



**GROUP OF FIFTEEN**  
**The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries**

Distribution: General

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**G-15 Joint Statement**  
**Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO, Fifty-Sixth Series of Meetings**  
**2 – 11 October, 2017, Geneva**

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Fifteen (G-15), a cross regional Group of developing countries focused on South-South cooperation and North-South Dialogue. The G-15 strives to foster and promote sustainable development among the member countries through identified common goals and leveraged capacities.

This is the second Joint Statement by the G-15 at the WIPO General Assembly and it marks growing collaboration between the two organisations.

Mr Chairman,

The G-15, since 2013 has identified Intellectual Property as one of four focused areas of cooperation and WIPO has emerged as an important partner as we strive to achieve our shared goals.

The G-15 has been actively engaged with WIPO during the last four years on several spheres, particularly with regard to capacity building among our member countries. As a Group seeking opportunities for South-South cooperation, the G-15 has been deeply appreciative of WIPO's generous sponsorship of a workshop that was hosted in Sri Lanka in April, 2017.

The main aim of the Workshop was to deepen the understanding of the issues relevant to IP and protection of Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge, and Traditional Cultural Expressions as well as to share national experiences. Such practical and tangible cooperation is welcomed by the Group.

Mr Chairman,

The G-15 places great importance to the work of Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC). We have taken note of the progress made on this important normative Agenda in the IGC and wish to see a conclusion of the negotiation process that would result in consensual, legally binding international instrument(s) that would protect and foster the IP rights of Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions. The G-15 also values the efforts to build capacities in developing countries to better deal with these IP rights.

Mr. Chairman,

The Foreign Ministers of the Group have identified the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a key global process for the G-15 to be involved and contribute to its implementation as a niche Group of the Global South. The G-15 would urge the WIPO to implement the 2030 Agenda and create linkages with the implementation of the WIPO Development Agenda.

In this regard, the G-15 welcomes the important steps taken by the Director General and his team to ensure mainstreaming of the Development Agenda in WIPO's work. The G-15 will continue to advocate the integration of the development dimension into the deliberations within WIPO and believes that it is now more necessary than ever to make intellectual property a real lever for development which would contribute significantly to the growth and socioeconomic development in our countries.

The G-15 believes that South-South cooperation should be a tool for developing important and strategic partnerships which could play an important role in achieving the objectives outlined in the DA Recommendations in promoting sustainable development. The Group also wishes to welcome the range of activities and projects designed to make intellectual property a dynamic part in the development strategies at national level, in developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The G-15 also takes this opportunity to commend the incremental progress in the WIPO negotiations on the opening of new External Offices. The Group believes that the existing WIPO External Offices coverage is limited. The Opening of new External Offices could be a win-win proposition for those countries that already put in place an enabling environment for enhancing innovation and creativity, or in other instances countries wish to get direct support from WIPO through technical assistance and capacity building to evolve national IP policies and the relevant IP infrastructure.

While taking into account the interest of different geographical regions to host External Offices, we are of the view that the process and modalities for selecting host countries shall be in conformity with WIPO General Rules of Procedure as well as principles enumerated in Guiding Principles, in particular geographical distribution and delivery of WIPO's services for technical assistance and capacity building.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion I wish to reiterate the commitment of the G-15 to the success of WIPO and its valuable work.

I thank you.

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