English Language
The upward curving lines of the World Intellectual Property Organization’s logo evoke human progress driven by innovation and creativity.

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**Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO**

**Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings**

**Geneva, July 6 to 14, 2023**

general report

*adopted by the Assemblies*

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# INTRODUCTION

1. This General Report records the deliberations and decisions of the following 22 Assemblies and other bodies of the Member States of WIPO (the “Assemblies”):
2. WIPO General Assembly, fifty-sixth (26th ordinary) session
3. WIPO Conference, forty-fourth (26th ordinary) session
4. WIPO Coordination Committee, eighty-second (54th ordinary) session
5. Paris Union Assembly, fifty-ninth (26th ordinary) session
6. Paris Union Executive Committee, sixty-third (59th ordinary) session
7. Berne Union Assembly, fifty-third (26th ordinary) session
8. Berne Union Executive Committee, sixty-ninth (54th ordinary) session
9. Madrid Union Assembly, fifty-seventh (25th ordinary) session
10. Hague Union Assembly, forty-third (24th ordinary) session
11. Nice Union Assembly, forty-third (26th ordinary) session
12. Lisbon Union Assembly, fortieth (25th ordinary) session
13. Locarno Union Assembly, forty-third (25th ordinary) session
14. IPC [International Patent Classification] Union Assembly, forty-fourth (24th ordinary) session
15. PCT [Patent Cooperation Treaty] Union Assembly, fifty‑fifth (24th ordinary) session
16. Budapest Union Assembly, fortieth (22nd ordinary) session
17. Vienna Union Assembly, thirty‑sixth (22nd ordinary) session
18. WCT [WIPO Copyright Treaty] Assembly, twenty-third (11th ordinary) session
19. WPPT [WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty] Assembly, twenty-third (11th ordinary) session
20. PLT [Patent Law Treaty] Assembly, twenty-second (10th ordinary) session
21. Singapore Treaty [Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks] Assembly, sixteenth (8th ordinary) session
22. Marrakesh Treaty [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled] Assembly, eighth (8th ordinary) session.
23. BTAP [Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances] Assembly, fourth (4th ordinary) session

meeting in Geneva from July 6 to 14, 2023, and which made decisions in joint meetings of two or more of the said Assemblies and other bodies convened (hereinafter referred to as “the joint meeting(s)” and “the Assemblies of the Member States,” respectively).

1. In addition to this General Report, separate Reports have been drawn up on the sessions of the WIPO General Assembly (WO/GA/56/14), WIPO Coordination Committee (WO/CC/82/6), PCT Union Assembly (PCT/A/55/4), Madrid Union Assembly (MM/A/57/2), Hague Union Assembly (H/A/43/2), Lisbon Union Assembly (LI/A/40/2) and the Singapore Treaty Assembly (STLT/A/16/2). Furthermore, consolidated reports of the sessions of the other bodies have also been drawn up, as follows: WIPO Conference (WO/CF/44/1), Paris Union Assembly (P/A/59/1), Paris Union Executive Committee (P/EC/63/1), Berne Union Assembly (B/A/53/1), Berne Union Executive Committee (B/EC/69/1), Nice Union Assembly (N/A/43/1), Locarno Union Assembly (LO/A/43/1), IPC Union Assembly (IPC/A/44/1), Budapest Union Assembly (BP/A/40/1), Vienna Union Assembly (VA/A/36/1), WIPO Copyright Treaty Assembly (WCT/A/23/1), WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty Assembly (WPPT/A/23/1), Patent Law Treaty Assembly (PLT/A/22/1), Marrakesh Treaty Assembly (MVT/A/8/1) and the Beijing Treaty Assembly (BTAP/A/4/1).
2. The list of the members and observers of the Assemblies, as of July 6, 2023, is set forth in document [A/64/INF/1 Rev.](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=614392)
3. The meetings dealing with the following items of the Agenda (document [A/64/1](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=614851)) were presided over by the following Chairs:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 21, 26 and 27 | Ambassador Tatiana Molcean (Ms.) (Republic of Moldova), Chair of the WIPO General Assembly | |
| Items 22 to 25 | Ambassador Alfredo Suescum Alfaro (Mr.) (Panama), Chair of the WIPO Coordination Committee |
| Item 7 | Mercy K. Kainobwisho (Ms.) (Uganda), Vice‑Chair of the WIPO Conference, as Acting Chair, in the absence of Shayea A. Alshayea (Mr.) (Saudi Arabia), Chair of the WIPO Conference |
| Item 14 | María Loreto Bresky (Ms.) (Chile), Chair of the PCT Union Assembly |
| Item 15 | Willie Mushayi (Mr.) (Zimbabwe), Vice‑Chair of the Madrid Union Assembly, as Acting Chair, in the absence of Philippe Cadre (Mr.) (France), Chair of the Madrid Union Assembly |
| Item 16 | David R. Gerk (Mr.) (United States of America), Chair of the Hague Union Assembly |
| Item 17 | Pascal Faure (Mr.) (France), Chair of the Lisbon Union Assembly |
| Item 20 | Anna Barbarzak (Ms.) (Poland) as Acting Chair, in the absence of Lucía Estrada (Ms.) (Uruguay), Chair of the Singapore Treaty Assembly |

1. The agenda, as adopted, and the list of participants appear in documents A/64/1 and A/64/INF/4, respectively.

ITEM 1 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA  
OPENING OF THE SESSIONS

1. The Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies was convened by the Director General of WIPO, Mr. Daren Tang (hereinafter referred to as “the Director General”).
2. The sessions were opened in a joint meeting of all the 22 Assemblies and other bodies concerned by Ambassador Tatiana Molcean (Ms.) (Republic of Moldova), Chair of the WIPO General Assembly.
3. The opening statement of the Chair is recorded as follows:

“Honorable Ministers,

“Excellencies,

“Director General,

“Distinguished delegates,

“A very good morning to you all.

“I now call the meeting to order. I am pleased to declare open the Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO.

“I am encouraged by the number of delegates attending the Assemblies. As previous years, the Assemblies will be conducted in a hybrid format. Many delegates are present on the WIPO premises while others are joining us online from around the world. A warm welcome to you all.

“We will now start our proceedings. We have a full agenda for the Assemblies and I look forward to your engagement, constructive deliberations and cooperation throughout the Assemblies. I am confident that with your support, we shall keep the spirit of multilateralism robust and the work of the Organization will move ahead.

“I do hope that we will have a successful Assemblies.”

