

**General Statement  
Federal Republic of Nigeria  
Fifty-Fifth Session of the WIPO General Assemblies  
5 October 2015**

**Thank you Mr. Chairman,**

1. My Delegation wishes to congratulate you and your Vice Chairs on your elections. We convey our confidence in your expertise and pledge our commitment to working with you to achieve positive results. We also thank the Secretariat for their hard-work in preparing for the meetings of the GA and their consistent support.

2. My Delegation equally extends its appreciation to the Director-General for his commitment, leadership and efforts towards fulfillment of the WIPO ideals. We look forward to continued cooperation on our common interests.

**Mr. Chairman,**

3. Nigeria aligns with the General Statement of the African Group. We attach immense importance to the over-arching role of the GA in charting the course of WIPO for the next year. In this context, we place on record, our concern at the state of WIPO's normative agenda. Indeed, taking due account of WIPO's position at the helm of global Intellectual Property (IP) policy making, it is a matter of self-preservation for WIPO and its Member States to find a balance between the competing interests of its diverse membership. We therefore call on Member States to demonstrate a collective will to recommit to progress on the various issues of divergence in WIPO.

4. Demonstrably, IP is a fundamental tool for facilitating the commercialization of innovative and creative efforts - as overwhelmingly evidenced by the contemporary global knowledge economy. These considerations guide my delegation's emphasis on the enabling roles that key actionable steps in WIPO can play in IP supported economic growth and development, for developing countries like Nigeria. For my delegation, such actionable steps include the establishment of External Offices in Africa. Nigeria has indicated its strong interest in hosting a WIPO External Office, underlining the benefits such a development will accrue for the dissemination of IP knowledge, awareness and appreciation in Africa, including Nigeria. It needs no further elaboration that Africa is a continent replete with human and material resources that can be elaborated through IP for societal development, wealth creation, and economic growth.

5. It is in the same context that we prioritize conclusion of negotiations on a Treaty for the effective protection of Genetic Resources (GRs), Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCEs) from misappropriation and commercialization. In

this regard, my delegation supports the African Group proposal to convert the IGC into a Standing Committee for the benefits and focus such a change in forum will afford the substantive text-based negotiations. My delegation further considers paramount, steps necessary for enhancing access to knowledge, scientific information and technology for developing and least developed countries; as well as redressing the considerable disparity in the geographical representation of Africa across the tiers of WIPO's workforce.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. Nigeria has taken important steps to enhance its domestic IP framework and supporting tools. We are actively engaged in the processes for ratification of relevant WIPO administered treaties; digitization of our IP records; undertaking reforms to enable us respond to the challenges of the digital environment; enhancing compliance with our international IP obligations; and scaling up criminal sanctions for IP infringements, while enhancing provisions to improve the prospects of rights management.

7. Nigeria appreciates its productive bilateral relations with WIPO. The organization has supported, and continues to support, the development of our IP infrastructure through awareness creation workshops and seminars, targeted engagements with SMEs, establishment and support of our Technology and Innovation Support Centre (TISC), and various other capacity building and technical assistance programs and activities undertaken in collaboration with our IP Offices.

8. We look forward to further engaging with WIPO on specific areas of interest, such as improvement of our examination standards and assisting Nigeria achieve substantive examination level; strengthening of cooperation through the IP Academy and implementation of the National Start-Up Academy for the training and development of a core human resource capital in the field of IP. In this context, we also anticipate inclusion of the general educational framework of Nigeria, where the primary objective will be the integration of a value system for IP in Nigeria.

**Mr. Chairman,**

9. My delegation will speak to specific agenda items during the Session, and elaborate on some elements already mentioned. We reiterate our commitment to constructive engagement on the issues before us during this Assembly, and look forward to a positive outcome.

10. I thank you.