## 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 18thcentury, 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.”

1. 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 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.”

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 leveraged, and strategic and emerging industries would be supported through IP trading.
6. 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.
7. 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”.
8. 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.
9. 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 64th session of the Assemblies should be held in the fall of 2023.
10. 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](https://www.wipo.int/tisc/en/doc/tisc_2011_survey_report.pdf)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.
11. 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 63rd 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.
12. 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 62nd 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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).
16. 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.
17. 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.
18. 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.
19. 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 64th 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.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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.
24. 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.
25. 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.
26. 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.
27. 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.
28. 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.
29. 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.
30. 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.
31. 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.
32. 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.
33. 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.
34. 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.
35. 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.
36. 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.
37. 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.
38. 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.
39. 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.
40. 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.
41. 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.
42. 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 27th 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.
43. 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.
44. 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.
45. 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.
46. 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.
47. 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.
48. 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 80th 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.
49. 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 63rd 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.
50. 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.
51. 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.
52. 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.
53. 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.
54. 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.
55. 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.
56. 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.
57. 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.
58. 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 30th 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.
59. 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.
60. 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.
61. 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.
62. 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.
63. 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.
64. 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.
65. The Delegation of Jamaica supported the statement made by the Delegation of the Dominican Republic on behalf of GRULAC. As it celebrated its 60th 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.
66. 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.
67. 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.
68. 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.
69. 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.
70. 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.
71. 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.
72. 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.
73. 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.
74. 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.
75. 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.
76. 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.
77. 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.
78. 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.
79. 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.
80. 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.
81. 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.
82. 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.
83. 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 20th anniversary of the Māori Trade Marks Advisory Committee and the 10th 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.
84. 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 63rd Session of the WIPO Assemblies.
85. 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.
86. 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.
87. 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.
88. 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.
89. 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.
90. 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.
91. 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 25th 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 (IPOPHL) 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 IPOPHL had been ranked 9th 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 IPOPHL 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.
92. 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.
93. 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.
94. 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.
95. 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.
96. 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.
97. 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.
98. 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.
99. 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.
100. 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.
101. 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 10,000th 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.
102. 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 101st 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.
103. 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.
104. 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.
105. 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.
106. 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.
107. 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.
108. 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.
109. 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.
110. 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.
111. 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.
112. 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.
113. 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 Al-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.
114. 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.
115. 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.
116. 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.
117. 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.
118. 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.
119. 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 14th 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.
120. 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.
121. 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.
122. 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.
123. 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.
124. 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.
125. 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.
126. 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.
127. 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).
128. 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.
129. 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.
130. 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.
131. 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.
132. 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.
133. 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.
134. 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.
135. 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.
136. 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.
137. 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.
138. 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.
139. The Representative of the Inter-American Association of Intellectual Property (ASIPI) said that ASIPI 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, ASIPI 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.
140. 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”.
141. 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.
142. 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.
143. 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.
144. 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 62nd 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.
145. 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.
146. 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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