern the pervasiveness of this issue in international organizations. Group B emphasized that all

forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, were unacceptable and encouraged the Secretariat to continue participating in the Chief Executive's Board (CEB) Task Force on sexual harassment and to exercise zero tolerance towards harassers, including through the implementation of the UN Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN system events that had been recently approved at the CEB level. Group B understood that convergence and the recognition of the Organization as a global provider in a fast-changing environment and the demand of cost containment from Member States was very challenging. Group B stated that it expected the Organization, as a member of the UN Common System, to follow the guidance of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), including on issues such as salary levels, compensation packages and reward programs, which would ensure the requisite consistency in staff compensation and benefits across UN organizations. Group B recalled that, on this issue, the PBC at its 30th session had agreed to significantly increase funding for the WIPO Rewards and Recognition Program, and had agreed that the resulting provision of 1.15 million Swiss francs was to be used for individual and team rewards and excluded any organization-wide reward. Group B added that, to fully effect those changes, it requested the Secretariat to amend the corresponding Office Instruction accordingly and proposed the following decision language: "the WIPO Coordination Committee took note of the Secretariat's report on the implementation of the WIPO Rewards and Recognition Program requested during the Coordination Committee's 75th session and in recognizing that the Program's purpose to reward excellence regardless of the Organization's overall results and financial performance, instructed the Secretariat to remove the organizational performance reward and retain only those rewards for individuals and teams for the current and future iterations of the WIPO Rewards and Recognition Program". On the topic of recruitment, Group B wished to reiterate the importance that it should be conducted on merit and on the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, whilst taking into account the very technical nature of the Organization and the reality of the service that it provided. Group B was of the view that this overarching principle was essential in order to achieve the unique mandate of the Organization, even in the UN context. Nevertheless and with this in mind, Group B appreciated the ongoing efforts undertaken by the Secretariat towards greater geographical diversity of its staff and towards the improvement of gender balance.

16. The Delegation of Tajikistan, speaking on behalf of the Group of Central Asian, Caucasus and Eastern European Countries (CACEEC), noted with regret that the CACEEC were underrepresented in the Secretariat. It was convinced that the CACEEC possessed the significant expertise based on the successful functioning of their national patent systems and other IP activities, and that experience could be beneficial to WIPO. The Group looked forward to further collaboration aimed at increasing the number of Secretariat staff members who were citizens of the CACEEC.

17. The Delegation of Brazil congratulated the Chair on his election to chair this important Committee and stated that under the Chair's stewardship, it would rise to the challenges facing the Organization. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for its presentation of the Annual Report on Human Resources and believed that the generation of specific data in this area and its proper evaluation was a relevant practice for producing better policies for the Organization's staff in the future. The Delegation commended the Secretariat on its continuous progress on its gender equality marker and stated that, compared to previous results, the improvements were considerable. However, the Delegation mentioned that data showed that policies were still needed for effective inclusion of women in the Organization, especially in high managerial positions. The Delegation stated that career support services and talent identification were valuable tools and should be further explored and improved, but the main focus needed to be on identifying barriers against the wider participation of women in the Organization, in all career levels, and to act to prevent such barriers. The Delegation mentioned that this was also true for geographical representation and that it was glad to see that unrepresented countries were entering the Organization. However, the Delegation mentioned that the Report showed minimal volume increase in the geographical distribution of staff members by region as compared to

previous years. The Delegation was of the view that, as imbalances remain, outreach efforts should be broadened and deepened in scope so that robust statistical improvements could be presented in the years to come. The Delegation added that targeting younger generations and underrepresented regions was a valid option since many lacked resources for investing in specific support programs. The Delegation, thus, strongly encouraged and supported the presentation made by the Secretariat and the specific policies for the underrepresented regions in the Organization. In that regard, the Delegation mentioned that it was ready to engage with the Secretariat since change and innovation were the core business of the Organization.

18. The Delegation of the Russian Federation congratulated the Chair on his election and wished him a productive and successful tenure. The Delegation commended the Secretariat and the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) for the preparation of the Report and was pleased that the Secretariat had made some progress in a number of key HR areas, including geographical representation. The Delegation highlighted that, over the past year, a number of vacant posts in the Secretariat had been filled by specialists from previously unrepresented countries, including from its own regional group. However, the Delegation pointed out that further steps were needed to ensure fair geographical representation, which was a key component of the Secretariat's diversity, as rightfully highlighted in the Report. The Delegation also suggested that in the future reports on HR, the part on geographical representation should be included in the section on matters for obligatory reporting to the WIPO Coordination Committee. The Delegation was of the view that special attention should be given to recommendation 12 of the External Auditor, which called for appropriate work to be done with Member States in order to resolve the lack of clarity around the geographical representation of the workforce. Therefore, the Delegation requested the Secretariat to provide information on representation by the Organization's regional groups rather than by geographical regions. The Delegation acknowledged the progress made in achieving gender parity. It emphasized the importance of a professional and competency-based approach in the selection of candidates, as provided for in the Staff Regulations and Rules, and which should remain the most important recruitment criteria. The Delegation expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for the background information on the Rewards and Recognition Program. It stated that for the Organization, it was particularly important to introduce rewards and incentives for its staff, which were the Organization's greatest asset. However, it was important to align all these measures with the guidelines established by the ICSC. The Delegation appreciated the information on the extension and reclassification of certain temporary appointments and welcomed the measures taken by the Secretariat to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. The Delegation requested the statistics on recruitment after fellowships, internships and the JPO program. The Delegation also requested clarification on the measures to enhance WIPO's recruitment processes mentioned in paragraphs 47 and 48 of the Report and expressed a desire for clarification on precisely what those parts had sought to convey and on the intended role of artificial intelligence (AI) in that process. The Delegation believed that such issues should be discussed with Member States. The Delegation also inquired as to how the reserve list, talent pools and talent pool for women at senior levels (P5 and above) would be managed and stated that it would appreciate the information to be provided. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat once again for having prepared this Annual Report in an easily readable and concise format.

