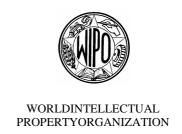
WIPO/ECTK/SOF/01/M1

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INTERNATIONALCONFER ENCEON INTELLECTUALPROPERT Y,THEINTERNET, ELECTRONICCOMMERCE ANDTRADITIONALKNOW LEDGE

organized undertheauspicesof HisExcellencyMr.PetarStoyanov,PresidentoftheRepublicofBulgaria

by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

incooperationwith the National Intellectual Property Association of Bulgaria

BoyanaGovernme ntResidence Sofia,May29to31,2001

MessagetotheConference from theSecretary -GeneraloftheUnitedNations, deliveredby Dr.KamilIdris,DirectorGeneral,WIPO

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Mr.President, Distinguishedguests,

Iampleasedtoconveymywarmgre etingstoalltheparticipantsinthisimportant conference,andIthankPresidentStoyanovforhostingit.Lastyear'sMillenniumSummitat UNHeadquarterscommittedallnationstohelpmakeglobalizationworkforalltheworld's people,andtoreducepov ertybyhalfbyyear2015.TheassembledHeadsandGovernments alsoresolved,intheirMillenniumDeclaration,toensurethatthebenefitsofnew technologies,especiallyinformationandcommunicationtechnologies,areavailabletoall.

Informationandc ommunicationtechnologiesarekeytointegratingdeveloping countriesandcountriesintransitionintotheglobalknowledgesociety;enhancingefficiency andgrowthinkeysectorsoftheeconomy;andsupportingthesocialeconomicandcultural goalsofeve rysociety. The applications of information technology coverawide range of activities, from improved a gricultural productivity, health, education, to the prevention and management of disasters.

Lackofaccessandconnectivitycontributestoglobalineq ualityandmarginalization, andcancontributetowardsabacklashagainstglobalization,withunpredictableconsequences. Inpurelyeconomicanddevelopmentalterms,thecostsoflackofaccessandconnectivityare enormous.In1999theworldwidevalueof e-commerceisestimatedtobeworthmorethan USD300billionintheUnitedStatesalone.

Toassistinbridgingthedigitaldivideandtohelpharnessthepotentialoftechnology forthedevelopmentofall,anumberofinitiativeshasbeentakenbytheIn ternational Community.AttheUnitedNations,IhavesetupanInformationandTechnologiesAdvisory Group.Thisgroupbringstogetherexpertsfromtheprivatesector,grantsandfoundationsto supporttheinter -governmentalworkinthisarea.

Theworld ischangingrapidlyanddigitaltechnologiesevenmoreso. Aclearandstrong frameworkforintellectualpropertyrights that would protect but also facilitate the acquisition and transfer of technology is more vital than ever before.

TheworkoftheWIP Oassumesnewandevergrowingsignificance. It faces the challenge of ensuring the smooth and mutually beneficial transfer of knowledge and development of human resources and provide improved access to afford able information and communication technologies.

Effective intellectual property systems are essential to fostering and enabling environment to attract for eign direct investment, stimulating innovation and creativity, and promoting sustainable development.

ThisConferenceisaddressingmanyofthes eissues.Iamconfidentthatyour deliberationsandtheoutcomeofyoureffortswillraisepublicawarenessabouttheroleand valueofintellectualpropertyasatooltopromoteeconomic,socialandculturaldevelopment whileaddressingthecomplexissue sonyouragenda.

IwishyoueverysuccessintheaccomplishmentoftheobjectivesofthisConference.