ITEM 2 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA  
ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. Discussions were based on document A/64/1 Prov.4.
2. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, adopted the agenda as proposed in document A/64/1 Prov.4 (referred to in this document as “the Consolidated Agenda”).

## ITEM 3 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Election of Officers

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/INF/2](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=615751).
2. Introducing Agenda Item 3, the Legal Counsel recalled that at the current year’s Assemblies, Member States were to elect officers, that is, one Chair and two Vice Chairs for each of the 22 Assemblies and other bodies of the Member States of WIPO and of the Unions of WIPO. She also recalled that in accordance with Rule 9(2) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the officers’ terms of office should begin following the final meeting of the session, that is, the present session, during which they were elected and officers would remain in office until terms of office of newly elected officers began. Finally, she pointed out that, with the exception of the WIPO Coordination Committee and the Paris and Berne Union Executive Committees, whose Chair and Vice‑Chairs served a one‑year term, all officers were appointed to a two‑year term. In that regard, the Legal Counsel was pleased to announce that Member States had reached consensus in respect of some of the officers to be elected, adding that the nominees for the respective officer positions were displayed on the screen and encouraged delegations to submit the remaining nominations and to inform the Legal Counsel accordingly.
3. As there was no objection, the Chair announced the nominees just read out duly elected and informed that the meeting would revert to the agenda item at a later stage.
4. Reopening the agenda item, the Chair invited the Legal Counsel to update delegations on the nominations for the remaining vacant officer positions.
5. The Legal Counsel announced that Member States had reached consensus on the remaining officers to be elected and read out their names, adding that the names were projected on the screen for the delegations’ information. The Legal Counsel then announced the conclusion of the nominations for officer positions.
6. The Chair proposed that the Assemblies endorse the nominations as presented by the Legal Counsel, which had gathered consensus among Member States.
7. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, elected their respective officers as appears in document A/64/INF/2.

## ITEM 4 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA ADDRESS of the Director General to the Assemblies of WIPO

1. The Address of the Director General is recorded as follows:

“Your Excellency, Ambassador Tatiana Molcean, Chair of the WIPO General Assembly,

“Ministers,

“Excellencies,

“Heads of Delegation,

“Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

“It is an honor and a privilege to welcome you to the [Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/index.html), the most well attended Assemblies in the history of WIPO.

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“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Soon after this Administration took office close to three years ago, my colleagues and I worked with all of you on a new vision for WIPO – a vision where every Member State uses IP as a powerful catalyst for creating jobs, attracting investments, supporting enterprises and entrepreneurs, and ultimately for growth and development.

“To make this vision reality, we asked and received your endorsement for our [Medium Term Strategic Plan](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo_pbc_32/wo_pbc_32_3.pdf) (MTSP). The MTSP has been our blueprint to transform what IP means, and to map out how we can shift IP from a technical topic of relevance only to IP specialists and experts, to a tool that helps innovators and creators on the ground and from anywhere in the world bring their ideas to life.

“I will describe this shift in numbers and statistics in the course of my address, but I first want to begin by telling the story of one person’s journey, a journey that takes place thousands of miles away from this hall in the rugged canyons of Jordan’s Petra region; a region famous for centuries.

“Madam Ikhlas Al Rawajfeh is from Al Rajef, a village in this part of Jordan.

“Over the last 11 months, she is one of 35 local women entrepreneurs participating in an intensive WIPO training and mentoring program.

“Through this program, we have not only used the power of IP to help the group to brand, market and package their products, we have also made IP part of their daily lives.

“Soon, all 35 are set to benefit from a collective trademark called “Rose Hands”, after how the Petra sky shimmers in the morning light.

“Not only will this protect the group’s unique handicrafts from imitation, but by drawing on the region’s rich history, it will also act as a gateway to new markets and business growth.

“The project is creating impact in other ways as well.

“In addition to being an artisan and entrepreneur, Madam Ikhlas volunteers at the Al-Rajef Association for Special Education, where she uses her crafts to educate and entertain children with learning disabilities.

“Now she is exploring how her IP skills can support the Association to create its own logo, using the practical knowledge of IP that she has gained to help others.

“Her journey is just one of many around the world that WIPO is supporting to bring IP to the grassroots.

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“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Transformations often take place during times of great change.

“Previously, such global disruptions have led to a drop in IP filings and activities. So what was surprising was that during the pandemic, these activities continued to show resilience and growth.

“With the benefit of hindsight, it has become clear that it is not *despite*, but rather *because* of the pandemic that IP moved even closer to the center of enterprises and economies during the past few years.

“Three key trends stand out.

“First, IP filings and innovation statistics continue to perform well, as businesses and economies increasingly look to innovation, entrepreneurship, technology and digitalization – areas connected with IP – to grow.

“Over the past three years, PCT patent filings rose 5 percent to over 278,000. Madrid trademark filings rose 8 percent to 69,000. And Hague design filings rose 15 percent to more than 25,000. Much of this is being powered by the China-Japan-Republic of Korea triangle of growth, but we see increased IP activity in many in other regions of the world as well.

“[Use of both the PCT and Hague Systems reached record levels last year](https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2023/article_0002.html), and the caseload before WIPO’s Arbitration and Mediation Center more than doubled, including a surge in domain name disputes.

“One interesting dynamic is that after strong growth in health-related technologies in 2021, digital communication, computer technologies and semiconductors resumed their place as the fastest growing PCT fields last year.

“The trends are similar with Madrid, where classes associated with the pandemic, such as medical instruments declined, while filings linked to the digital economy and retail grew.

“Wider innovation metrics are proving similarly resilient and robust. On September 27, we will launch WIPO’s 2023 [Global Innovation Index](https://www.wipo.int/global_innovation_index/en/) (GII). This will show that the top corporate R&D spenders increased their expenditure to 1.1 trillion US dollars last year, a new record, and that global venture capital (VC) deals increased by close to 20 percent in 2022, to over 23,000, despite the tough economic environment.

“Second, IP and innovation activity is no longer dominated by one region, but continuing a decades-long trend to become more global, as new growth engines emerge around the world.

“India exemplifies the rise of new players in this dynamic landscape. Until 2006, India filed fewer than 100,000 domestic trademark applications per year. Now, this number stands at close to half a million, with India the fourth largest trademark filer in the world.

“Local patenting activity is also powering ahead. At the last count, India received over 61,000 patent applications, the 6th highest total in the world, and in 2022 India recorded the [sharpest growth of all major PCT filers, with applications rising by more than 25 percent.](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-901-2023-en-patent-cooperation-treaty-yearly-review-2023.pdf)

“From lower bases, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mexico and Thailand are also showing signs of moving in a similar direction, with each country recording increases of at least 17 percent in PCT applications last year.