19. The Delegation of India congratulated the Chair on his election. It took note of the Annual Report on Human Resources and thanked the Secretariat for its preparation. The Delegation appreciated that the Organization was in the process of implementing its organizational gender action plan 2019-2021 in line with the UN system-wide effort of the UN Secretary General towards gender parity. The Delegation also noted with appreciation that representation of geographical nationalities in the Organization had increased since the previous year. However, the Delegation believed that additional efforts still needed to be taken to narrow the existing gaps in geographical distribution in HR, particularly with respect to unrepresented and underrepresented geographical regions and Member States. The Delegation commended the

improvements introduced this year in WIPO's Internship Program and looked forward to further positive changes in the management of HR in the Organization.

20. The Delegation of the United States of America congratulated the Chair on his election and expressed its support to the statement made by the Delegation of Canada on behalf of Group B. The Delegation appreciated the informative report and was pleased that the Organization continued to make progress in the areas of gender parity and staff development and learning. The Delegation took note of the Secretariat's programs and outreach initiatives to improve geographical representation and gender parity in the Organization, and encouraged the Secretariat to continue those efforts, including by strengthening outreach and recruitment strategies. The Delegation wished to reiterate its concerns about financial awards being given to staff, other than for individual merit or performance. It mentioned that awards should be given to staff who are outstanding performers, otherwise awards would begin to lose their significance and could be perceived as an entitlement, which was contrary to the fundamental principle of rewarding individual performance or team performance. The Delegation was of the view that the Rewards and Recognition Program should reflect the 2020-21 Program and Budget which provides for a significant increase for team and merit-based awards as agreed to by the PBC, but not for the organizational performance reward. With respect to the development of the well-being strategy, the Delegation mentioned that it would appreciate more information about the specific initiatives being developed under this framework. In regards to addressing the issues from the staff health and performance survey, the Delegation welcomed and was pleased that the Secretariat was introducing measures to combat sexual harassment, a concerning issue throughout the UN system. The Delegation stated that it would appreciate more information regarding the Secretariat's year-long program combatting sexual harassment at WIPO.

21. The Delegation of Uganda, speaking on behalf of the African Group, wished to make one consolidated statement on all the agenda items before the WIPO Coordination Committee (Agenda Items 7, 30, and 31). The Group extended its appreciation to the outgoing Chair for his leadership and commitment to achieving results. It congratulated the Chair and Vice-Chairs on their elections and had no doubt that they would continue to lead and advance the work of the WIPO Coordination Committee in the next year. The Group also expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for the hard work in delivering the mandate of the Organization and for preparing and presenting the Annual Report on Human Resources. The Group also took note of the report that would be presented by the Chief Ethics Officer as well as of the proposals on the amendment to the Staff Regulations and Rules, the cooperation frameworks that had been approved earlier and the proposal for the election of an alternative member to the WIPO Staff Pension Committee. The Group stated that well-trained and well-motivated HR represented the most important asset of the Organization and that it remained a strong supporter of the progressive HR policy at the Organization. The Group expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for the various strategies aimed at improving workforce planning and performance management, complaint management processes, recruitment procedures which took into account diversity and equitable geographical representation, staff welfare and health and for having ensured that the Secretariat's workforce embodied the highest standard of competence and integrity. The Group stated that equitable geographical representation remained a priority and welcomed all the strategies deployed by the Secretariat to realize a workforce that was truly representative of all the membership of the Organization, through various outreach and sensitization programs such as the Focal Point Initiative, the Internship Program and online presence, among others. The Group mentioned that the African Group had the highest number of unrepresented countries both in regular positions and in the Internship Program. The Group also noted with serious concern that a number of African Member States within the desirable range of representation in higher posts had decreased in recent years and was interested to learn more about the reasons for the situation, and what plans were being put in place to correct these imbalances. The Group also stated that it would be useful to receive analysis showing the distribution of staff by regional grouping and country and the respective positions to which

