



General Statement

by

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Commissioner

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On the Occasion

of

the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

October 5, 2015

Geneva

Switzerland

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On behalf of the Republic of Korea, I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to you for being elected to chair this Assembly.

I would also like to thank Director General Dr. Francis Gurry and the WIPO Secretariat for their hard work and dedication in making all the necessary preparations and arrangements for this meeting.

Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates:

Our delegation is pleased with the outcomes and progress of the WIPO projects that were launched over the past year. However, we believe that WIPO would greatly benefit from putting a stronger focus on further enhancing its customer services. This is why we feel that WIPO's External Offices are so important.

The Republic of Korea is heavily invested in the notion that External Offices be established in areas where they can be financially sustainable and most effectively provide localized services. However, we must also keep in mind the other important functions of External Offices, such as geographical representation and the Technical Assistance Cooperation network.

It is our hope that WIPO member states will engage in concrete discussions on the locations of future External Offices as soon as a compromise on the Guiding Principles has been reached.

Another issue I would like to mention centers on fair and transparent operations in the financial elements of the IP registration systems. Without a doubt, if any registration system insists its independence and autonomy, it should do its best to attain financial sustainability. I hope that all Unions will sincerely consider this issue and reach a compromise, thereby ensuring the

success of the General Assemblies.

Let me now turn to the development agenda.

Since bridging the IP divide among Member States is of obvious importance, the Korean government, in collaboration with WIPO, is working to address the issue by utilizing the Korea Funds-in-Trust.

Last April, we hosted the KIPO-WIPO Appropriate Technology Grand Symposium to provide a platform for compiling AT-related experience and know-how. And, with cooperation from WIPO Academy, we also launched IP-IGNITE, an audio-visually enhanced version of WIPO's Distance Learning-101.

With regard to copyright and related rights, the Korean government has contributed the Funds-in-Trust in Copyright and Related Rights to WIPO every year since 2006. I am honored to inform of the 10th year of the Korea Fund-in-Trust in Copyright and Related Rights and invite all Member States to the side event on October 8th to take a look on the tenth-year of Fund-in-Trust implementation and draw up a future plan with Member States.

We will continue to share our experience and know-how with other Member States as we further expand our aforementioned projects in close collaboration with WIPO.

Lastly, I'd like to briefly highlight some of Korea's recent IP-related activities.

Since the adoption of "Creative Economy" as its new national agenda in 2013, the Republic of Korea has worked to strengthen the IP ecosystem in order to encourage the start-ups of new business with the innovative ideas, and, new type of IP R&D and IP-based financing strategies were setup to help start-ups to develop into scale-ups and become finally global IP star company.

One successful outcome of our activities was the establishment of 17 Creative Economy Innovation Centers to provide coverage across the entire nation. Each Center assists with commercialization and helps facilitate the growth of SMEs and venture companies.

The outcome was an expansion in the scope of our IP-based financing, which encourages IPR commercialization and the fostering of innovative start-ups. Last year, a total of about 150 million US dollars was loaned to 303 different companies. However, much work remains to be done, such as promoting global innovation by cooperatively establishing guidelines for harmonizing various IP valuation systems.

I'd like to note that the annual GDP growth rate of Korea is almost identical to the annual increase rate of number of IPR applications for past 20 years. This shows that IPR is always main engine for industrial and economic development.

Last year, we amended both the Patent Act and the Utility Model Act in order to give IP users the choice of whether to file their applications in Korean or English.

Also, I am happy to report that the Republic of Korea will deposit the instrument of ratification to the Marrakesh Treaty during this Assembly.

Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates:

The Republic of Korea stands ready to lend WIPO its full support by faithfully fulfilling its responsibilities and commitments, as well as by effectively collaborating with its fellow Member States.

Thank you.