

**General Statement on behalf of the LDC Group at the 56th Session of the Assemblies of
the Member states of WIPO**

[3 October 2016]

**Delivered by Ambassador H.E. Mr. M Shameem Ahsan,
Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations**

(Suggested time: 5 minutes)

Mr. President,
Director General,
Distinguished representatives,
Good morning.

1. Bangladesh has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Least Developed Country Group.

2. We are very happy to see your assumption of this important position as the President of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO. We are confident that with your guidance, experience and efforts that you have demonstrated in your engagements so far, we will reach decisive conclusions and achieve expected success at this session. And I also take this opportunity to congratulate other new members of the Bureau and at the same time recall the valuable contributions of H.E. Mr. Gabriel Duque as the outgoing Chair of WIPO GA.

3. The Group deeply appreciates Director-General, Dr. Francis Gurry for his detailed summary of WIPO's engagement and achievements in different sectors last year. We would also like to thank the WIPO Secretariat for their hard work for the excellent arrangements and for the documentation of the meetings of the Assemblies this year's.

Mr. President

4. LDCs highly value their cooperation with WIPO, which assists us in developing our national IP strategies and building our human and institutional capacities. This cooperation is crucial for the modernization and automation of IP infrastructure and the overall development of the Members of the Group. I wish that this mutually beneficial cooperation will be further strengthened to cover new areas, including IP education, capacity building for industry, branding of LDC products and protection of our GIs, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions. We also look forward to develop better cooperation in the area of copyrights and related rights so that IP policies can be adopted for all areas for the benefit of the peoples.

Mr. President,

5. In 2011, the LDC Ministers adopted "WIPO DELIVERABLES FOR THE LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES" in Istanbul to guide LDC issues for the next decade. This served as the basis for WIPO and the Director General to take certain steps to build the knowledge base in the LDCs and started assisting the LDCs to implement those directives step by step. To implement the first two deliverables, WIPO had started providing assistance to the LDCs to formulate IP and innovation policy and strategy and 12 LDCs have already adopted IP policies to strengthen their development efforts. And to enhance technical skill, a number of national, regional and inter-regional activities were adopted and accomplished and up to last year, 2,866 persons have been trained from LDCs in different capacities. Actions on branding and promotion and making available the appropriate technology are other areas where substantive developments have been noticed as branding projects are continuing in 4 LDCs. 6 LDCs have already benefitted from the implementation of appropriate technology project. With the help of WIPO, Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) have already been set up in 18 LDCs. 309 institutions in 37 LDCs are using WIPO's Access to Research for Development and Innovation (ARDI) Programme. In addition, WIPO's Access to Specialized Patent Information (ASPI) platform has been made available to all LDCs.

Mr. President,

6. For all these achievements, first I want to whole-heartedly thank all the Member States for their support and assistance. Next I would like to thank the LDC Division of WIPO for making all these possible through their hard work and dedication and hope that they will continue this great momentum of catering to the causes, issues and needs of the LDCs in future. We also thank the regional bureaus for their important contributions towards their LDC Members within the particular regional groups.

Mr. President,

7. We LDCs firmly believe that rights are always accompanied by responsibilities and any fair, reasonable and balanced intellectual property system should care for the rights of innovators as well as the needs of common people for the greater benefit of society. In this respect we are happy to see that the combined efforts of the LDCs and WIPO are trying to surmount the prevalent knowledge gap or the digital divide. We are also happy that WIPO's technical assistance is making considerable contribution towards the development of the LDCs. However, to promote a fair, equitable and balanced intellectual property regime in the LDCs, WIPO's technical assistance should be development-oriented, demand-driven and transparent, based on country's specific needs and above all, must consider the respective level of development. We are happy to learn that WIPO is now providing technical assistance to the LDCs based on respective needs assessment and analysis. Here we would like to refer to the annual report of the Director of the Internal Oversight Division where a comprehensive evaluation of the WIPO's assistance to LDCs had been done recently. The evaluation highlighted many positive outcomes which warrants continuation of WIPO's assistance to the LDCs, preferably through the LDC Division to ensure continuity and to avoid duplication by the regional bureaus as LDCs all over have similar constraints and require solutions.

8. The proper implementation of the development agenda is extremely important for the LDCs and we also ask that the projects for the LDCs like start-up academy are fast-tracked in CDIP. As a UN organization, mainstreaming the issue of development in the activities of WIPO is long overdue. Here we expect that all relevant WIPO bodies should inform CDIP of their efforts according to 2008 GA decision on coordination mechanism. Here we want to mention that on the excuse of any controversy regarding income and expenditure of different Unions, no development expenditure should be affected.

Mr. President,

9. LDCs expect that on GRTKF, we will have a package of agreement or agreements on all three sectors at IGC. We recommend that the proposed Diplomatic Conference for GRTKF is soon convened and we urge the Member States to work seriously towards this goal. LDCs are naturally and historically rich in genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore and our experience is that without a binding legal agreement, the resources will not be protected effectively.

10. We want to congratulate all the Member States for the Marrakesh Treaty and its entry into force last week. Being a part of the Marrakesh Treaty is high on the agenda of the Members of the LDC Group. In this respect, we also expect that limitations and exceptions for educational, teaching and research institutions and persons with other disabilities, and limitations and exceptions for libraries and archives would be the next ones to create history. Due to lack of resources to meet individual needs and the prevalent digital divide, libraries, archives and other educational and research institutions are the only means to impart education and to preserve history for the Members of our group. So when we discuss and decide about IP rights and protection for libraries, archives and other educational and research institutions, the issue of development is the key consideration at least for the LDCs. That's why we need consensus of the Members on this issue urgently.

11. For the Design Law Treaty, LDCs strongly support the inclusion of an article ensuring technical assistance in the main body of the Agreement. We are also open to any constructive negotiation regarding the Broadcasting Treaty on the signal based approach according to traditional sense as per the 2007 General Assembly mandate.

12. On the issue of the Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Members of Group agree with the report and recommendations of the former GA and Coordination Committee Chairs.

However, our Members are open to the proposal of revision of WIPO's Internal Oversight Charter and WIPO's existing procurement principles and procedures.

Mr. President,

13. We have just step into the ambit of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For LDCs, nothing could be more important than securing sustainable development for them and eventually for everyone on this planet. As discussed and suggested, the SDG framework for the LDCs will be integrated, universal and transformational. As a UN agency, WIPO is very important for the achievement of the SDGs. LDCs hope that what we have started with the mainstreaming of the idea of development into every activity of WIPO, this will culminate with the ultimate accomplishment of the SDGs.

Finally Mr. President,

14. The LDC group at WIPO consists of more than one-fourth of the total membership of the UN and we pledge our total cooperation and support to you. The members of Group would make necessary interventions during the discussions on specific agenda items as and when necessary.

I thank everybody for their engagement and high spirit.

Thank you Mr. Chairman