geographical distribution applied. The Group renewed its call for a revision of the 1975 principles to reflect the reality of the Secretariat's diversity, and general UN principles on universality. Regarding gender balance, while the Group applauded the Secretariat's commitment to achieve gender parity, it noted with concern that gender imbalance remains a persistent issue, critically women representation for the P5 and D2 grades had decreased since 2006 and wished to know which measures were in place to reverse this trend. With regard to matters concerning promoting a respectful and harmonious workplace, the Group was pleased with the efforts made, in particular, the introduction of a mandatory online course on working together harmoniously, which addressed harassment. The Group urged the Secretariat to take more substantive actions to address issues connected to any allegations of harassment, as and when they arose within the Organization and would be interested in receiving information on progress made in that regard. On internal justice, formal conflict resolution and disciplinary cases, the Group recalled the principles of natural justice and equality, and the equality of the process should be the criterion observed for the disposal of cases. The Group wished to receive information on the progress made in that regard, and in particular, the specific number of cases as regards the Secretariat's staff. On the proposed amendments to Staff Regulations and Rules, the Group welcomed the proposed amendments which were intended to align the Secretariat's practices with the best practices of the UN common system. The Group mentioned that it had carefully examined the amendments related to the retirement age and transitional measures. The Group stated that, while it sought more clarity on all issues during formal consultation, it also sought clarity at this stage on whether the proposed amendments were undertaken in consultation with staff representatives. The Delegation took note of the report of the Ethics Office and commended the great work done by the Office in ensuring that the Organization's staff maintained the highest ethical standards and integrity. It encouraged the Ethics Office to continue developing cutting-edge strategies and benchmarks and best practices from other UN agencies to progressively enhance competence, effectiveness and integrity of the Organization's staff. The Group also welcomed the approved MoU between the Secretariat and ECCAS, as well as the cooperation agreement for COMESA. The Group believed that the cooperation framework would enhance the reach of the Secretariat's services and programs which would in effect promote the use of IP as a tool for development in the partner states and concerned regional organizations. With respect to the WIPO Staff Pension Committee, the Group endorsed the candidature Mr. Philippe Favatier as Alternate Member of the WIPO Staff Pension Committee for the period 2020-2023.

22. The Delegation of Mexico welcomed the Annual report on Human Resources and wished to pay tribute to the progress which had been made on various issues. The Delegation highlighted particularly the progress made on preventing sexual harassment and harassment at work in general, and the settling of issues in a comprehensive manner and in a way which was beneficial to staff members. The Delegation mentioned that it would be happy to learn more about the Organization's standing in tackling issues of harassment within the UN system. The Delegation expressed its gratitude for the efforts made on the Internship Program and wished to receive more information about the Program in order to increase the number of participants involved. The Delegation expressed its appreciation for the work done on access for persons with disabilities and urged the Secretariat to do whatever was necessary to ensure that the Organization was fully in line with the overall UN system policy on the inclusion of persons with disabilities as outlined by the UN Secretary General. On the Rewards and Recognition Program, the Delegation expressed its support to the proposal made by Group B in ensuring that these rewards were awarded to teams and individuals whose performance was above the norm.

23. The Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago congratulated the Chair on his successful election and his role in chairing this meeting. The Delegation mentioned that it was pleased to hear about the Organization's HR for this year, and stated that it was encouraging to hear of higher applications from unrepresented Member States and about outreach to universities. The Delegation expressed its gratitude for the support from the Secretariat to inform and update

small island developing states on these opportunities. The Delegation was pleased to have regions represented at the Organization and took note of efforts towards gender parity, and the current composition of 54 per cent women and 46 per cent men. The Delegation was hopeful with the initiatives listed on time management, female talent pools and sexual harassment, and it looked forward to hearing of an increase in women at the senior levels of leadership and increased representation from its region and small island developing states at WIPO.

24. The Delegation of Tunisia congratulated the Chair on his election and wished him success in the discharge of his responsibilities. The Delegation expressed its gratitude to the Secretariat for the exhaustive report and the information provided on HR-related issues within the Organization. The Delegation congratulated the Organization for progress made in improving working conditions for staff, which it welcomed. The Delegation attached particular importance to gender issues and therefore it welcomed the efforts which the Organization had been making to ensure gender parity, particularly in higher level posts. The Delegation urged the Secretariat to continue to work on this issue. On recruitment, while emphasizing the issue of competence and integrity, the Delegation stressed the need to observe both geographical representation, fair and equitable geographical distribution, diversity and stated that further work needed to be done on these issues. The Delegation expressed its support to the statement made by the Delegation of Uganda on behalf of the African Group.

25. The Delegation of Singapore congratulated the Chair on his election and expressed its appreciation for the detailed report presented by the Secretariat. The Delegation was heartened to know of the Secretariat's efforts on issues of geographical representation and gender parity. The Delegation stated that HR management was an important part of the Organization's well-being and reaffirmed its commitment to assist the Secretariat in the smooth functioning of its work.

26. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of), on behalf of the outgoing Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee, congratulated the Chair on his election and wished him all success in this important position. The Delegation also expressed its gratitude to the Director General and to the Secretariat for their cooperation and assistance to the Chair of the WPO Coordination Committee in discharging his responsibilities within the past year. The Delegation took note of the Annual Report on Human Resources and expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing and presenting the document. The Delegation acknowledged the effort made by the Secretariat and the progress achieved on HR issues, but stated that it expected and invited the Secretariat to undertake more initiatives in order to address geographical representation of all Member States in the Secretariat.

27. The Chair stated that the work of the WIPO Coordination Committee was based on the excellent work carried out the previous year under the chairmanship of the Ambassador of Iran (Islamic Republic of) to whom he conveyed his thanks.