“[Meanwhile, over the past five years we have seen double-digit increases in Madrid applications](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-940-2023-en-madrid-yearly-review-2023.pdf) from economies as diverse as Bulgaria, Morocco and Viet Nam, with applications from Indonesia doubling, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) tripling.

“[And with designs, the share of applications originating from Asia under the Hague System](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-930-2023-en-hague-yearly-review-2023.pdf) has jumped from three percent to 23 percent over the past 10 years, with China’s entry last year boosting growth. At the same time, the share from North America also increased from around four percent to over 10 percent during the same period.

“Put simply, this is a world where ideas and IP are emerging from everywhere. A world where Africa and Latin America led the way in terms of VC deal growth last year, with Africa the only region not to see an overall decline in the value of VC investments.

“[Third, in last year’s GII](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-2000-2022-en-main-report-global-innovation-index-2022-15th-edition.pdf), WIPO identified two emerging innovation waves that are beginning to make their presence felt across economies and societies: a digital innovation wave, built on AI, supercomputing and automation, and a deep science innovation wave, built around biotechnologies and nanotechnologies.

“While the rise of new technologies is generating a lot of headlines and attention, it is important to remember that we are still in the early stages of this process and much is yet to unfold.

“But what we know for sure is that future advances, whether in energy, transport, medicine or AI, must reach and work for all.

“That instead of a digital divide, we must use the power of innovation to reap a digital dividend for everyone in the world – where new technologies and solutions create jobs, drive growth and help to build a better, fairer and more equal world.

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“While global IP statistics tell an important story, it is also important for us to understand what is in the hearts and minds of people. This is why earlier this year we initiated WIPO Pulse – our first global survey of attitudes towards IP around the world.

“Based on 25,000 responses from 50 countries across all regions of the world, it offers a unique snapshot on global perceptions towards IP rights and the role of IP in the economy.

“We will release the full report in September and hold information sessions, including for Permanent Missions and experts, to socialize key findings.

“But let me give you an advanced preview of some of the main takeaways that are emerging, as these are striking.

“First, while respondents in all regions recognize the positive impact of IP on the economy, this is most appreciated in Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.

“In each case, more than two-thirds of participants – and these are laypersons, not experts – have a favorable view of IP’s impact – higher than in Europe and in North America.

“Second, respondents in all regions see IP as a key tool for ensuring fair income for individual innovators, creators, authors and designers.

“And third, there are strong indications that IP awareness, especially amongst youth, is higher in the global south than in developed countries.

“For example, more than 4 in 10 young people surveyed in Africa and Latin America report a personal understanding of trademarks. In most developed countries, the figure is 2 in 10.

“These figures show that we still have much more to do to connect our work with those on the ground everywhere in the world. But they also present a different picture from the common perception and stereotype that IP is only known and appreciated in the global north, and gives us impetus to work even harder to bring IP to everyone, in every region.

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“Excellencies,

“These global trends of IP moving from the periphery to the center of our economies, our societies and our people’s hearts and minds, give us strong affirmation that WIPO’s journey of transformation must continue.

“In doing so, we will build on the work we have started in previous years.

“The [WIPO Performance Report 2022](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo_pbc_35/wo_pbc_35_3.pdf) presents a comprehensive view on our achievements over the past year.

“While it is impossible to delve into all of them, I would like to highlight a number of key accomplishments under each of the four pillars and the foundation of the MTSP.

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“Pillar one is about communication and engagement. It is about making IP relatable and understandable by everyone.

“To do this, we have focused on sharing stories that demystify IP and bring its impact alive. Drawing on the journeys of people we are supporting on the ground, WIPO has produced more than 160 videos over the past 12 months, including features on Pakistan’s first Metaverse, [3D printed rockets in the United S](https://twitter.com/WIPO/status/1641319343177728000)tates and [Algeria’s Babar carpets](https://twitter.com/WIPO/status/1658698862217818119). These efforts are connecting our work with new audiences who now see IP in a new light.

“Of course, the right content has to be delivered using the right channels.

“On social media, our followers grew by nearly 20 percent last year to move beyond the 400,000 mark. [Our fastest growing platform is Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/wipo/?hl=en), where about 60 percent of followers are under 34, and the majority are women. We have just launched WIPO’s TikTok channel to reach out to a different demographic and to take on the challenge of making IP dance.

“We have also revamped our website to focus more strongly on the customer journey and to make our content more accessible to you. We are pleased that this work has been noticed and that in the recent World Trademark Review ranking of accessibility of IP websites, WIPO jumped from 49th place to 5th, with page views rising by more than 50 percent last year to almost 60 million.

“Engagement with [our flagship World IP Day campaign](https://www.wipo.int/ip-outreach/en/ipday/) also continues to grow. This year’s theme was “Women and IP: Accelerating Innovation and Creativity”, which many of you personally supported and celebrated together with us. We recorded over 40 million impressions across our digital platforms, two and a half times the level last year, and supported more than 400 events in over 130 countries. In all, users from 209 countries and territories participated in the campaign, a record high.

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“Pillar two is about bringing people together and partnering with everyone to shape the future of the global IP ecosystem.

“Member States continue to engage extensively and constructively with the vital work of our Standing Committees and Working Groups.

“These committees do not stand still, they engage energetically with issues critical to the future development of IP around the world. As examples, [the Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP) will soon gather practical experiences](https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/scp/) with Standard-Essential Patents and FRAND related issues. Around [80 Member States have engaged with the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks’ (SCT) work on nation branding](https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/sct/). And [the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore’s (IGC) renewed mandate](https://www.wipo.int/tk/en/igc/) comes before you for approval at these Assemblies.

“We are also exploring how novel approaches can inject new energy into longstanding debates.

“[At the last Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) meeting](https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/sccr/), we held an information session on music streaming alongside the official Committee agenda. SCCR colleagues have also worked with NGOs and Member States to develop a Toolkit on Preservation, to support lawmakers and policymakers to safeguard the world’s cultural heritage.

“While moving the normative agenda forward is demanding, it is not impossible.

“Last year’s [landmark decision, at these Assemblies, to proceed with two Diplomatic Conferences on the protection of designs, and IP, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge](https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2022/article_0009.html) was a major breakthrough in WIPO’s work.

“Since then, we have worked hard to give practical effect to these decisions.

