

General Statement

By Mr. Thosapone Dansuputra

Director-General, Department of Intellectual Property of Thailand

at the 61st WIPO GA, Monday 21 September 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chair

1. Thailand would like to convey our appreciation to WIPO for the maximum efforts in providing progress and fruitful discussions on various IP related topics on virtual platforms over the past year, despite the worldwide Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.
2. I would also like to join other Member States in thanking you, Mr. Director General, and the Secretariat for the hard work in preparing the 61st General Assemblies via both physical and online platforms.

Mr. Chair

3. It is commonly accepted that IP plays an important role in the 4th Industrial Revolution, and the Royal Thai Government has attached high priority to develop our IP policies that balance the interests of the right holders and the society. Considerable efforts have been put in enhancing the country's IP infrastructures and creating an IP-friendly environment.
4. Since the beginning of this year, we are all facing the same challenges in combatting the pandemic of COVID-19, for which most if not all sectors of the society have severely been affected including the government and IP offices' operational functions.

5. To overcome this unprecedented challenges, Thailand has taken a number of measures, especially the use of technologies, to enhance our office's functions and ensure the accessibility of the applicants to the IP systems. This includes encouraging the use of e-Filing and e-Payment systems for IP applicants, as well as providing relief of the time limits, fee payment and applicant identification process using available technological measures. To us, it is a strong and tangible evidence that technology and innovations are key elements in driving the world forward in this difficult time.

Mr. Chair

6. Thailand recognizes the importance of IP enforcement. Close coordination and integration of relevant stakeholders have been conducted to combat IPR infringements in physical and online marketplaces. We have also carried out various IP awareness and educational activities via both traditional and non-traditional means including organizing other kinds of activities that are popular in our country such as mini marathon, "*The DIP Mini Marathon 2020: Stop Piracy – Respect Intellectual Property Rights*" campaign.
7. Furthermore, during the period of State's Emergency where a social distancing measure had been put in place, we found that social media was one of the most effective and useful medium used in raising IP awareness. Hence, this year, in celebrating the World IP Day, Thailand organized a Photo Contest under the theme "Innovate for a Green Future" and broadcasted the outcomes online. The feedback to the campaign has proved remarkably successful.

8. This past year, the norm- setting activities under WIPO' s framework could not significantly progress due to the pandemic, and several activities require even stronger political wills and intensive discussions to ensure their satisfactory outcomes. The continued negotiation on the protection of Genetic Resources (GRs) , Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Traditional Cultural Expressions (TCEs) under the WIPO IGC is also needed. Thailand would like to encourage Members to put their highest efforts in finding a positive and acceptable solutions for all including exploring the possibility to adjust the negotiation mandate and programs to cope with the current situation.

Last but not least, Mr. Director General,

12. It was with great honor to have been working with you over the past years. It is my appreciation that Thailand and WIPO have maintained strong and meaningful cooperation in various fields of intellectual property resulting in strengthening the IP-ecosystem that is beneficial to all. In this connection, I would like to offer my sincere gratitude for your kind assistances and collaboration throughout your long and meaningful services.

13. I wish also to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Daren Tang, the next Director General, for your new and challenging post. Thailand would like to reaffirm our commitment to work hand-in-hand with you and WIPO for a sustainable development of IP ecosystem at all levels in the years to come.

14. In closing, Mr. Chair, please be assured that Thailand stands ready to support and work constructively with other Members on all initiatives under WIPO with an aim to strengthening international IP systems, and we sincerely hope that the decisions made during this very important Assembly will be beneficial to all Member States in this difficult and challenging period of time.

15. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
