



**17<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP)**

**11- 15 April 2016**

**Agenda Item 6: General Statements**

**Statement by Sri Lanka**

Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of this Committee, which plays a pivotal role in leveraging Intellectual Property for development.

Sri Lanka would like to align itself with the statement made on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group.

Sri Lanka wishes to commend the excellent work done by Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO over the past years in the context of this Committee. My delegation also takes note of the DG's report on the implementation of the DA recommendations. Sri Lanka is confident that under his leadership, the WIPO will continue its maximum contribution in mainstreaming of the Development Agenda within WIPO's work. We also appreciate the work carried out by Mr. Mario Matus, the Deputy Director General in the coordination of the DA in WIPO's work.

While taking note of the significant role played by the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), as a body that is mandated for coordinating, promoting, and monitoring the implementation of Development Agenda (DA), we also underline the need to maintain a holistic approach to ensure that IP system is more inclusive and development-oriented.

Mr. President,

In view of our efforts in the promotion of the national IP system and our interest in using the IP system in the development process, WIPO Development Agenda remains valid and important to Sri Lanka. The translation of all the DA recommendations into projects and activities and their timely implementation require early and constructive attention. We believe that DA related activities should be demand driven, based on and customized according to the needs of the respective member country. All such activities must be truly result oriented, systematically implemented and regularly monitored.

We believe that the IP system has a key role to play in supporting innovation and technology, which are essential components of sustainable development. We welcome the initiative taken by this Committee to begin discussions on how to ensure that IP is used in the most effective way possible in creating linkages between the SDGs and the implementation of the WIPO Development Agenda and look forward to continued discussions in this regard during this Session.

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka recognizes the importance of IP as an important tool for technological advancement as well as socio-economic development. We are currently in the process of integrating IP into our national policy formulation, with special emphasis on innovation, science and technology and creativity as a means of economic development and empowerment. This process is being operationalized in line with the present Government policy of orienting the country towards a knowledge and innovation economy.

Sri Lanka is currently implementing a 10 Point Action Plan in cooperation with WIPO, which came into force since 2014 following the visit of Dr. Francis Gurry, Director General of WIPO to Sri Lanka in November 2013. In this context, we wish to place on record our sincere appreciation of the valuable cooperation extended by the WIPO, in developing and supporting the implementation this Action plan, which could serve as a model to countries similarly placed as Sri Lanka.

Based on this Action Plan, a coordination mechanism was created last year to ensure effective integration of IP into national innovation policy formulation of Sri Lanka. A National Steering Committee on Intellectual Property (SCIP), chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce was convened in July 2015 and since then there is a frequent exchanges of views between the SCIP and WIPO officials through a video conference, held every two months, to assess progress in the implementation of the GoSL-WIPO 10 Point Action Plan.

Development activities to be implemented within the next two years under the 10 Point Action Plan, include the integration of IP into innovation policy formulation in Sri Lanka, developing the capacity and resources of the National IP Office (NIPO), the creation of an Innovation Index, developing an IP Hub, developing local expertise in Traditional Knowledge with the objective of drafting of a national policy on Traditional Knowledge (TK), Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCE) and Genetic Resources (GR), organizing effective programs to uplift and strengthen Collective Management Societies (CMOs), developing a national strategy for building respect for IP and the effective enforcement of IP rights in the interest of social and economic development and consumer protection and incorporating certain amendments to the National IP law for the protection of Geographical Indications (GIs).

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka was recently selected as one of the four pilot countries to participate in the CDIP Project titled “Intellectual Property, Tourism and Culture” adopted by this Committee, during its 15<sup>th</sup> Session held in April 2015. This is the first time Sri Lanka has been selected to participate as a pilot country in a CDIP Project. In the framework of this Project, the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) has been appointed as the coordinating agency for the project implementation in Sri Lanka. This Project will be soon launched in Sri Lanka, through a WIPO Mission to be undertaken in early May 2016. This Mission envisages to bring together the main stakeholders in the fields of IP, tourism and culture, in order to create a National Steering Committee for the project implementation at national level. We hope that this Project will contribute to promoting awareness of the role of IP in Sri Lanka and support the tourism-related economic activities of the country.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

Sri Lanka also wishes to commend the excellent work done by the WIPO Secretariat over the past years in the context of this Committee. We look forward to fruitful deliberations during the Session and to contribute to the discussions in this Committee based on constructive spirit and support.

Thank you very much.