



DRAFT STATEMENT BY:

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BOTSWANA PERMANENT MISSION**

65TH GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION (WIPO)

**09TH – 19TH JULY 2024
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

Thank you, Mr President,

1. The delegation of Botswana wishes to start off by joining other delegations in congratulating you on your appointment as the President of the sixty-fifth series of meetings of the General Assemblies of WIPO Member States. Botswana is confident that your able leadership will successfully steer these meetings towards achieving their objectives. My delegation also congratulates your Vice Presidents on their appointments.
2. We sincerely thank and congratulate the Director General, Mr Daren Tang for his wide ranging and inspiring opening address, and the staff of WIPO for the hard work in preparing for this series of meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO.
3. **Mr. President,** the delegation of Botswana aligns with the statement made by Kenya on behalf of the Africa Group. We wish to congratulate member states of the World Intellectual Property Organisation on the successful Diplomatic Conference that adopted the WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources.
4. However, the adoption of this Treaty two months back is a clear demonstration that no matter how long it takes, as WIPO member states, we are able to navigate complex and diverse intellectual property systems and priorities and find common ground to create an all-inclusive international IP system.

5. This should therefore serve as an encouragement and a challenge for us to adopt the same spirit of cooperation to close other critical matters such as the protection of traditional cultural expressions; conclusion and adoption of the Design Law Treaty; conclusion of discussions on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions and many others.
6. **Mr. President**, for Botswana, the adoption of this Treaty gives us an opportunity to advance our IP system. Its recognition of the cultural knowledge systems and practices owned by our indigenous communities and local people, will allow communities to participate in the preservation of our cultural practices and promotion of access to this wealth of knowledge to develop new goods and services for the modern consumer, at the same time benefiting from such exploitation.
7. We believe that following the domestication and implementation of this Treaty, our communities will experience the benefits that accrue to them. We further hope that they will also contribute to the conservation and preservation of genetic resources associated with the traditional knowledge and practices, thereby protecting the environment and its ecosystem.
8. We are pleased that with the support of WIPO, we are currently running a project on traditional medicines where we work with

traditional knowledge practitioners. This project will serve as a key reference when we engage stakeholders to motivate for Botswana to sign the Treaty.

9. Mr. President, Botswana, like many developing countries, continues to work tirelessly to build its IP system for the benefit of its people and its economy. Therefore, my delegation expresses profound gratitude for the continued support we receive from WIPO and its member states. We have since seen growth in the development and implementation of our IP policy and legislative environment, building of the diverse human capacities, implementation of technological solutions, received immense technical assistance, and collaborated with WIPO to implement projects which translate IP into tangible results that benefit our communities.

10. As the DG indicated in his opening statement, Botswana is the first African country where WIPO deployed the Industrial Property Automated System and e-filing modules, for which we are most grateful. We kickstarted the online filing of IP applications with IP agents, and in September this year we will launch the full e-filing IP platform that is open to the public. This will improve customer experience, increase efficiency in our service provisions, and possibly increase our revenue generation.

11. **Mr. President**, the growth of Botswana's IP system has been strongly supported and promoted by the country's leadership, which has seen our President, His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi visit WIPO in 2022, deliver a Keynote address to WIPO's General Assemblies in 2023 and host WIPO Director General Mr. Daren Tang in Gaborone in November 2023.
12. This high level of interest and support has culminated in an increase in the budgetary allocation towards research and development and other initiatives intended to foster the generation, protection and commercialisation of IP products. In that regard, as a country we continue to find opportunities through which we improve our own IP landscape and at the same time contribute to the global IP landscape.
13. In conclusion, **Mr. President** my delegation looks forward to constructive engagement, assures you of its support, and commits to work with other Member States to ensure that the sixty-fifth series of meetings of the WIPO member states achieves its objectives.
14. We equally hope that this Assembly will reach decisions that will continue to grow the organisation and ensure that IP continues to contribute to the socio-economic and cultural growth

of the world, its economies and most importantly, benefit people everywhere.

Thank you, Mr President.