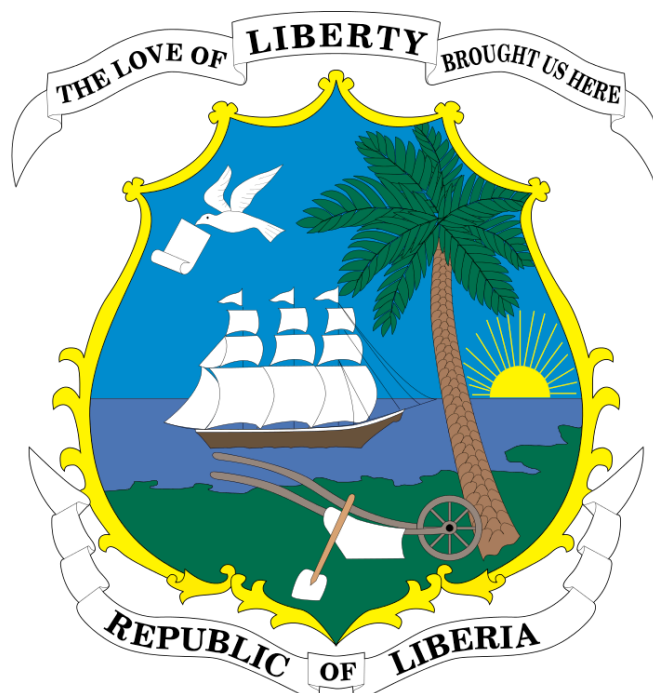


**WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
55th SERIES OF ASSEMBLIES OF MEMBER STATE**



STATEMENT

BY

H.E. AXEL M. ADDY

MINISTER

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, R.L.

**COUNTRY REPORT ON THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SYSTEM
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

Geneva, Switzerland

October 7, 2015

**Country Report on the Intellectual Property System of the Republic of Liberia
presented to the 55th Series of Assemblies of Member States of WIPO**

Mr. Director General,
Mister Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the Liberian delegation, let me first congratulate you Mr. Chairman, His Excellency Ambassador Gabriel Duque of Colombia, for having been nominated to Chair these Assemblies. I also wish to congratulate your two Vice Chairs and am most confident that you will successfully steer these assemblies. Mr. Chairman, my delegation also wishes to extend congratulations to the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Kairamo of Finland, for her outstanding leadership in steering the affairs of these assemblies.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the people of Liberia, my delegation is delighted to participate in this 55th Series of Assemblies of Member States of WIPO and is grateful for the enormous support extended to Liberia, under the leadership of the Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Gurry on his re-election as Director General to head this institution for another term. We wish him and the new management team a success in this new undertaking.

Mr. Chairman, the Liberian Delegation also notes with satisfaction and aligns itself with the statements made by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and the delegation of Benin on behalf of the Least Developed Countries.

Mr. Chairman, we also note with satisfaction WIPO continued technical and financial support to the development of the Intellectual Property System (IPS), particularly in LDCs.

With WIPO support under the framework of the Intellectual Property Development Plan (IPDP), we are pleased to note with great satisfaction the tremendous progress being made on the legislative front for the enhancement of IP in Liberia.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, I am pleased to have you informed that with WIPO support and the political will of the government of Liberia, all of WIPO and ARIPO Conventions, Protocols and Treaties, which Liberia has acceded to, and the new amended Copyright and Industrial Property Laws have been ratified and enacted by the 53rd Liberian National Legislature under the leadership of His Excellency J. Alex Tyler, Speaker of the House of Representative and His Excellency Armah Z. Jallah, Senate Pro Tempore of the Senate. These legal instruments include:

- New amended IP Law
- Patent Law Treaty
- Marrakesh Treaty
- Banjul Protocol
- Lusaka Agreement
- Swakopmund Protocol
- Harare Protocol

Mr. Chairman, the Liberian Delegation hopes to accede to the Beijing Treaty for Performing Artists whilst we are here in order to have it also ratified by the Liberian National Legislature in early 2016.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, the Liberian Delegation is pleased to inform you that a parcel of land has been provided for the construction of the Intellectual Property Office. The technical detail for the proposed IP Office is being worked out. A building has also been provided temporarily which presently hosts the Copyright and Industrial Property Offices of the IPS. We look technical forward to support that will lead to the realization of the new IP Office.

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation is also pleased to have you informed that the National Collective Societies are formed. They are the Liberian Musicians' Union, the Liberian Movie Union, Liberian Cultural Union, the Liberian Artists Union and the Liberian Association of Writers. However, we note the need for continuous technical assistance for capacity development of the Society to enhance the work they do in Liberia.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is grateful for the level of training, which is helping to upgrade the capacity of our employees at the offices of the intellectual property system to include three Liberian Lawyers who were trained at the University of Turin, Italy and the Africa University in Muntari, Zimbabwe. Against this backdrop, we would be pleased if additional lawyers could be trained especially in the area of IP enforcement so as to help us combat the present wave of escalating piracy and other infringements on our market.

Mr. Chairman, the my delegation also recalls that during the 54th General Assembly, it made certain request on the hosting of the Judiciary Workshop for the Liberian Judiciary. However, we note that our health crisis made that impossible and as such are making an appeal that such activities be implemented for 2016. These critical training opportunities are needed to enhance IP enforcement in accordance with the new IP Law.

We would like to also thank USPTO, ARIPO and WIPO for hosting a successful and beneficial Enforcement Training Workshop on IP, which focused on counterfeit medicines in Accra, Ghana, September 16-18, 2015 for member states of ARIPO.

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Mr. Chairman, my delegation also wish to use this opportunity to thank ARIPO for its new dynamism which saw the hosting of the roving seminar in Liberia prior to our health crisis. Although we could not hold the approved ARIPO Ministerial Conference due to the outbreak of the EBOLA Virus in our country, it is our hope that ARPIO would consider Liberia in the next selection for the hosting of its next Ministerial Council.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in April of last year, for the first time, thanks to the support of WIPO, we were able expose our SMEs to the benefits of IP during our annual SME conference. Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, on November 17-18, we will host our annual SME conference. This year's conference is to highlight youth innovations for economic empowerment. We once again would be grateful for WIPO's participation in the conference.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, thank you for your kind attention and I wish you a successful and productive deliberations.
