

GENERAL STATEMENT
Mr. Makha CHANTHALA, Deputy Director General
of Department of Intellectual Property of Lao PDR

61st
Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO
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Ambassador Omar Zniber, Chairman of the 61st General Assembly,

First of all, on behalf of Director General Dr. Khanlasy Keobounphanh, I would like to echo ASEAN in congratulating you, Ambassador Omar Zniber, on your election as Chairperson. Under your Chairmanship and guidance, I strongly believe that this session of Assemblies will be a fruitful and great success.

Taking this opportunity, I also wish to express my appreciation for the comprehensive report of Director General Francis Gurry and his WIPO Secretariat on WIPO's accomplishments over the past year, and we stand ready to work with WIPO in order to advance our works in lights of COVID 19.

I also would like to congratulate Mr. Daren Tang, on his appointment as the next Director General of WIPO. Under his leadership, I truly believe that WIPO will continue to provide the best services to its member states.

This year our economy has been affected by COVID-19 pandemic, particularly to the Department of Intellectual Property, we were very much regretted to cancel the IP Fair and the IP day cerebration for 2020, above all the visit of Director General Fancis Gurry to that event. However, we reaffirmed our invitation to DG Francis Gurry to visit Laos once the COVID 19 has been relieved.

On the other hand the pandemic also affected the filing of hardcopy applications. Hence, we are now putting our focused and efforts on the establishment of the electronic filing system and thanks for the support provided by WIPO Singapore office in helping us on this project which allows us to expedite the preparation works so that we can plan to launch this system by the end of this year.

We are also enhancing public awareness and effective use of intellectual property system to support an increase of trade and business competitiveness particularly for SMEs and MSMEs by implementing the enabling intellectual property environment project (EIE Project), which provides necessary ingredient for DIP to provide high quality advisory services on brands and designs to our client for the increase of utilization of IP for the SMEs. In the next two months we are implementing the brands and design coaching and support project for 6 SMEs on building the branding strategy.

Consistent with our goal to utilize the intellectual property system to enhance innovation and research, we are looking forward to WIPO expert's mission to Laos to help us establish a national network of the Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISCs) in Lao PDR in the near future. More importantly, we have taken an initiative to accede to the Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications by the end of this year. While, this year we are able to register five more GIs namely: Komean tea, Paksong tea, Huaphanh Silk, Luangphrabang Silk, and Bolaven Coffee.

Last but not least, we continued our efforts to accede to the Hague Agreement, WIPO Copyright Treaty, WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty to allow our local businesses to explore markets outside our country and to encourage foreign businesses to invest in product development by providing them easier access to our intellectual property system.

With that notes I Thank you, Mr. Chairman!