28. The Director General stated that the question on WIPO's Rewards and Recognition Program could be dealt with relatively quickly by removing paragraphs 26 and 27 of the relevant Office Instruction as requested by the Delegation of Canada on behalf of Group B. On gender representation, the Director General thanked all delegations for their interest in this issue and on all the other issues, and for their extremely helpful comments in that regard. The Director General mentioned that this was an issue that the Secretariat took extremely seriously and did not want to diminish the responsibility of the Secretariat in any way, but added that it was a shared responsibility as well. The Director General emphasized that when Member States nominate candidates, especially for senior positions, the Secretariat's typical experience was that only about 25 per cent of candidates for high positions in the Organization were women nominated by Member States. The Director General added that the Secretariat had its responsibility and that it was working on this issue, and that it undertook to continue working on this issue, whilst admitting that sufficient progress had not been made in the senior positions in

the Organization. He reiterated that this point was clear, the statistics showed it and the Secretariat needed to improve its efforts in that area. The Director General requested the assistance of Member States in the nominations they make for senior positions as well. On the question of sexual harassment, the Director General assured delegations that this issue was taken by the Secretariat with the utmost seriousness and that it had undertaken an extensive campaign in that regard. He added that nobody should be very confident that their statistical record was excellent, but that the Secretariat's happened to be at the moment, and it intended to keep it that way. The Director General added that that was merely a statistical record, and it was a question of culture in the Organization that it was conscious of, and that needed to be addressed. The Director General underlined that the Secretariat would continue to not just implement the UN norms in that regard, but also to ensure that its own standards would reach the highest possible standards in the public or private sectors. On geographical representation, the Director General mentioned that the Secretariat had taken note of the various observations and thanked the delegations in that regard. The Director General added that the Secretariat would be happy to publish in the future statistics also giving an indication of the breakdown by regional group as requested by two delegations, whilst noting that the Secretariat had used, up until now, the standard UN classifications. The Director General stated that the Secretariat had made progress on geographical representation, not just in terms of numbers of Member States represented on the staff, but also in the relative balances. The Director General agreed that the Delegation of Uganda, on behalf of the African Group, was quite right to point out that the Secretariat still needed to make some improvement in regard to Africa, whilst noting that there had been improvements in respect of other groups. The Director General added that the Secretariat firmly believed that Member States felt much more comfortable about an organization in which some of their own were represented, and that it facilitated communications with Member States. The Director General also stated that it was very positive for the Organization and it reflected its international character, and that the Secretariat was firmly committed to continue to improve in that regard. The Director General recalled that an extensive exercise was undertaken amongst the Member States on this question in the years 2015 and 2016, in which the criterion of the 1975 Accord referred to by the Delegation of Uganda, on behalf of the African Group was revisited, and that this exercise had resulted in a report. The Director General reiterated that this 1975 Accord was agreed to by Member States and that in the discussions held in 2015 and 2016, Member States did not agree to change it. The Director General mentioned that that responsibility lay with Member States and not the Secretariat, however, the Secretariat had an extensive outreach program to unrepresented Member States, to assist any State that wished to improve the communication of the available posts in the Secretariat and how they were advertised. Again, the Director General urged Member States to encourage their nationals to present their candidacies for available posts, noting that there were Member States that did not present any candidacies or very few. The Director General mentioned that the Secretariat would do everything to improve that, such as outreach visits to countries to explain to universities, to students, to the government institutions, what the Secretariat's procedures were etc. The Director General highlighted that this was partly a shared responsibility and that the Secretariat would be happy to work with all the Member States to ensure that the Secretariat's performance on both gender balance and geographical representation improved.

29. With respect to some of the other questions from delegations, the Secretariat clarified that talent pools was a system where applications that seemed to have future promise were held, and whenever vacancies arose, the candidates in those pools got automatic alerts to apply for the position and go through the normal selection process. It was a means of capturing talent in order not to lose that talent for the future. The Secretariat also mentioned reserve lists, which had been approved by Member States, when more than one candidate was recommended for selection in a competition, the candidates not selected for the post by the Director General were then placed on a reserve list; and if similar vacancies arose in the course of a year, candidates could be directly selected from the reserve for that position. On the question on harassment, the Secretariat stated that it had developed a comprehensive program on a respectful

workplace for individuals and managers, across the Organization, comprising of: a mandatory online training that had been developed by the UN system and then adapted to WIPO, workshops for all managers and after the Assemblies of Member States, group discussions with the staff and managers together in order to bring out the issues about what people perceive as harassment and how it should be prevented in the Organization. The Secretariat added that, at the end of these, an open day would be organized, probably early next year, to be followed by a survey in order to ascertain that the attitudes had actually changed and that everyone understood what was expected in the Organization, what was an acceptable conduct and what was not. The Secretariat mentioned that a revised Office Instruction had been issued that would facilitate how such matters were dealt with and which now covered non-staff personnel alike who had been excluded earlier from filing formal complaints, and thus aligned with the practices of other institutions in the UN system. On the question of how many interns, fellows and JPOs were actually hired, the Secretariat mentioned that it had not prepared a report on this topic. It added that WIPO had quite a good record, especially concerning JPOs from donor countries, who were very carefully preselected and then gained valuable experience in WIPO for two and sometimes even three years, at the end of which they were very well placed to compete for vacancies. The Secretariat mentioned that WIPO had a good record of absorbing JPOs, whilst underlining that recruitment was always based on merit. With respect to the Well-Being Strategy, which was also an UN system effort, the Secretariat stated that the strategy was aimed at staff across the Organization and was led by the Senior Medical Adviser involving awareness campaigns, lunchtime presentations by speakers and of training programs that staff members could participate. With regard to the question on the number of cases, the Secretariat mentioned that the HR Brochure contained a detailed presentation on all the cases that had been received in the reporting period.

30. The Delegation of Canada, speaking on behalf of Group B, welcomed the commitment of the Director General to withdraw paragraphs 26 and 27 from the Office Instruction on WIPO's Rewards and Recognition Program. The Delegation mentioned that it was not in possession of the last version of the said-Office Instruction and that paragraph 27 in the version in its possession did cover the issue at hand. Hence, the Delegation suggested that the decision paragraph should remain for this agenda item.

