

ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO
Fifty-Ninth Series of Meetings
Geneva, September 30 to October 9, 2019
Agenda item 5: GENERAL STATEMENTS

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

The Delegation of Croatia would like to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Secretariat undertaken since the last Assemblies meeting to maintain the Organization's place as the global intellectual property authority fit for the future.

We would like to express our satisfaction with financial results in the outgoing biennium and we support sound approach to financial planning for the next biennium. We are also pleased with further improvements in programs and financial planning methodology and presentation.

Croatia acknowledges the continuation of positive developments within various WIPO Committees, especially within the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) regarding the treaty for the protection of broadcasting organizations. We hope that member states would finally reach an adequate and effective response to new technological challenges in this matter. We endorse the emphasis the new Program and Budget is putting on addressing the challenges of new technological developments that impact intellectual property system. Today's digital economies, which heavily rely on data, demand fast and adequate response from the intellectual property system as well. We are pleased to see that WIPO's reaction in this matter is prompt, active and solution orientated.

We are pleased to note that the new Program and Budget foresees a further refinement of the support to SMEs and entrepreneurship with regard to their effective use of intellectual property. SMEs contribute significantly to economic growth and social stability and we should undertake appropriate actions to empower them to take full advantage of intellectual property system in order to enhance their innovative and creative capacity and competitiveness. Such a support to SMEs will be one of key priorities of Croatia in the first half of year 2020 when it will for the first time hold Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

As regards further normative work of WIPO, we express our regrets that still no consensus has been reached on the adoption of the Design Law Treaty. We are hoping to see constructive approach of delegations to finalize enormous effort invested so far at the WIPO on its adoption.

We encourage joint efforts of the WIPO Secretariat and the Member States in considering further advancement of the WIPO governance as a contribution to mastering the challenges ahead of the Organization in response to increased complexity of its work. We invite the Member States to be open-minded in this exercise and ready to leave entrenched positions taken in the past that stifle further progress of the work of the Organization. This particularly relates to the longstanding impasse regarding the allocation of the WIPO's external offices that is in clear contradiction with modern communication technology advancement that enables us to work and communicate surpassing physical limits and borders.

Members of the Delegation of Croatia uses this opportunity to thank the WIPO for a valuable cooperation and assistance delivered since the last Assemblies regarding the support to the intellectual property system in Croatia, especially in finalizing the Joint Project on Assisting Technology Transfer Offices in Croatia, as well as in providing continuous support to promoting the importance of creativity and innovation among children and delivering different IP training programs.

In conclusion, we would like to express our willingness to contribute to further development of the intellectual property system in the framework of the WIPO system as well as in other fora, and we are looking forward to even more intense cooperation during the first half of 2020 when Croatia will be presiding over the Council of the European Union.

The Delegation of Croatia would like to express its appreciation to all the Member States for their cooperation, and wishes fruitful deliberations to all the Members States and a successful 59th series of meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States.

(Geneva, September 2019)