

**ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF
THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
SIXTY-FOURTH SERIES OF MEETINGS**

6 July 2023

GENEVA

GENERAL STATEMENT – AUSTRALIA

Australia thanks Director General Daren Tang and the Secretariat for their excellent work over the past year and in preparing for this General Assembly. We welcome the opportunity to attend these assemblies in person and offer our support to the Chair and Vice Chairs in making them a great success.

We appreciate the Director General's pragmatic leadership of WIPO during these challenging times and commend the Secretariat, Chairs and Vice-Chairs for continuing to arrange these hybrid physical and virtual meetings.

We urge Member States to work constructively towards successful outcomes for the Diplomatic Conferences for the Design Law Treaty and the International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources. These are meaningful and pivotal opportunities for us all to demonstrate that by working together multilaterally we can deliver tangible benefits and drive prosperity for a diversity of creative people across the globe.

Australia is committed to ensuring that Indigenous Peoples are able to participate in decisions directly impacting them. We are pleased to have been able to contribute AUD \$50,000 to the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge, and Folklore Voluntary Fund for Accredited Indigenous and Local Communities.

This contribution will support effective, on the ground participation from representatives of Indigenous Peoples in the upcoming Special Session and Preparatory Committee on Genetic Resources. We hope it will assist in a successful outcome at next year's Diplomatic Conference, an outcome that reflects the interests of Indigenous Peoples worldwide.

We emphasise the continued importance of innovation for the wellbeing of all people, and the key role of IP in the innovation process. We have seen resilience despite the challenging environment, with Australian applications for patents reaching near record highs in 2022. Patenting in healthcare continued to grow, as did new IP for digital equipment, components and services.

We continually strive to improve our support for creative and inventive endeavour, and to ensure that IP is an everyday asset that benefits everyone, everywhere. Our research shows that IP adds real business value, with innovative businesses that actively patent benefiting from higher wages and higher workforce retention. We look forward to working with WIPO and Member States to help simplify the international IP system, to make it more accessible to innovators, creators and businesses – especially small and medium enterprises.

The world of IP continues to evolve and present new opportunities and challenges. Nowhere is this more evident than the rapid developments in generative artificial intelligence (AI). We are exploring the possible impacts of generative AI on IP rights and the innovation system as a whole, and welcome WIPO's active involvement through its Conversations on IP and Frontier Technologies.

Australia welcomes continued cooperative and constructive discussions in WIPO's committees and working groups to make progress on international IP issues. We reiterate our strong support for ongoing modernisation of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid Protocol, and work towards a treaty on the protection of broadcasting organisations.

Australia acknowledges the challenging environment faced by communities around the world, as economies slow and recovery from the impact of COVID-19 continues. It is of paramount importance that WIPO and the broader international IP system continue to play an active and supportive role in responding to these challenges. We recognise the crucial work that WIPO has done to assist Member States and the international IP community and to generate tangible benefits for all.

Australia condemns Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine and continues to stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We call for Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and for WIPO and its Member States to consider all options for supporting the people of Ukraine and the support of its innovation and IP system.

We continue to urge Member States to join the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled to spread its clear humanitarian benefits.

In closing, Australia expresses its strong commitment to working with WIPO and Member States to ensure that the international IP system continues to fulfil its social and economic purposes and serves our innovators, creators, and businesses, as well as the broader public.