31. The Chair clarified that the Director General referred to paragraphs 26 and 27 contained in the English version of Office Instruction 31/2015 Rev. 4. The Chair added that paragraph 26 contained the following: "Subject to WIPO's overall results and its financial performance, an organizational performance reward in the form of a cash lump sum may be awarded in any given year to staff members who contributed to those organizational results", whilst paragraph 27 contained the following text: "If and when it is decided to pay an organizational performance reward, staff members whose performance was rated below effective in any of the two years preceding the award shall not be eligible. Additional criteria for the payment of the reward may be set by the Director General". The Chair stated that these two paragraphs would be deleted and mentioned that all the WIPO Coordination Committee could decide was to have an additional decision paragraph, in which the WIPO Coordination Committee welcomed the announcement made by the Director General about the deletion of paragraphs 26 and 27 in Office Instruction 31/2015 Rev 4.

32. The WIPO Coordination Committee:

- (i) took note of, and welcomed, the decision of the Director General to remove, from the Office Instruction on the WIPO Rewards and Recognition Program, the provisions concerning the organizational performance reward, namely, paragraphs 26 and 27 of Office Instruction No. 31/2015 Rev. 4.

(ii) elected Mr. Philippe Favatier as alternate member of the WIPO Staff Pension Committee from January 2020 up to the end of the ordinary session of the WIPO Coordination Committee in 2023.

(ii) Report by the Ethics Office

33. Discussions were based on document WO/CC/76/INF/2.

34. The Chief Ethics Officer introduced the “Annual Report by the Ethics Office”, which presented its activities for the year 2018. The Chief Ethics Officer referred to the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization, which underlined the importance for the Organization of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The establishment at WIPO of a comprehensive ethics and integrity system, and of the Ethics Office followed from this. The Chief Ethics Officer enjoyed the independence required for the effective discharge of her functions and was not part of operational management. The Ethics Office dealt with four main areas of activity, namely: undertaking promotional activities, particularly training and awareness building activities; providing confidential advice to senior management, managers and all staff members; standard setting, and policy development. The Office implemented policies assigned to it. These activities followed from the Office Instruction on the Terms of Reference of the Ethics Office. Following multiple consultations with the WIPO Independent Advisory and Oversight Committee (IAOC), a further revised mandate would again be sent to the IAOC before the end of October 2019. With respect to promotional activities, the Chief Ethics Officer mentioned that there had been mandatory training on ethics and integrity for all staff at every level of the Organization since the launch of the WIPO Ethics and Integrity policy in 2012. In 2017, a new awareness raising approach had been introduced, whereby developments in thinking about practical ethics, and of ethics practices in the public and private sectors, were shared with staff by invited ethics experts. This formula intended to trigger discussions on the code of ethics and on the practical implementation of its principles. The Ethics Office selected experts with specialized skills from different cultural backgrounds. In 2018, the Organization was privileged to host for its first public lecture Professor Peter Singer from Australia; an ethicist and recipient of multiple distinctions and awards. This public lecture was also attended by members of the diplomatic community, staff from the UN family, specialized agencies and other international organizations, representatives of NGOs, members from the academic community and students. The presentation contributed to WIPO staff's reflection on ethical behavior in the conduct of their duties. In line with best practice in both the private and the public sectors, the Ethics Office continued to place special attention on the so-called “mood in the middle” in 2018. Three dedicated briefings for managers and senior staff were organized. All activities included a review of ethical principles and values that apply at WIPO, with a focus on specific areas, examples, case studies, and ethical decision-making models. The activities of the Ethics Office and the services it provides to staff, such as its 24/7 help line, were also presented. In 2018, some 500 staff participated in ethics training and awareness activities. In 2018, the Ethics Office received 98 requests for advice. Seventy requests regarded declarations of interest under the 2017 Policy on Financial Disclosure and Declaration of Interests (FDDI), which was implemented for the first time in 2018. Other requests for advice were on conflicts of interest and outside activities followed by employment-related matters, inquiries concerning the policy on protection against retaliation, and matters related to gifts and/or hospitality. Advice was provided to the satisfaction of staff members concerned. The Chief Ethics Officer referred to two policies under the purview of the Ethics Office. In furtherance of the principles and objectives of securing the highest standards of integrity among all members of personnel of the Organization, and in support of the Organization's established core value of environmental, social and governance responsibility, the Policy to Protect Against Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct and for Cooperating with duly Authorized Audits or Investigations (the PaR Policy), constitutes the general framework for the protection of all personnel against retaliation for cooperation in an oversight activity, or for making a report in good faith, of misconduct that, if established would be manifestly harmful to

