

## General Statement

Iceland would first and foremost like to thank WIPO for continued cooperation and strong support in various aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. It is of high importance for a small country with minimum resources for e.g. education and retraining in this field to have access, not only to wide variety of information and guidelines on the new and improved website but also to experts in this field for „hands-on“ assistance and deeper dialogue on various topics.

The importance and interest of the international filing systems, namely the PCT, Madrid and the Hague systems is continuous in Iceland with stability reached in the number of filings in the last two years. This year the number of filings of especially Madrid and PCT applications seems to be rising again. This continuous growth has led to the renewal of the IPO's filing systems and IPR registers. A new Trademark Register was launched this summer and within the upcoming months focus will be set on Design and Patent registers. In relation thereto, the Office is exploring the possibilities for accessing the Madrid goods and services database and to promote the using of ePCT.

On November 20, 2014 a conference was held at the premises of the National Museum of Iceland, a cooperative project of WIPO, the Icelandic Patent Office and the University of Iceland. The theme was: *Cooperation on IP Awareness and University Technology Transfer*. The main aim of the conference was to raise awareness on IPR in relation to the exploitation of research and promote discussion on the importance of innovation for Iceland. The conference moderator was Ms. Ásta Valdimarsdóttir, Director, Operations Service, Madrid Registry, Brands and Designs Sector (BDS), WIPO and one of the main speakers was Mr. Ben Leadbetter, IP consultant of WIPO. He addressed the following topics: *Exploiting university innovation: Spin-outs and licencing and Sponsored research funding*. The conference was highly appreciated by the participants and was concluded with lively panel discussions on how to take the conference topics to the next level.

The following day of the conference, both Ms. Valdimarsdóttir and Mr. Leadbetter were invited to a meeting with a steering committee of the Ministry of Industries and Innovation, whose task is to form a national strategy for Intellectual Property Rights in Iceland. The contribution of Ms. Valdimarsdóttir and Mr. Leadbetter during their visit in Iceland was of high importance and necessary both to create an even closer contact between Iceland and WIPO and to provide an eye-to-eye contact to look at the Icelandic IPR landscape and the opportunities. As for the national IPR strategy, the work of the steering committee is still ongoing, but the aim is to present a finalized product next spring, hopefully in relation to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Icelandic Patent Office.

In May 2015, Ms Borghildur Erlingsdóttir, Director General of the Icelandic Patent Office, attended the Korea International Women's Invention Forum 2015, which was organized by WIPO and KIPO. Ms. Erlingsdóttir participated as a speaker in the session *The importance of IP policies in fostering an innovation Ecosystem for start-up companies*. The cooperation was very effective, bringing together experience from various WIPO member states in on one successful event. Furthermore, the IPO participated in the cooperative event of WIPO and NIPO held in Oslo earlier this year under the topic *Patent quality*. The IPO considers it a great honour to participate and share IP related knowledge and experience in cooperative events organized by WIPO.

Only minor changes were made in national law relating to IPRs last year but a few provisions of the Patent Act are currently being reviewed. Last December a new Act on Geographical Indications was passed through Parliament. The act provides for protection of product names as designation of

origin, geographical indications or traditional speciality. The changes made to the Lisbon Treaty last May and possible accession of Iceland is currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Industries and Innovation.

Iceland would like to thank the WIPO team for organizing this General Assemblies meeting in Geneva and congratulates Mr. Gurry on his achievements within the Organization. Next on the agenda for Iceland is the organizing of a seminar on ePCT and hopefully in due course also a Madrid seminar. Iceland is looking forward to welcoming WIPO delegations for these and other events in the future.