



53rd Session of the WIPO Assemblies

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Agenda Item 3

Statement by H.E. Ravinatha Aryasinha

Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations

Madam President,

My delegation wishes you the best in chairing the 53rd series of WIPO Assemblies.

Sri Lanka would like to align itself with the statements made on behalf of the Asian Group and on behalf of the Development Agenda Group.

We congratulate Dr. Francis Gurry, on his re-election as the Director General of WIPO and express our appreciation for the excellent work done by him and his team over the past years. Sri Lanka recognizes the significant achievements of WIPO last year including the conclusion of Marrakesh Treaty in succession to the Beijing Treaty. We also welcome the important steps taken by the Director General and his team to ensure mainstreaming of the Development Agenda in WIPO's work. We are encouraged by WIPO's innovative concepts such as WIPO RE-Search and WIPO Green which are beneficial to many developing countries.

We wish Dr. Gurry success in his second term as Director General and hope that under his leadership WIPO will continue to achieve important results for developing countries, as well as for the intellectual property system as a whole. Sri Lanka particularly attributes importance to the work carried out by the Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) and its efforts to formalize international legal instruments that would offer the necessary protection to the human and natural resources that could be enormously beneficial to the people of the developing world. We endorse the call for a diplomatic conference to finalize the IGC negotiations and highlight the importance of the need for a legally binding international instrument (s) which contributes in a fair and balanced manner to the preservation of biodiversity, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. Regarding the Draft Design Law Treaty, while Sri Lanka takes note of the progress made in the negotiations and the proposal to convene a Diplomatic Conference, we also highlight that further work is still needed in reflecting the different levels of development of the member states in the text of the treaty. We stand ready to engage constructively on this issue.

Sri Lanka particularly appreciates Dr. Gurry's visit to Sri Lanka in November 2013, during which he had the opportunity to honor the memory of the late Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Lakshman Kadirgamar, who was the first Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in WIPO, by delivering the Kadirgamar Memorial Oration 2013. This visit also opened a new chapter in the intellectual property field in Sri Lanka. With a view to further strengthen the cooperation between the Government of Sri Lanka and WIPO, a 10 Point Action Plan proposed during the visit, recently became operational. We thank WIPO for the assistance given to Sri Lanka in this endeavour and in seeking to enhance the capacity of the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) and other stake holders in the country. This will assist Sri Lanka in strengthening its IP protection regime, especially that of innovators, entrepreneurs, artists, scientist and practitioners of traditional arts and crafts.

Under the 10 Point Action Plan, WIPO will be providing technical assistance to Sri Lanka under ten main areas - establishment of technology and innovation support centre (TISC), integrating IP into national innovation policy formulation, product branding, accession to WIPO treaties, protection of traditional knowledge, strengthening of Collective Management Organizations (CMOs), conducting a study on creative industries, building respect for IP and assisting Sri Lanka's participation in WIPO Green and WIPO Re:Search programmes.

The collaboration between the Government of Sri Lanka and WIPO could serve as a useful model for developing countries in upgrading their intellectual property protection regimes and delivering the benefits of IPR to a broader spectrum of stakeholders.

As a developing country, it is necessary for us to integrate Intellectual Property into national policy formulation, as we are looking at innovation, science and technology and creativity as means of economic development and empowerment. These are in addition to the ongoing WIPO assistance in the formulation of laws for the protection of Intellectual Property such as patent drafting and copyright.

Finally I wish to once again reiterate the appreciation of my delegation to the Secretariat and assure WIPO of our fullest cooperation.

I Thank You