the interest of operations or the governance of the Organization. Based on its preliminary review of a complaint, the Ethics Office determines whether *prima facie* there is a case of retaliation requiring adequate protection of the complainant concerned. The Ethics Office of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) serves as an outside reviewer for requests for review by complainants in respect of determinations on preliminary reviews by WIPO's Ethics Office. In 2018, the Ethics Office received five PAR-related inquiries. Three preliminary reviews were concluded. The Ethics Office determined that these cases did not present *prima facie* cases of retaliation. Furthermore, preliminary reviews in two cases were initiated. The 2017 Policy on FDDI concerns the disclosure of financial interests and compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) by senior staff and other designated categories of staff. WIPO's FDDI Policy strives to achieve an appropriate balance between the need for information and staff members' right to privacy, while taking into account the risk management framework and the internal control system implemented by the Secretariat, and best practices. WIPO's Ethics Office is also responsible for the implementation of the declaration of interest program for WIPO staff members at the level of D1 and above, and a limited number of other specific categories. One hundred and five staff participated in the first filing exercise under the new Policy. The program was open for approximately five weeks in 2018. A 100 per cent rate of compliance with IPSAS and the disclosure requirements by WIPO staff members was achieved for the reporting period. Five per cent of filers were randomly selected by the external reviewer for the verification process, in addition to the regular review process, and were requested to provide third-party documentation for items disclosed. All participants selected complied. The external reviewer determined that there were no reportable observations. Other activities of the Ethics Office in 2018 included its active engagement with the IAOC. The Ethics Office strived to respond to the requests of the IAOC, mindful of its own mandate as well as of the need for the vital prerequisites for the functioning and operation of an Ethics Office, namely independence, confidentiality and impartiality. Upon the election in December 2018 of Ms. Maria Vicien-Milburn and Ms. Tatiana Vasileva, the Chief Ethics Officer presented warm congratulations and wishes for success to the IAOC leadership and again extended her fullest cooperation to the Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as to the IAOC. In 2018, the Ethics Office also cooperated with system-wide initiatives and surveys, such as the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit's "Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations". The 2018 Annual Report also mentioned the Ethics Office's efforts for harmonization of best practices within the UN common system, to which end the Office actively engaged with the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO), which aims to promote system-wide collaboration on ethics related issues within the UN system, and which provided a structure for the exchange of ethics policies and practices.

35. The Delegation of Mexico expressed its gratitude for the report introduced, as well as for the additional information provided on awareness building and training for staff of the Organization. It said that it had carefully taken note of it and that it reflected the work done over the past year. It remarked that the Ethics Office was to submit a revised amended draft Terms of Reference of its Office to the IAOC and that it was important that the Ethics Office had a strong foundation. The Delegation also underscored the independence of the Ethics Office. The Delegation took note that work had also been done jointly with the Ombudsperson and the HRMD and asked if at forthcoming meetings of the WIPO Coordination Committee a report from the Ombudsperson could be made available, which was a common practice of other agencies in the UN system. The Delegation was pleased to learn about the 24/7 helpline and wished to have details on whether and how it operated, and if it was being used as expected, aware that the information requested on the usage of this tool was sensitive.

36. The Delegation of Indonesia thanked the Chief Ethics Officer for the presentation and preparation of the report. The Delegation continued to support the importance of the Ethics Office for ensuring that staff members and other personnel observed and performed their functions with the highest standards of integrity, through a culture of ethics, transparency and accountability. It commended the Ethics Office on its activities on awareness raising and

training, and advice to staff. The Delegation underlined the importance of the implementation of the PAR Policy, and the FDDI Policy, as a culture of transparency and accountability could only be fully established if they were fully implemented and in line with practices in the UN system.

37. The Delegation of Canada, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Ethics Office for the annual report and appreciated WIPO's compliance with IPSAS and additional disclosure requirements for senior staff members. Group B was pleased with the 100 per cent rate of compliance with disclosure requirements by WIPO staff. It looked forward to the promulgation of the Terms of Reference by the Ethics Office and asked for this to be shared with the Member States. Group B supported the recommendations made in the JIU "Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations". Group B also supported the JIU recommendation for the sharing of an annual report of the Ombudsperson with Member States and believed that an annual Ombudsperson report would be a valuable addition to the WIPO Coordination Committee agenda. Group B mentioned that the World Health Organization (WHO) had recently implemented this recommendation and that its Ombudsperson report contained insightful information regarding staff dynamics and potential organizational issues.

38. The Delegation of Australia mentioned that it supported good governance across the UN system and highly valued the important role of the ethics function, including at WIPO. It welcomed the WIPO Ethics Office's initiatives to enhance the culture of ethics and to strengthen ethical leadership through its awareness raising and training and overall oversight. The Delegation favored the IAOC's and Ethics Office's support for relevant best practices. The Delegation supported the JIU's recommendations, and specifically welcomed implementation of any outstanding recommendations arising from the JIU's "Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations".

39. The Delegation of the United States of America supported the statement made by the Delegation of Canada on behalf of Group B and thanked the Ethics Office for its report. The Delegation strongly supported the mission of the ethics function at international organizations, appreciated the activities undertaken by WIPO's Ethics Office in 2018. It was pleased to note that the on-line Ethics and integrity course, required for all new hires, had been successfully implemented in 2018. The Delegation requested more information about how often staff would be required to take the course as refresher training. It believed that international organizations needed to have robust financial disclosure and declaration of interest policies and was pleased with the results of the 2018 filing exercise under the new Policy, while also welcoming more information about lessons learned from the 2018 process. The Delegation noted what appeared to be a decrease in the requests compared to 2017 for advice, other than on declarations of interests, and welcomed more information about what the Ethics Office believed the reason for this decline to be. The Delegation inquired what the Ethics Office's priorities would be for 2019-2020, whether any notable ethics issues had arisen during the reporting period, and a sharing of observations or recommendations that the Ethics Office had made to management. Furthermore, the Delegation said that it would welcome information on implementation of recommendations from the internal audit of the WIPO's Ethics framework and a status update on the Terms of Reference for the Ethics Office, including any reasons for a delay in its implementation. It requested that these Terms of Reference be added to WIPO's Financial Regulations and Rules, in which both the Oversight Charter and the IAOC's Terms of Reference were included. This inclusion would add to further understanding of the ethics function among Member States and would make clear the relationship between the oversight functions. The Delegation appreciated the Ethics Office's cooperation with the JIU survey and "Review of whistle-blower policies and practices in United Nations system organizations" and strongly support the recommendations from this Review. The Delegation said that it would appreciate more information from the Ethics Office on efforts to implement these recommendations, and on whether the Ethics Office planned on reviewing and revising the current whistleblower protection policy, taking into account any outstanding best practice indicators from the JIU report.