“Our pledge is that we will continue to support negotiators navigate both issues as we build towards the two preparatory committees scheduled for the autumn, as well as the Diplomatic Conferences next year.

“Let me take this opportunity to call on Member States to demonstrate strong political will to cross the finishing line together – as one WIPO community – on these two important issues, so that we can make a difference to the lives of many people across the world who are looking to us for leadership.

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“Alongside our normative agenda, we want WIPO to be *the* global forum for discussing IP issues.

“Some of these focus on specific communities, like the work that we do at the WIPO Judicial Institute to bring IP Judges together to help them connect and share best practices.

“But some of our other work in this area is broad and crosscutting. For example, through our seven Conversations on IP and Frontier Technologies, WIPO has established a leading role in broadening understanding of how IP intersects with technologies such as AI.

“Our most recent conversation on IP and the Metaverse, in March, drew more than 4,000 participants from over 140 Member States – two-thirds of whom were from developing countries.

“Our next session will be on IP and Generative AI – a very topical issue that I am certain will generate a lot of interest and participation when it is held on September 20 and 21.

“[Another cutting edge issue is on IP backed Finance](https://www.wipo.int/sme/en/ip-backed-financing-for-policy-makers.html), with a second High-Level WIPO Conversation scheduled for November after a successful first session last year.

“While we value these discussions, where possible, we want to translate them into practical results and actions.

“This is why we have begun an IP Management Clinic for SMEs active in AI, and will launch a policy guide for IP offices on AI later this year, as well as formed an Expert Consultative Group on IP Valuation.

“As part of this Pillar, we are also committed to Building Respect for IP.

“While a lot of this work centers around helping to develop capabilities in Member States to address IP enforcement issues, at its broadest this work is about helping Member States to build a culture of confidence, respect and, dare I say it even love for IP and innovation.

“That’s why, alongside training and capability building programs with prosecutors, judges, law enforcement officials and others, as well as the growth of WIPO ALERT to almost 11,000 registered domains, we are stepping up the delivery of projects that build respect for IP on the ground.

“Many of these initiatives focus on youth and how we educate our children. To do this, we need to reach out to the youngest with easy-to-understand messages about IP.  Over the last decade, with the help of funds from the Republic of Korea, we have developed a set of six animations for children on IP, based on the popular character, Pororo the Little Penguin. The series is now available in nine languages – most recently in Thai – and earlier this year the number of views on YouTube reached 20 million.

“Another important aspect of this work concerns engaging with schools. With ARIPO, the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization, we are running IP Clubs that have supported 200 schoolchildren in Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe to learn about the importance of IP rights.

“We encourage Member States to partner with us on more such projects, so that we can help our children and young people understand that IP is part of their journey too.

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“As WIPO reaches more deeply into countries and more broadly across the world, delivering through partnerships becomes more critical.

“We are pleased that many of you have supported [our enhanced cooperation with the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization](https://www.wipo.int/policy/en/global_health/trilateral_cooperation.html) during the pandemic. This led to a number of important initiatives for Member States, including a joint technical symposium on pandemic response, preparedness and resilience hosted by WIPO last December, and the creation of a joint COVID-19 Technical Assistance Platform, which provides Member States with a one-stop-shop for the expertise and resources of all three organizations to deal with IP, health and trade issues.

“Not only has this work been impactful, it has also provided us with a model for interagency cooperation that is now flowing across other areas of our work.

“We are partnering with the International Trade Centre (ITC) on *SheTrades*, bringing an IP component to this program. And alongside UNCTAD and its *eTrade for Women* initiative, we have provided training to over 100 women entrepreneurs in Africa and Latin America on IP rights in the digital economy.

“New partnerships are also being forged, most recently with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), where we will work to bring the worlds of IP and sports more closely so that we can work to support sports associations and athletes to use IP to sustain growth and careers.

“The IP community is a multi-stakeholder community and partnerships with other stakeholders who represent various professional groups – the International Trademark Association (INTA), the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM), the Licensing Executives Society International (LESI), as well as the World Blind Union (WBU) in [the Accessible Books Consortium project](https://www.accessiblebooksconsortium.org/) – allow us to draw on expertise, networks and ideas from across a wide range of stakeholders to support a wide range of beneficiaries.

“We welcome more of these partnerships and collaborations so that we can, together, do more for you.

“But perhaps the area where collaboration across agencies can deliver the greatest [impact is around the 2030 Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals](https://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2023/article_0005.html) (SDGs).

“WIPO has entered into our second year as a member of the UN Sustainable Development Group, and it is clear that IP has an important role to play in fueling innovative solutions in our common, global challenges across all 17 SDGs.

“[Momentum in this direction is building.](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/dg_tang/speeches/20230529-lisbon-conference.html)  We recently held a major international conference on IP and the SDGs in cooperation with Portugal, [published a new report identifying how IP offices are supporting Agenda 2030](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-rn2023-10-en-intellectual-property-offices-and-sustainable-innovation.pdf), and announced that the theme of next year’s World IP Day will be IP and the SDGs.

“This is a priority area for us, and when I attend the UN SDG Summit in September, my message to world leaders and the wider UN community will be that WIPO is determined to harness the power of IP, innovation and creativity to bring the SDGs back on track and to build a better, fairer and more sustainable world.

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“Pillar three is about providing high quality IP services, knowledge and data.

“WIPO is unique amongst UN agencies in providing services not just to governments and policymakers, but also directly to people and enterprises.

“Delivering value to our users has always been part of our DNA and a key part of our mission and will continue to be so.

“Last year we launched a major initiative across all of WIPO’s fee paying services to transform our Customer Service ethos, experience and approach. This will ensure that WIPO continues to keep pace with the evolving needs of our users around the world.

“We are also exploring ways of harnessing new technologies to make our services more efficient. One example is the work of the Advanced Technology Applications Center, which is embedding AI tools to further enhance our operations, support translation and provide new services for users.

“As well as strengthening our own services through e-filing and other improvements, we will continue to support you as national IP offices to enhance your functionality and infrastructure.

“Over 90 offices are now using WIPO’s IPAS4.0 and IP Office Suite of business software solutions, including 25 in Africa and 20 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

“In addition to supporting national IP offices in their work, we continue to provide lawmakers with the data that they need to make informed policy choices around national IP and innovation strategies.

“At the global level, WIPO’s Global Innovation Index is well established as a world-leading resource and reference guide for understanding the state of more than 130 innovation ecosystems around the world.

