

**Director General's Keynote Address to the World Government Summit
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Your Highnesses,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Salam alaikum,

Good afternoon. It is a great pleasure to be at the World Government Summit. Let me begin by congratulating the UAE on the 10th anniversary of this important global forum and to thank the organizers for the opportunity to address this esteemed audience.

The father of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Zayed, once said that, "the real spirit behind progress is the human spirit".

This spirit is also the spirit of innovation and creativity. Whether we are creating new architectural wonders in the desert, unravelling the secrets of the human genome, or using AI to finish Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, our desire to invent, innovate and create has been part of who we are since time immemorial.

But innovation itself is transforming.

WIPO's data shows that more people are using the global IP system today than ever before. Over the past five years, global IP applications have increased by 40 percent, with worldwide filings in patents, trademarks and designs hitting record highs in 2021, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

However, not only is the growth of IP, innovation and creativity accelerating, the engines powering such growth are changing as well.

10 years ago, when this Summit was launched, half of all IP filings in the world came from Europe and North America. That number has dropped to 3 in 10, with 7 in 10 IP filings originating from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Ten years ago, only five countries were home to a unicorn, today the number is closer to 50 – including countries like Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, Senegal, and the UAE.

And the most consistently improving economies in WIPO's Global Innovation Index are countries like Türkiye, India, Vietnam and the Philippines.

Today, the engines of innovation are no longer just the advanced, industrialized economies but are increasingly developing countries and emerging economies.

In the face of such changes, the work of WIPO and the global IP community cannot be business as usual.

IP can no longer remain a technical area of interest to only IP specialists and experts, but must become a powerful catalyst for jobs, investments, business growth and economic development in all parts of the world, and especially for developing countries and LDCs.

Likewise, WIPO itself must transform from a technical-driven agency to an impact driven agency – bringing IP to the grassroots and helping innovators and creators on the ground to use IP to bring their ideas to the market.

To achieve this, let me highlight three key areas for our collective work ahead.

First, we need to demystify IP and help laypersons, business owners, entrepreneurs, researchers, artists, designers, creators and those on the ground to acquire practical IP skills and use it as part of their toolkit for success.

The WIPO Academy, which trained 270,000 people around the world in the last two years, is expanding its curriculum to include practical courses like “IP for start-ups” and “IP for exporters”, to name a few, as well as scaling up its university partnerships from 12 to 30 and beyond.

But to build a culture of respect, love and confidence for innovation, we need to start earlier and to reach out to those at the primary and secondary school levels. We should give our children the opportunity to innovate through problem solving early on in life, and encourage them to form innovation clubs in high school. In this way, we can allow them to apply the knowledge they are acquiring in school to the daily challenges they encounter, and ultimately break the mindset that innovation can only happen in the most advanced economies.

Second, we need to build a more inclusive global IP ecosystem that reaches out more strongly to those who have been traditionally underserved – in particular, women, youth and small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

To make this happen, we are innovating the way we support our Member States and moving away from just seminar and workshops to projects that create visible and lasting impact on the ground. For example, we recently launched our first project for women entrepreneurs in the Arab Region, where we are mentoring 35 female entrepreneurs from the Petra region in Jordan over 11 months to use IP to market, brand and package their products, as well as to register a collective trade mark around the slogan “Made in Petra”. 99 other such projects are now underway all over the world.

With the UAE, we are exploring two exciting projects. First, we would like to support local communities to not only use IP to protect their heritage products and artisanal crafts, but to blend different types of IP in order that these products are marketed and positioned for the right niches in new markets.

Second, given the dynamism of the financial services sector in this country, we are looking to support the development of IP financing, so that entrepreneurs in the UAE use their IP and other intangible assets as collateral to secure financing for business growth. In this way, IP will be not just a business asset, but also a financial asset.

Finally, IP must support the world in addressing global challenges. We just heard from the President Designate of COP28, His Excellency, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, that addressing climate change requires innovative and creative solutions. The global IP eco system needs to step up to support this.

One way we are doing this is through our online platform WIPO GREEN, which is WIPO's global technology matching platform for climate change related technologies.

WIPO GREEN has grown to cover nearly 130,000 technologies from over 150 countries – and we will continue to support Members States to speed up the deployment and diffusion of these technologies on the ground.

Another initiative we have taken is to launch a Covid-19 support package last year. In all, 40 countries have tapped on the package, which has delivered a range of tailored support, including tech transfer workshops in Algeria and Uganda and the WIPO-South Africa Summer School on IP and Technology Transfer.

But complex global challenges cannot be solved by any one agency acting alone. This is why we have partnered with the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization to pool our expertise in innovation, health and trade to offer Member States a more complete package of support in the face of the pandemic.

In a fast moving world, partnerships between countries, across international agencies as well as with industry and civil society, will be key to addressing common challenges and building a more sustainable world.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The resources of our earth are limited, but the resources of our mind are limitless. WIPO will work with all Member States to harness the power of our ingenuity, invention and creativity for the benefit of everyone.

We invite you to join us on this exciting transformation of the global IP ecosystem, and look forward to working with all of you.

Thank you.