40. The Director General said that following discussions between the Ombudsperson and the IAOC, the Ombuds' report had been published on WIPO's Intranet. Subject to a conversation with the Ombudsperson, he saw no reason why it should not be more widely distributed. He said that the only questions that arose regarded confidentiality, but that he was confident that these had already been dealt with by the Ombudsperson in the preparation of his report. The Director General also referred to the need to make sure that there were no personally identifying circumstances in the report but that, otherwise, there was no difficulty about this. The Director General stated that he saw no difficulty with the suggestion of the Delegation of the United States of America to incorporate the Terms of Reference of the mandate of the Ethics Office in WIPO's Financial Rules and Regulations. If it was a question of rules, then it was within his competence and it could be done quickly. If it was a question of regulations, it was within the competence of the Member States to amend the Financial Regulations and this would take a bit more time. The Director General assured that the Office Instruction on the Terms of Reference of the Ethics Office would be submitted expeditiously and before the end of the month to the IAOC, as had already been stated by the Chief Ethics Officer. Its publication would depend upon the IAOC, and he was sure that the IAOC would afford the greatest priority to this and would deal with it quickly. The Director General repeated that, after the Office Instruction had been presented to the IAOC, the matter was in their hands and not the Secretariat's.

41. The Chief Ethics Office thanked all delegations for their words of appreciation. Regarding the question on the PAR Policy, she mentioned that the Policy foresaw regular updating, and that this would be considered carefully, in collaboration with the Legal Counsel. On lessons learned from the FDDI process she mentioned technical issues in the online filing process, which had been looked into in cooperation with the relevant departments.

42. The Delegation of Brazil aligned itself with the statements and expressed thanks for the Ethics Office Annual Report, and for the work of the Ethics Office in general in raising awareness and presenting decision-making models. The Delegation welcomed measures to avoid retaliation for reporting misconduct, and the continuous efforts towards increased financial disclosure in the Organization.

ITEM 31 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

AMENDMENTS TO STAFF REGULATIONS AND RULES

43. Discussions were based on document WO/CC/76/1.

44. The Secretariat stated that amendments to the Staff Regulations were being presented to the WIPO Coordination Committee for approval, whereas amendments to the Staff Rules were being presented to the WIPO Coordination Committee for notification. The Secretariat mentioned that for each proposed change, there were detailed explanations in the document in question and that seven Regulations were presented for approval. The Secretariat highlighted that two of these Regulations related to the introduction of retirement at age 65, from January 2020. The Secretariat added that, in the case of one Regulation, it was proposed to move it from Regulations to Rules, to ensure that changes that were brought in from the UN system, in particular, could be implemented in a timely manner. The Secretariat mentioned that the other issues concerned housekeeping items.

45. The WIPO Coordination Committee:

- (i) approved the amendments to the Staff Regulations as provided in Annex I of document WO/CC/76/1; and
- (ii) took note of the amendments to the Staff Rules as provided in Annex II of document WO/CC/76/1.

[Annex¹ follows]

¹ It is customary practice that, on request, the Chair allows a representative of the WIPO Staff Council to address members of the WIPO Coordination Committee after the conclusion of its agenda in order to provide the perspectives of staff. The Chair informed that he would follow the precedent set forth with the agreement of the Member States, and so he proceeded. The statement of the representative of the Staff Council is annexed.

WIPO Staff Council Intervention before the
Member States of the WIPO Coordination Committee
World Intellectual Property Organization
October 4, 2019; Geneva, Switzerland

Excellencies,
Chair,
Director General,
Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the WIPO Staff Council, of which I am President, and on behalf of all staff members of the Organization, whom I am called to serve, I am honored to take the floor before you, the representatives of the Member States of the WIPO Coordination Committee.

The Staff Council's primary mission is to represent, defend and serve the interests of all WIPO staff members vis-à-vis senior management. It has been recognized as the official staff representative body by the Administration. The Staff Council is pleased to note the high quality of the dialogue held with the Administration. While that dialogue has not been straightforward, it has been made possible by the professionalism, mutual respect and careful consideration of all stakeholders. Last year, my colleague Tom Bombelles made clear that the Staff Council regularly and openly opposed policies proposed by the Administration. Conversely, it should be noted that the Staff Council is sometimes in full agreement with certain proposals and decisions of the Administration.

Before I go on, I wish to note with satisfaction the Organization's excellent financial position. WIPO's economic model appears to be working well, owing to both the income that the Organization earns from the range of services it provides, namely its global intellectual property systems, and the rigorous and effective management of its resources. However, we are quite convinced that this is only possible thanks to the undeniable competence and diligence of WIPO staff members. The unwavering effort of those employees makes WIPO a veritable hub for intellectual property – a complex and dynamic domain. A great many projects are being implemented and significant challenges have to be faced, including the emergence of new technological trends as tools for economic, social and cultural development. As you are no doubt aware, artificial intelligence is playing an ever greater role in intellectual property. The challenge for WIPO is to keep up with, or even one step ahead of, this movement.