“And at the more technical level, we have updated [our Patent Landscape Report on COVID-19 Vaccines and Therapeutics](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo-pub-1075-23-en-covid-19-vaccines-and-therapeutics.pdf) to provide further insights on patenting activity related to the pandemic, and to contribute constructively to the important discussions on IP and global health.

“Beyond reports and data, many of you know that [WIPO GREEN is the biggest and most sophisticated climate-tech platform offered by a UN agency today](https://www3.wipo.int/wipogreen/en/).

“It now covers 130,000 technologies from over 140 countries, with WIPO GREEN’s Acceleration Projects helping to advance climate-smart agriculture in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru; boost energy efficiency in China; and support the greening of palm oil production in Indonesia.

“Many of you have asked that we do more in this area. We have certainly heard you, and we will be exploring ways to do so.

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“Pillar four is about using IP to drive growth and development.

“As part of our vision in the MTSP of building a more inclusive IP ecosystem, we have transformed how we provide development assistance.

“Of course, our established ways of helping you use IP for development continues to be important.

“For example, WIPO’s legislative support reached close to 60 countries last year, and we helped 25 Member States to formulate, and in many cases, implement, their national IP strategies.

“Our work in building capabilities also continues to grow.

“[The WIPO Academy is now the world’s largest IP training institute and academy](https://www.wipo.int/academy/en/), training over 1 million people since its inception and over 220,000 people in the last 2 years.

“We continue to evolve and broaden our offerings from more traditional IP courses directed at IP professionals to the imparting of practical IP skills targeted at entrepreneurs, researchers, teachers, and exporters. One of our greatest hits last year was a course directed at IP for Diplomats and Trade Officials.

“Alongside the WIPO Academy, [our network of IP Training Institutes (IPTIs) also continues to grow](https://www.wipo.int/academy/en/training_institutions.html). We now have 14 IPTIs around the world, with a further 13 in development including in Algeria, Armenia, Ecuador, Ukraine and Viet Nam. Last year, almost 90,000 participants benefited from IPTI training around the world.

“But alongside these types of established support, we are innovating our development assistance, and using both packages and projects to deliver impact on the ground.

“On packages, during the pandemic, WIPO innovated by creating a COVID-19 Response Package to help Member States tap on WIPO’s expertise on IP and health issues and other issues as well. We are very pleased that 45 countries have tapped on the Covid package, which we will now transform into a recovery package so that Member States can use our services across the whole Organization.

“In Doha this year at the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), I announced an LDC Graduation Package to help LDCs that are graduating tap on IP, innovation and creativity as part of their graduation journey.

“On projects, we have launched close to 90 all over the world. Many of them are connected to our work of building a more inclusive IP ecosystem and so the beneficiaries are those who have been underserved in the past – women, youth, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and indigenous communities.

“For example, 120 women from 10 Latin American countries have benefited from our regional programs in support of women entrepreneurs and women in STEM, and we will soon begin the third phase [of our mentoring and matchmaking program for Women Entrepreneurs from Indigenous and Local Communities](https://www.wipo.int/tk/en/women_entrepreneurs/), which has already touched the lives of over 90 women from over 50 countries. Meanwhile, we have just launched two new projects in support of 65 women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh and Pakistan, building on our successful projects in Jordan, Egypt and Namibia.

“These projects are intense and last months instead of days, because our objective is not to impart theoretical IP knowledge, but to change lives and support livelihoods through IP.

“I am also pleased that this work increasingly has south-south elements as well as inter-regional connections. For example, [we recently launched a project in support of videogame developers](https://www.wipo.int/sme/en/videogames.html). While this began life in the CEBS region, interest was such that the network quickly grew to encompass Asia and Latin American game developers as well. So through our projects we are building positive connections across the world.

“We have also stepped up the support we provide to startups, SMEs and researchers.

“Our [WIPO IP Diagnostics Tool for SMEs has been accessed](https://www.wipo.int/ipdiagnostics/en/) over 22,000 times in the first 18 months since launch, generating 3,000 customized reports for SME owners around the world and translated into 12 languages, with another 7 in the pipeline.

“And over 52,000 SMEs from all parts of the world have benefited from WIPO Academy training over the past two years.

“In the area of technology transfer, we are helping hundreds of thousands of researchers and innovators to protect, manage and create value through our network of over fifteen hundred [Technology and Innovation Support Centers](https://www.wipo.int/tisc/en/), active in over 90 countries.

“Our work on gender remains important. Women make up half the world, but fewer than 1 in 5 inventors listed in patent applications filed before WIPO last year.

“To catalyze action at the global level, on World IP Day this year, we published WIPO’s first ever IP GAP, our [IP and Gender Action Plan](https://www.wipo.int/women-and-ip/en/).

“This will see us generating new data around the IP gender gap, encouraging policy responses at the national and regional levels, and continuing to deliver impact driven projects – individually and in partnership – that support more women innovators and creators around the world.

“Our work on youth has also picked up, with many projects and activities launched or to be launched. Examples include an IP Moot Competition for the first time, a youth IP Business boot camp in Latin America and IP education games for youth in Africa. We intend to gather our work in support of youth coherently through a Youth Action Plan, and we will share this Plan in due course.

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“Building a more inclusive IP ecosystem also means connecting more with indigenous communities and helping them to use IP to bring their culture and heritage to the world.

“We are supporting a wide variety of communities including groups in Antigua and Barbuda, Cambodia, Mexico, Oman, Senegal and Togo to protect, brand and commercialize their unique products through IP.

“Projects are also being delivered on IP and Traditional Medicine in Ethiopia. IP and Tourism in Indonesia. And IP and Gastro tourism in Cameroon, Malaysia, Morocco and Peru.

“And as someone who has music close to my heart, work is proceeding on the [WIPO for Creators project](https://www.wipo.int/wipoforcreators/en/), our public-private partnership with the music community to help new musicians understand and learn about how to use IP to earn a living and sustain their careers. Our plan is to hold a launch in Geneva later this year, and we invite more partners to join the WIPO for Creators movement.

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“This is just a snapshot of the many ways that WIPO is working to support you, and the innovators and creators in your country. I am certain that in the course of this week, you will be engaging with my colleagues on many of the activities and initiatives that are of interest to you, and I welcome you to carry on these conversations.

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“The foundation on which our four pillars rest is the organizational strength of WIPO.

“Financially, WIPO continues to be healthy in the face of challenging macro-economic environment. [We ended last year with an overall surplus of 7.7 million Swiss Francs](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo_pbc_36/wo_pbc_36_6.pdf), and are projecting a stronger surplus for the next biennium. We will continue to use a results‑based management framework, and in this regard, I am pleased to share that over three quarters of our key performance indicators are on track to achieve their biennial targets.

