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Republic of Zambia

FIFTY-SEVENTH (57TH) SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, OCTOBER 2 TO 11, 2017

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ZAMBIA

Chairperson,

Distinguished delegates,

We are pleased once again to join this Assembly of the WIPO Member States. On behalf of Zambia, I wish to congratulate the President Elect, the Vice Chairperson as well as all the other elected Officers for the 2018-2019 biennium. We wish them all the very best in their future endeavors at directing the affairs of the Assemblies.

Chairperson,

At the outset the Zambian delegation would like to align itself with statement delivered by the distinguished delegation of Senegal on behalf of the African group and the statement by the delegation of Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs. We agree with the views expressed by the African group regarding the matters concerning the convening of the Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of Design Law treaty. We also agree that matters regarding traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Traditional Cultural Expressions are critical for Africa and Zambia in particular. It is for this reason that at the national level, we have already taken positive steps to ensure the protection and prevent misappropriation of Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources and Expressions of Folklore through domestic legislation. In addition, consensus has also been reached by all local stakeholders on the text of the implementing regulations and it is expected that the new law will be operationalized at the beginning of next year.

Given this background, Zambia is pleased with the commitment and progress of the IGC in its continued effort in narrowing existing gaps and trying to build consensus on the text of an international legal instrument that will ensure a balanced and effective protection of GRs, TK and TCEs. Zambia is therefore in full support of the recommendation by the IGC to the Assembly that the Committee should continue its work during the 2018/2019 biennium.

Chairperson,

My delegation would like to once again reiterate the role of IP as an important tool of technological and economic development. In this regard, Zambia recognizes WIPO's commitment to work with developing and least developed countries such as ours to enable them to secure the benefits from the IP system and to enhance their participation in the global innovation economy. My delegation therefore wishes to express its gratitude to the International Bureau, and the Director General - Dr. Francis Gury, in particular, for the technical assistance WIPO has continued to render to Zambia in different areas. Allow me to proudly announce at this juncture that Zambia is one of the few LDCs in Africa to have adopted and implemented a national IP policy and later conduct a review of its implementation. The review of the National IP policy which started in 2016 and is now in its final stage was made possible with support of WIPO and we remain grateful for the gesture.

In Addition Chairperson,

I wish to further acknowledge the assistance rendered by WIPO in streamlining and automating our IP administration procedures through IPAS and in particular for the process optimization and Capacity Building project that commenced early this year. This kind of cooperation has enabled Zambia to begin to rethink the parallel system for the administration of IP in the country in preference for a one stop shop for administration and protection of IPRs. In view of this

government took a bold decision early this year and transferred the copyright administration to the Patents and Company's Registration Agency (PACRA) which previously administered only Industrial property Rights.

With all these developments and whilst making its own efforts to secure the benefits from the IP system, Zambia will continue looking to WIPO for continued support as envisaged in its Development Agenda.

Finally,

Chairperson allow me to thank you for the able manner in which you have continued to guide the deliberation of the assemblies since your election as chair.

I thank you.