Broadly speaking, we can confirm that relations between the Staff Council and the Administration are good. Employees' views are sought within appointment committees and on changes to internal rules concerning our daily activities and other important issues. We often agree for the most part with the Administration's proposals, such as those on the establishment of a daycare centre or support for sport and leisure activities, or the work time management project. However, we have also vehemently opposed certain changes proposed by the Administration, such as the new sick leave policy, which was suspended at our request, and changes relating to the Organization's internal justice system. We have taken responsibility for each of these positions. In some cases the Administration adjusts its position accordingly and in others it does not. This is to be expected.

In reality, the biggest challenge that we face is not the WIPO Secretariat, but rather the pressure that you, the Member States, are putting on the international civil service in general and on WIPO in particular. That brings me to today's most important subject, and the most difficult to broach, namely the devastating effect of the constant financial pressure that you are exerting on the Administration to reduce staff-related expenditure. The savings that you are intent on making are at odds with the reality of the global labor market. The unremitting pressure that you are placing on the Secretariat to cut staffing costs, and your continued refusal to treat WIPO differently to any other United Nations agency – for example, by restricting bonuses – are

preventing the Organization from positioning itself sustainably and successfully on the labor market. You are restricting the Organization's flexibility and ability to attract the most talented professionals. The drive to reduce staffing costs is reducing the number of long-term appointments (which currently represent only 70 per cent of the total workforce) and increasing the number of contractors and service providers (which now account for 30 per cent of the workforce). The Staff Council notes with concern that WIPO Member States prefer precarity to job security. Last year, the Staff Council stressed that the common system should be seen as a platform and not as a ceiling. By restricting working conditions you are doing employees a disservice, and yet WIPO, as a self-funding body, is more than holding its own – for now. The world is changing fast, possibly too quickly, and some economies are growing at a dizzying pace while others are running out of steam. Let us not forget that WIPO's mission is to promote the use of international intellectual property systems for the benefit of *all* its Member States. WIPO's services and activities are still up to the task, but there are fears that its economic model could quickly be superseded by emerging technologies and know-how, especially if the Organization does not prepare for the future by taking on and retaining passionate and well-qualified people. The Staff Council would point out that you are not in any way aiding that quest for the perfect blend of people and skills.

To that end, and to ensure that the current economic model remains sustainable and competitive, the Organization must constantly evolve by recruiting top talent and retaining its most valuable assets. The skills, creativity and dynamism of WIPO staff must be on a par with those of workers elsewhere. WIPO is in competition with some of the biggest companies in the private sector and must fight to attract the best recruits in the field of intellectual property and innovation. It is up against some of the most established firms in the world which hire directly from the best university programmes in IT and engineering and offer excellent salaries. It is primordial for WIPO to be as attractive as the private sector.

Lastly, I find it appropriate to mention and welcome the encouraging Decision of July 3, 2019, handed down by the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILOAT) and repealing the Decision of the International Civil Service Commission to revise the post-adjustment multiplier that led to a significant decrease in the effective pay of all Geneva-based civil servants in categories P and D and above. The Staff Council played a significant role in this outcome but is not resting on its laurels for all that. While the 750 or so employees of WIPO may have won this battle, the Council always advises all staff members of the Organization to remain extremely vigilant and not to lose sight of their power to join forces and take collective action. The Staff Council recalls that (i) the reduction of the post-adjustment multiplier approved by the ICSC was preceded by a series of measures that considerably curtailed staff members' rights relating to the education grant for their children and home leave; (ii) the Staff Council further recalls that the ICSC has a clear mandate to cover all facets of the employment conditions of international civil servants; and (iii) the Staff Council is well aware that Member States will continue to push the ICSC to reduce staff costs. In that regard, it would seem appropriate to point out that the ILOAT did not see fit to take up one of the key arguments that we had put forward, namely that the ICSC's calculation of the rent index was manifestly incorrect – according to three experts consulted on the matter – and that the pay of civil servants in the USA need no longer be based on the Noblemaire principle, since the salaries of Member States' national civil servants were far higher than those of federal employees in the USA. Any future attempt to reduce pay without a thorough and proper reform based on current economic realities will be resolutely contested before the courts by the Staff Council and the employees that it represents, and with a high chance of success to boot. That is why the Staff Council is proposing that, in the future, the pay issue should be discussed in an inclusive manner among three parties: Member States, senior managers of international organizations and of course employee representatives. The Staff Council remains at your disposal to discuss the arrangements of such a tripartite consultation.

Allow me to conclude with the following observation: It may be a cliché to say that the pace of change continues to grow, especially where that growth is dictated by technology. Nevertheless, the recent success of WIPO's economic model, services, platforms and databases gives absolutely no guarantee of future performance. Our Organization consists of individuals – individuals who provide innovative services to customers and stakeholders around the world. If our human infrastructure no longer keeps step with the pace of change in the world around us, the Organization will quickly find itself overwhelmed. So the Staff Council is counting on you, the Member States, to afford WIPO's senior management all the leeway to administer the Organization's recruitment and retention policies and to attract, recruit and keep hold of the best resources. WIPO's role as a leader in innovation must be safeguarded at all costs. The Organization must be enabled to maintain its enviable position in the world of intellectual property.

Thank you for your attention.

[End of Annex and of document]