“It is said that culture eats strategy for breakfast. Our transformation of IP around the world is therefore being accompanied by an internal transformation journey at WIPO to build a more open, dynamic, proactive and collaborative work culture. This requires engagement and frank conversations, and this is why we now have a systematic process involving yearly surveys and discussions at all levels to identify and address concerns and engage with our employees.

“We are also strongly aligned with the desire of you to see a more diverse workforce in WIPO, including equitable geographical representation and gender equality. I believe that the two are mutually supportive, and we are committed to moving the needle on this. But we cannot do this alone. Your partnership and interest in this matter, not just during the Assemblies, but throughout the year is critical to our shared objective.

“I also want to thank Member States for your extensive engagement with the [Program of Work and Budget for 2024-25](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/a_64/a_64_11.pdf). This has enabled us to make strong progress on the vast majority of areas during the recent PBC meetings, with this Budget a roadmap for continuing to raise the bar for what we deliver for you.

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“Excellencies,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Let me conclude by sharing some frank observations as your Director General.

“As the pandemic recedes, new and unprecedented challenges have come to the front. At the same time, there seems to be a deterioration in the multilateral environment in which we collectively operate, and which is so crucial to the resolution of these challenges.

“I therefore want to make an appeal to all of our Member States, to the representatives in this room and beyond, that as your Director General I hope that we can together continue to treasure, uphold and support multilateralism. While it is not perfect, I believe I am echoing the view of many when I say that despite its flaws, we have no better way of ensuring that all of our interests are served, protected and advanced.

“Lastly, let me take this opportunity on behalf of all my colleagues to thank you for your attention, support, encouragement, guidance and advice in our work, and to say that we deeply appreciate your engagement and interest in the transformation of WIPO and the global IP ecosystem.

“Dear Chair, let me wish you all the best as you shepherd us through this year’s Assemblies, and to you and to all Members, we in the Secretariat stand ready to facilitate and support all your discussions in the following days and towards a successful conclusion of the 64th Assemblies of WIPO.”

## ITEM 5 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA GENERAL STATEMENTS

1. The Delegations and Representatives of the following 139 States, (including 13 on behalf of groups of States), seven intergovernmental organizations and 19 non-governmental organizations provided oral or written statements under this agenda item: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia (the), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao (People’s Democratic Republic of), Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe, European Union, African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), League of Arab States (LAS), Patent Office of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC Patent Office), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), South Centre (CS), Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN), Intellectual Property Latin American School (ELAPI), International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property (AIPPI), International Intellectual Property Commercialization Council (IIPCC), Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), Latin American Audiovisual Authors Societies Federation (FESAAL), Maloca *Internationale*, Organization for an International Geographical Indications Network (ORIGIN), All-China Patent Agents Association (ACPAA), China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), China Trademark Association (CTA), *Corporación Latinoamericana de Investigación de la Propiedad Intelectual para el Desarrollo (Corporación Innovarte)*, Egyptian Council for Innovation and Creativity and Intellectual Property Protection (ECCIPP), Emirates Intellectual Property Association (EIPA), German Association for the Protection of Industrial Property (GRUR), Japan Intellectual Property Association (JIPA), Korea Intellectual Property Association (KINPA), *Ordre suprême des ancêtres* (OSA) and Patent Protection Association of China (PPAC).
2. The Statements on this agenda item are included in the Annex.

