

ASSEMBLIES OF MEMBER STATES OF WIPO

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**Statement of Bhutan Delegation by Secretary, Ministry of Economic
Affairs, Royal Government of Bhutan**

Mr. Chairman,
Mr. Director General
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates

My delegation would like to congratulate you and the Vice Chairs on your election. We are confident that our deliberations will be productive under your leadership.

Bhutan would like to associate itself with the statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group and by Bangladesh on behalf of the LDC Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Since 1994 WIPO has been a steady and reliable partner and has consistently supported our efforts to strengthen our intellectual property to better serve the needs of businesses and industries. We remain focused in promoting the values of the intellectual property system in our innovation ecosystem through policy initiatives and clear benefit-driven strategies.

With WIPO's support, Bhutan has taken a number of important initiatives. The National Intellectual Property Policy adopted in February 2018 provides direction and clarity to the intellectual property system through consolidation of efforts across all sectors of the economy and building linkages between industry, research and development institutions, universities and private sector. It also provides a framework for improving the intellectual property system as a catalyst for innovation and development.

In terms of patent related activities, the Service Level Agreement to establish Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) was signed between the WIPO and Royal Government of Bhutan in June 2018. TISCs have been set up in two science and engineering colleges and in the Information Technology (IT) Park in the capital. We look forward for WIPO's support to train our staff to manage these centers and also to gradually set up more such centers for more coverage. We hope to learn from the experiences of successful TISCs in other

member states to help our innovators and creators to exploit their innovative potential by accessing high quality scientific and technology information.

Bhutan launched the annual National Trademark Award in April 2018, which is one of the measures to encourage innovation and creativity emanating from the Policy. The Award is to recognize the role and significance of the trademark system in promoting brand competition leading to quality goods and services in the market. We hope to launch similar annual awards on patents, industrial designs and copyright in the near future.

On the Copyright side, we are strengthening our legislative framework to reflect the changes and developments in digital technology. This includes enforcement mechanisms that in ways respects the rights of copyright owners and channels the benefits of creativity to the society. Our voluntary registration and deposit system of copyright works continues to garner wider support from authors, creators and right holders alike. Similarly, we are revamping efforts to create awareness on the importance of the copyright system.

Mr. Chairman,

Bhutan is expected to graduate from a least developed to a middle income country in a few years time. This would be a significant milestone in our socio-economic development journey which has been supported by the international community, in particular our development partners. Our Twelfth Five Year Plan, 2018-2023, which was launched last July, will coincide with the graduation schedule and will therefore be a crucial plan to ensure that we stand on firm ground for the next leg of our development journey. The Plan emphasizes innovation as one of the key drivers to address the challenges, and towards this, strengthening the intellectual property system will be a crucial activity. Bhutan is making all efforts to take maximum advantage of the benefits of the intellectual property system and look forward for WIPO's continued assistance.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.