

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION
59TH SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES
WIPO GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2019
NATIONAL STATEMENT BY THE SINGAPORE DELEGATION

Mr President

Director-General

Distinguished colleagues

Ladies and gentlemen

1. Singapore would first like to join the other Members in thanking the President and the Secretariat for their hard work throughout the year, culminating at this General Assembly. Singapore also congratulates the President, Ambassador Duong Chi Dung and Vice-Chairs of these Assemblies for their successful election and assures the Chair of our full support in making these Assemblies a success.

The role of IP offices in a world driven by innovation and digitalization

2. My fellow Members, we live in a world where our economies are increasingly driven by innovation, and our lives are increasingly digital. In such a world, IP offices have a tremendous opportunity to leverage on our strengths as IP registries and regulators to evolve into innovation agencies, playing a central role in driving our future economies and building our future societies.
3. The IP Office of Singapore continues to take active steps in this direction and much of the new areas of our work in the past year has revolved around transforming our customer experience, supporting enterprises to use IP for business growth, building skills and capabilities and supporting the global flow of innovation.

4. In customer experience, like WIPO and many other national IP offices, we are deploying AI and technology to transform the way applicants interact with us. Just last month, we launched the world's first mobile app for trade mark applications. The IPOS GO app uses a mobile interface instead of a form, and combines it with AI-enabled image search to cut down the time taken to apply for a trade mark from one hour to less than ten minutes.
5. Even as we transform the IP registration process, we do not see the registration of an IP as the end of our journey with our customers, but as the start. Beyond registration, we actively support innovative enterprises as they take their IP to the market, whether through giving them a chance to build IP and innovation related skills through our training programmes, or working with government and private sector partners to support them as they scale-up into the world.

Supporting regional IP platforms for growth

6. Singapore is fortunate to be centrally located within one of the most economically dynamic regions in the world, and we are fully committed to working hard with our many partners in ASEAN and Asia to continue strengthening and building the region's IP and innovation ecosystems.
7. WIPO's involvement with the region has helped drive this growth and Singapore strongly supports this engagement. In late August, we had the privilege of hosting the 7th Heads of IP Offices meeting, and we will continue to work closely with the WIPO Singapore Office to support their many regional programmes, including those under the Singapore Cooperation Programme.

WIPO, multilateralism and the world

8. At the international level, we see increasing tensions and fragmentation in the global economy, even as IP offices are working more closely than ever. We cannot and should not let up in our efforts to forge partnerships and build bridges so that global innovation flows can continue to make a positive impact on our economies, societies and lives.

9. In such a world, the role of WIPO as the multilateral platform for IP issues is especially critical and we are privileged to have the chance to contribute to its work in various ways, including as Chair of the SCCR, Vice-chair of the SCP, the Committee of Experts of the NICE Union and the Madrid Working Group. I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the various Secretariats for their hard work, much of it behind the scenes, in working with Members to ensure that the work of the Committees makes an impact.
10. In the global setting, other institutions and developments can also support the work that we do in WIPO, and one example we would like to share is the recently signed Singapore Convention on Mediation, which has already attracted over 40 signatories. We believe the Convention will boost the longstanding efforts by WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Centre (AMC) to support alternative dispute resolution for IP disputes.
11. With regard to the specific agenda items at these Assemblies, Singapore wishes to support the recommendation made by the SCCR regarding the Broadcasting Treaty, and the approved action plans for limitations and exceptions for copyright. We also associate ourselves with the statements made earlier by the Asia-Pacific Group with regard to the allocation of unfilled seats in the Coordination Committee. We also encourage continued progressive discussion on the other agenda items relating to the Designs Law Treaty and the IGC, and look forward to playing a constructive role in those discussions.
12. In closing, Singapore stands ready to partner with WIPO Members, the WIPO Secretariat and the many stakeholders in this area to continue building and strengthening the global innovation ecosystem.
13. Thank you.