



**54<sup>th</sup> Session of the WIPO Assemblies  
22-30 September 2014  
Agenda Item 5- General Statement**

**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 54<sup>th</sup> 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 (DAG).

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. 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 by ensuring mainstreaming of the Development Agenda in WIPO's work. Sri Lanka also recognizes the significant achievements of WIPO last year including the conclusion of Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities in succession to the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances.

Sri Lanka gives high importance to intellectual property as an important contributor to the socio-economic growth and technological development.

While we take note of the developments in the WIPO's work and mainstreaming of the Development Agenda, it is also necessary to develop substantive discussions on the larger conceptual framework of development to ensure that IP regimes will contribute the socio-economic growth and development. As the only body that is authorized for overseeing the DA implementation as a whole, the WIPO General Assembly needs to carefully review and devote more time to discuss the report of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) on the implementation of the DA by all WIPO bodies.

We also take note of the audit reports of WIPO especially on significant recommendations that reflect on mainstreaming development considerations in the activities of WIPO. We highlight the need to enhance implementation of the Development Agenda through respective WIPO Committees as well as formulating targeted country plans with specific areas of cooperation for providing WIPO's technical assistance.

Considering the recent discussions of the Standing Committee on Copyright Related Rights (SCCR) on protection of broadcasting organizations and limitations and exceptions to copyright and related rights, Sri Lanka proposes that a technologically neutral approach should be adopted with regard to the working document for a Treaty on the Protection of Broadcasting Organizations. The protection granted under the new Treaty should be in line with the mandate given to the SCCR in 2007, for the transmission of signal, irrespective of the platform, by traditional broadcasting/cablecasting organizations as beneficiaries of this Treaty, including the protection of the pre-broadcast signal.

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 also highlight the need to ensure that the activities of the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) are in line with the implementation of the Development Agenda and also regularly take stock of whether the current process is helping the SCP to advance towards establishing a concrete, balanced and consensus-based work plan.

Madam President,

Among the major developments in the normative work of WIPO, Sri Lanka attributes the greatest 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. While we note that the work of the experts have been exhausted on the finalization of the draft legal instrument, we believe that political will is necessary to finalize the IGC negotiations for a legally binding international instrument (s) through a diplomatic conference which contributes in a fair and balanced manner to the preservation of

biodiversity, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. As a developing country, we believe that WIPO should consider as a matter of priority in this General Assembly to reach agreement on a decision on a new work plan for the IGC that sets out a date for a Diplomatic Conference in this regard.

Madam President,

Sri Lanka particularly appreciates Dr. Gurry's visit to Sri Lanka in November 2013, which became a catalyst in the rejuvenation of the intellectual property field in Sri Lanka. With a view to further strengthen the cooperation between the Government of Sri Lanka and WIPO, 10 Point Action Plan<sup>1</sup> proposed during the visit, became operational in 2014. We consider that this Action Plan will further enhance the capacity of the National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) and other relevant stake holders in Sri Lanka.

Under this Action Plan, preliminary discussions were held on the implementation of a Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) network in Sri Lanka. Subsequently a Project document was finalized to establish TISCs in the Universities and Research & Development Institutes in Sri Lanka. A service Level Agreement was signed between NIPO and WIPO in this regard. From 21-25 April 2014, a Sub-Regional Workshop on Patent Drafting was organized in Colombo to provide practical training on patent drafting skills and improve students' knowledge about the patent system. A WIPO mission visited Colombo in June 2014 and discussions were held with relevant stakeholders to examine the innovation policy in Sri Lanka, identify gaps and needs from an IP perspective and make recommendations on integrating the IP actors and the IP system into the innovation system.

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<sup>1</sup> The ten areas of the GOSL-WIPO IP Action Plan for 2014 are : 1) Establishment of a Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC), 2) Integration of IP into National Innovation Policy Formulation, 3) Capacity Building in Patent Drafting, 4) Branding in Sri Lanka (a) General and b) spices) , 5) Facilitation of Accession to a) Madrid and b)Lisbon Systems, c)Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances and d) Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities, 6) a)Establishment of a Traditional Medical Knowledge Digital Library (TMDL) and b) drafting a policy on Conservation of Traditional Knowledge (TK) Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCE) and Genetic Resources (GR), 7) Strengthening of Collective Management Organizations (CMOs), 8) Study on Creative Industries, 9) Building Respect for IP, 10) a) Sri Lanka's participation in WIPO I Green Program and b) Sri Lanka's participation in WIPO I Re:Search Program and Product Branding in Sri Lanka.

Madam President,

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. Sri Lanka believes that 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.

Finally, as the coordinator of SAARC Countries for WIPO- SAARC Consultation Meeting on cooperation in the field of Intellectual Property which was held on 16 September 2014, Sri Lanka highlighted the need to enhance implementation of the Development Agenda through its activities, the importance of formulating targeted country plans to achieve the objectives of WIPO's technical assistance and also the need to formulate a definition of development expenditure that facilitates better tracking of expenditures on development. We believe that the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen mutual cooperation between WIPO and SAARC countries, expected to be considered during the upcoming Summit Meeting of SAARC Member States scheduled to be held in November this year, will further contribute to the development of IP regimes in our region.

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