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# Sri Lanka nominated as coordinator of the Asian Group during the 2012 WIPO

## General Assembly

Monday, 03 December 2012

The Sri Lankan delegation, headed by Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Ravinatha Aryasinha, participated in the 50th series of meetings of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Member States held 1-9 October 2012 at the WIPO in Geneva, with the participation of more than 180 countries. The comprehensive agenda and meeting schedule was accompanied by informal meetings that took place on the sidelines of the Assemblies. Sri Lanka was nominated as Asian Group Coordinator of the WIPO, at the commencement of the Assemblies. The Asian Group nomination comes at a significant moment with Sri Lanka playing a more visible role in the multilateral sphere after the ending of its 30 year long terrorist conflict.

Taking the floor on the opening day of the Assemblies, Ambassador Arysinha observed that with the conflict behind it, Sri Lanka had embarked on a new era of development where creativity and innovation would take the forefront. He said the country had readily understood the important role of intellectual property in this equation. Making special mention of how IP can better the socio-economic standing of developing countries, he noted the national initiatives undertaken to promote IP knowledge in the country, joint assistance projects undertaken with WIPO and developments on geographical indicators that assisted in providing Sri Lanka with a competitive edge. Ambassador Aryasinha further emphasized the need of a development perspective to Intellectual Property in order to assist developing countries to meet greater goals. Mrs Sheitha Senarathna, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, made interventions under a number of agenda items including on traditional knowledge, genetic resources and cultural expressions, to express Sri Lanka's continued commitment toward those deliberations and its hope for further progress. Mrs. Natasha Gooneratne who coordinates WIPO related activity on behalf of the Sri Lanka Mission in Geneva was associated in the session. Earlier in a separate meeting with the Director General of WIPO, Dr Francis Gurry, Ambassador Aryasinha recalled the strong history between Sri Lanka and WIPO, with the late Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar being one of the pioneering figures from the region in the organization. Ambassador Aryasinha had affirmed Sri Lanka's deep commitment to the UN multilateral system, and expressed his intention to ensure that Sri Lanka plays its full role in the multi-faceted dialogue in the numerous fields headquartered in Geneva, including in the intellectual property sphere. Full Statement given by HE the Amb/PRUN - Geneva is attached.

10 October 2012