

General Statement by India under Agenda Item 5 delivered by Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey at the 61st Series of the Meetings of the General Assembly of WIPO on 21st September 2020. [WIPO HQ, Geneva]

Mr. Chair,

Let me convey our appreciation of your efforts as Chair of the WIPO General Assembly. We are confident that under your able stewardship this Assembly will make progress on all agenda items.

2. We express our gratitude to the team of the WIPO Secretariat for their tireless efforts. We appreciate that in spite of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, WIPO's IPR services have continued to operate efficiently.

3. India aligns itself with the statement delivered by Singapore on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group.

Mr. Chair,

4. We congratulate Mr. Daren Tang on his appointment as the next Director-General of WIPO. We are confident that under his leadership, WIPO will continue to make progress in achieving its core objectives. We are assured that Mr. Tang and his team would continue to steer the organization in an efficient, transparent and inclusive manner, while working towards the twin inter-related goals of fostering innovation and fulfilling the developmental needs of the member States.

5. We want to place on record our sincere appreciation for the immense contribution made by the outgoing Director General, Mr. Francis Gurry, and his team, during the past 12 years. Under his leadership the WIPO's collaboration and cooperation with India has attained new heights.

Mr. Chair,

6. We believe that the World Intellectual Property Organization, as the principal global norm setting body in the field of Intellectual Property, has a critical role to play, in spearheading international norm-setting and formulation of policy guidelines, and ensuring effective, balanced and development-oriented implementation of the global IP system. Intellectual Property lies at the very root of innovation that enables countries to meet their development challenges and allows industries to be differentiated and stand out amidst their peers.

Mr. Chair,

7. India has a well-established legislative, administrative and judicial framework to safeguard Intellectual Property Rights, which meets our international obligations, while enabling us to address our developmental challenges. In recent years, India has taken significant steps towards promotion of innovation and creativity as well as a dynamic, vibrant and balanced intellectual property system. The 'Make in India' programme of the Government of India has given a fillip to manufacturing in

India. The ‘Startup India’ mission has unleashed entrepreneurial energy among start-ups. Giving a spur to IPRs of startups, the Government of India has launched a Scheme for facilitating Start-ups Intellectual Property Protection, for supporting startups from the stage of filing to final disposal of the IP applications for patents, trademarks and designs.

8. In this uncertain phase of the pandemic, access to Medicines has attained significance. We reiterate the importance of TRIPS flexibilities on intellectual property rights for public health objectives. India’s is being seen as a “pharmacy of the world” has been recognized during this Covid pandemic. We have a world-class pharmaceutical industry which is the manufacturer of choice for critical medications with brand recognition in all geographies and markets. India is also part of the global effort to produce an effective and safe vaccine against covid-19.

Mr. Chair,

9. Our cooperation and collaboration with WIPO has intensified in recent years. India has acceded to five IPR treaties administered by WIPO in the last two years. India has witnessed a substantial jump of 33 places in the rankings of the Global Innovation Index since 2015, and this showcases the importance of innovation in the fastest growing major economy in the world. We are committed to emerge as a global hub for innovation and research and development.

10. Further, we have already started the process of expanding the network of Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs) in collaboration with WIPO across India.

Mr. Chair,

11. India is hopeful that we will be able to make substantial progress on all pending issues including the discussions in the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, the Design Law Treaty and WIPO's Development Agenda. On the discussions in the Standing Committee of Patents, we are of the view that the discussions in the SCP should not lead to harmonization as a one size fits all approach will not work, given the diversity of issues faced by different countries, especially developing countries and LDCs. Right to education and access of information are key elements for advancement and promotion of culture, science and education. The discussions in the Standing Committee on Copyrights on limitations and exceptions for libraries and archives and for educational and research institutions and for persons with other disabilities are of critical importance for the development of society.

12. India understands that substantive agenda items that have a negotiating component would not be taken up during this session of the WIPO Assemblies due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We welcome the proposal to have an

extraordinary General Assembly in early 2021 to discuss these issues.

13. We urge member states to work towards resolution of the impasse over the decision on opening of WIPO External Offices. India is one of the applicants for hosting an External Office of WIPO in its national capacity. We believe that opening of an EO in India will strengthen the IP ecosystem globally. We are hopeful that the proposed review of the existing network of WIPO External Offices would be completed in 2021 as mandated and we would be able to make further progress.

Mr. Chair,

14. We look forward to productive discussions during this Session of the General Assembly. We are committed to participating constructively in the deliberations and extend our full cooperation.

Thank You