## ITEM 6 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA ADMISSION OF OBSERVERS

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/3](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=607011).
2. Introducing Agenda Item 6, the Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegations to document A/64/3 and stated that Member States were being invited to consider applications for observer status by six international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and eight national NGOs as listed in paragraph 4 of document A/64/3. The Legal Counsel informed the Member States that in respect of the eight national NGOs, and in conformity with the principles applicable to national NGOs that were adopted by the Member States, the Secretariat held the requisite consultations with the Member State from which the NGO originated prior to the submission of the NGO’s request to the Assemblies. She further informed the Member States that the necessary agreement had been received in respect of all eight national NGO applications concerned.
3. The Delegation of China expressed its appreciation to the Chair, the Director General and the Secretariat for their thoughtful arrangements of the Assemblies. The Delegation stated that China had no objection to most of the NGOs applying for observer status as contained in document A/64/3 and wished to see the NGOs play a positive and constructive role. The Delegation, however, pointed out that China could not agree to Wikimedia Foundation becoming an observer at WIPO. In the Delegation’s view, the Wikimedia Foundation’s projects, including the Wikipedia website, contained a large amount of content and misinformation that violated the one‑China principle. Over the past three years, China has stated its position on the organization’s application for observer status at the meetings of the Assemblies. The Delegation regretted to see that even though China had repeatedly voiced its concerns regarding the Wikimedia Foundation’s application, the Wikimedia Foundation had not addressed these concerns. Given that the Wikimedia Foundation was in serious violation of the one‑China principle, as well as of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolution 2758, and WIPO’s consistent position on the one‑China principle, China was unwilling to accept the Wikimedia Foundation as an observer. It wished to re‑emphasize that the decision on the admission of observers had always been made by the Member States of WIPO based on consensus, and hoped that all parties would continue to follow the principle.
4. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for preparing document A/64/3 and expressed support for all requests therein. It stated that it was Group B’s understanding that all requests for observer status received by the Secretariat contained the requisite information to enable the consideration, and subsequent granting, of observer status. The published requests, in the view of the Group, had complied with all proper procedures. Furthermore, Group B understood that all of the organizations listed in document A/64/3 met the admission criteria and procedures for applying for observer status at WIPO as indicated on the WIPO website. In Group B’s view, observer organizations brought technical expertise and insight to the deliberations of WIPO. Group B believed that if organizations were able to show a direct relationship between their objectives and the field of intellectual property (IP), it was important that they were able to observe and to contribute to proceedings. The Group stated that it had been a common practice at WIPO to welcome the involvement of a wide variety of NGOs, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), industry groups and other stakeholders in consultation processes and discussions regarding current IP issues. This had been part and parcel of the transparency and inclusiveness that Member States cherished at WIPO. Group B was not aware of any information that would lead the Group to believe that any of the organizations listed in document A/64/3 would not be able to bring valuable contributions to the Member States’ deliberations on current IP issues. Group B therefore urged the approval of the full list of requests for observer status, at the current session, as contained in document A/64/3, in compliance with procedural steps.
5. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) supported the views expressed by the Delegation of China and opposed the request of the Wikimedia Foundation for observer status, adding that this had been the Delegation’s position in the past four Assemblies. The Delegation further stated that its view was based on the respect for the one‑China principle and the position that WIPO had maintained on the issue. In conclusion, the Delegation wished to emphasize the importance of observing the principle of consensus in such matters.
6. The Delegation of the United States of America thanked the Chair and expressed its support for the statement made by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B. The Delegation supported the approval of the full list of observer applications and regretted that, for yet another year, China had objected to admitting the Wikimedia Foundation as an observer at WIPO. In the Delegation’s view, this was deeply unfortunate as observers were important to the work of the WIPO Committees and the Assemblies as they contributed significantly to debates through diverse and informed views. Their engagement improved discussions in the Assemblies and helped to advance WIPO’s activities and objectives. In particular, the work of the Wikimedia Foundation aimed to provide the infrastructure to help disseminate free educational content worldwide. Along with Wikimedia country chapters, the Wikimedia Foundation had a demonstrated interest in copyright issues, a subject of direct relevance to WIPO’s work. The Delegation stated that, clearly, the Wikimedia Foundation had a legitimate interest in gaining observer status to the Assemblies and its application should be decided on its merits, and based upon what it could contribute to discussions on IP issues in the Assemblies, adding that Wikimedia’s application was strong. In the Delegation’s view, Wikimedia should not be denied the status of observer, because one Member State had chosen to politicize the agenda item. The Delegation therefore urged the approval of the organizations as listed in document A/64/3 at the session.
7. The Delegation of Pakistan expressed its appreciation for the introduction of document A/64/3 but believed the concerns expressed by the Delegation of China held merit and, in that regard, requested that the agenda item, as far as it pertained to the organization under debate, be deferred for further deliberation, based on the lack of consensus on the matter. The Delegation expressed its sincere hope that the principle of consensus would continue to prevail in the proceedings of the Organization.
8. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Chair and expressed its gratitude to the Secretariat for the preparation of the working document. With regard to document A/64/3, the Delegation aligned itself with the position taken by the Delegation of China regarding the Wikimedia Foundation’s request for observer status. The Delegation believed it to be necessary not to grant observer status to entities about which certain Member States harbor doubts or opposition. The Delegation also declared that decisions should be taken on the basis of consensus.
9. The Delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea thanked the Chair and stated that it took due note of the concerns raised by the Delegation of China, which should be respected in WIPO, being one of the specialized agencies of the UN. The Delegation further indicated that there had been the good practice among the Member States of WIPO to take the decisions on the admission of observers by consensus and the Delegation was of the view that this principle should be maintained.
10. The Delegation of Nicaragua thanked the Chair and stated that on behalf of the Government of National Reconciliation of Nicaragua, it wished to call for respect for the procedures regarding the admission of observers to the Organization and the need not to be influenced by organizations that were dedicated to misinformation. The Delegation objected to the Wikimedia Foundation’s admission as an observer because it had information on its website that ran counter to the principles of WIPO and the relevant UN resolutions recognizing the one‑China principle. It encouraged Member States within the Organization not to admit the Wikimedia Foundation as an observer and to create dialogue and consensus as much as possible.
11. The Delegation of France wished to align itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B and stated that it was in favor of granting observer status to all organizations which had submitted a request. The Delegation supported the presence and participation of civil society in multilateral organizations, which played important roles in the dissemination of knowledge, and a significant role in debates on IP. In the Delegation’s view, refusal to grant the status of observer to an organization should be based on objective criteria, and not on any political considerations.
12. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) thanked the Chair and expressed its thanks to the Secretariat for the preparation of document A/64/3. The Delegation concurred with the observation of the Delegation of China that decisions on admission of observers had always been taken on the basis of consensus among Member States and this procedure had to be continued. The Delegation understood the concerns raised by the Delegation of China and supported the one‑China principle. Since there was no consensus among Member States on granting observer status to Wikimedia, the Delegation supported the observation made by the Delegation of China and other delegations on the matter.
13. The Delegation of Belarus expressed its support for the statements made by the Delegations of China, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), the Russian Federation, the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea, Pakistan, and Iran (Islamic Republic of). In the Delegation’s view, it was critically important to maintain the principle of consensus when taking decisions, including the question of admitting observers.
14. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking in its national capacity, thanked the Chair and expressed its gratitude to the Secretariat for the preparation of document A/64/3. The Delegation aligned itself with its statement made on behalf of Group B, and supported all the requests for observer status, in particular that of the Wikimedia Foundation. The goal by the Wikipedia Foundation was to promote educational content in Switzerland and the rest of the world. These objectives have a direct link with IP, so Wikimedia can make a significant contribution to WIPO's work. For these reasons, the Delegation fully supported the admission of Wikimedia Foundation as an observer and invited the Member States to accept it.
15. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic thanked the Chair, supported the position of the Delegation of China and emphasized that the request for observer status by Wikimedia Foundation had been refused many times as it violated the objectives of the UN. The Delegation noted that it always supported the principle of a unified China, as well as its sovereignty over all of its territories, and recalled the principle of consensus.
16. The Delegation of Zimbabwe observed that its long-standing position was that, in WIPO, decisions had to be arrived at through broad-based consensus. To that end, its Delegation wished that the admission of observer organizations to WIPO be done through a Member State consensus-driven decision-making process and urged all sides to continue formal and informal consultations to address all concerns for consensus to be achieved on the admission of observer organizations.
17. The Delegation of the United Kingdom thanked the Chair as well as the Secretariat for document A/64/3 and supported the statement made by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B. The Delegation pointed out that observers were important for the activities of WIPO and brought valuable contributions in the deliberations thereof and, believed that all applications should be considered on their individual merits. The Delegation understood that all the organizations listed in document A/64/3 were in compliance with WIPO rules for admission as observers and urged approval of the full list of the organizations.
18. The Delegation of Canada, expressing its support for the statement delivered by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B, declared that, like previous speakers, it supported the involvement of NGOs in the work of UN agencies, including WIPO. The Delegation believed that observers enriched discussions within the bodies of the Organization and made important contributions that were different from those of the Member States, in particular, relevant to WIPO for the users of the systems. The Delegation believed that all the applications for observer status should be welcomed.
19. The Delegation of Algeria acknowledged the concerns expressed by the Delegation of China and other delegations regarding the grant of observer status to some of the applicants. The Delegation called for respect for the principal of consensus, which to date, had framed the work of the Assemblies, and urged all delegations to continue in the same manner.
20. The Delegation of China thanked the many delegations for supporting China’s position. It also took note that some countries supported the Wikimedia Foundation’s request to be admitted as an observer at WIPO, and that those countries gave reasons for their position, which seemed to be reasonable but were not soundly founded. Firstly, the Secretariat only examined the documents provided by applicants but it was for the Member States to take the decision on their admission. In the Delegation’s view, this meant that if Member States were not able to arrive at a decision, the organization as such could not be accepted as an observer. Secondly, WIPO as a UN agency is subject to established standards and rules by which it should also abide. In this regard, the Delegation referred to the rules of the UN Charter and other international law as well as the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolutions. In the Delegation’s view, the Wikimedia Foundation seriously violated the one‑China principle, UNGA Resolutions 2758 and the UN Charter. Thus, in the Delegation’s view, the Wikimedia Foundation could not be accepted as an observer in WIPO. The Delegation further stated that observing the rules in a selective way would politicize the issue. It was the Delegation’s opinion that some countries had talked about observing the rules of international law each day but that the time had come to test their sincerity. Thirdly, China has consistently supported NGOs in making contributions to WIPO and, in that respect, the Delegation expressed its support for the vast majority of the organizations, whether from developing or developed countries, to be granted observer status but was firmly opposed to the application of the Wikimedia Foundation. The reason for the Delegation’s decision was the need for this organization to reflect upon and correct its behavior.
21. The Chair thanked all delegations for their statements and acknowledged the differing views, but noted the desire for consensus by all delegations. The Chair therefore proposed to adopt the decision paragraph as contained in document A/64/3 with the exception of the request by the Wikimedia Foundation.
22. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, decided to grant observer status to the following organizations:

INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)

1. Digital Music Europe (DME);
2. European Intellectual Property Teachers’ Network (EIPTN);
3. Global Intellectual Property Alliance (GLIPA);
4. International Association of Young Lawyers (AIJA); and
5. *Organisation internationale de l’artisanat* (OIA).

NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)

1. Bahrain Intellectual Property Society (BIPS);
2. *Centro de Investigación en Propiedad Intelectual* (CIPI);
3. *Compagnie nationale des conseils en propriété industrielle* (CNCPI);
4. CreativeFuture;
5. Emirates Reprographic Rights Management Association (ERRA);
6. Intellectual Property Protection Association (IPPA);
7. Korea Institute of Intellectual Property (KIIP); and
8. United States Telecom Association (USTelecom).

## ITEM 7 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

## Composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee, and of the Executive Committees of the Paris and Berne Unions

1. Discussions were based on documents [A/64/4](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=607012), [A/64/9](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=609871), [A/64/10](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=612991) and [A/64/12](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=614971).
2. In the absence of the Chair of the WIPO Conference, the Vice‑Chair presided over the session and opened deliberations on Agenda Item 7 on the Composition of the Coordination Committee and of the Executive Committees of the Paris and Berne Unions. She recalled that there were four working documents under consideration during the session and invited the Legal Counsel to briefly introduce the agenda item as per the working document submitted by the Secretariat.
3. Introducing Agenda Item 7, the Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegations to document A/64/4 and recalled that membership of the Coordination Committee was established once every two years, at the ordinary sessions of the Assemblies of WIPO, and consisted of members of the Paris and Berne Union Executive Committees; *ad hoc* members designated by the WIPO Conference, that is, States that were party to the WIPO Convention but not Members of the Paris or Berne Unions; and Switzerland, as the host State, as *ex officio* member. The Legal Counsel announced that the terms of office of the present members of the Paris and Berne Executive Committees and of the Coordination Committee were to expire the current year. Therefore, new members were to be elected during the present Assemblies to serve until the close of the next ordinary sessions of the Assemblies. She noted that, as explained in the working document, the new composition of the Coordination Committee was to consist of 90 members, an increase above the current membership of 83.
4. The Vice‑Chair recalled that as indicated in the list of documents, a joint proposal had been received from the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group. She further announced that a second proposal had also been received from the Central European and Baltic States (CEBS) Group and then invited the African Group and the Asia and the Pacific Group to present their document.
5. The Delegation of Indonesia, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, thanked the Vice‑Chair for the opportunity to present the joint proposal with the African Group on the Composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee as set out in document A/64/9. The Delegation recalled that, as indicated in the proposal of the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group, equitable geographical representation should be a guiding principle in determining the composition of the Coordination Committee. The Group observed that, regrettably, the current allocation in the Coordination Committee failed to reflect this. Further, the Delegation noted that the analysis conducted by the African Group and the Asia and the Pacific Group, as illustrated in Annexes A and B of the joint proposal, clearly demonstrated an underrepresentation of both the African Group and the Asia and the Pacific Group, as well as other groups in other regions. Thus, one of the main purposes of the proposal was for the allocated seats in the Coordination Committee to better reflect a fair and balanced composition of WIPO’s membership in relation to the relative size of regional groups as well as accessions to the Paris and Berne Conventions since 2011. The proposal therefore sought to ensure that every regional group was represented appropriately in line with the principle of equitable geographical distribution outlined in Article 14(4) of the Paris Convention, and Article 23(4) of the Berne Convention. The Delegation affirmed the Groups’ belief that the joint proposal was timely and necessary to address the imbalance within the Coordination Committee. By implementing this allocation, the Group noted that WIPO would move closer to achieving a fair and representative composition of its important decision-making body. The Group looked forward to continuing engagement with other groups to find a fair, balanced, and amicable solution to the matter.
6. The Delegation of Ghana thanked the Chair and announced that it was speaking on behalf of the African Group. The Group also wished to thank the Secretariat for preparing document A/64/4, which contained valuable information on the election of the Executive Committees of the Paris and Berne Unions and the WIPO Coordination Committee members. The African Group noted that the WIPO Coordination Committee should have 90 members from the close of the present session of the Assemblies to the close of the next ordinary session. The Group recalled that, unfortunately, no agreement had been reached among regional groups on the distribution of seats since 2011. It highlighted that a large majority of WIPO Member States had stressed the need for reforms in the composition of the Coordination Committee to reflect the WIPO membership. The current allocation of seats to each group in the Executive Committees of the Berne and Paris Unions and the WIPO Coordination Committee did not reflect the principle of proportionate or equitable geographical representation of the WIPO membership in the Coordination Committee, which was not in line with the letter and spirit of the provisions in the Paris and Bern Conventions. Given the above, the African Group believed that the only sure way to move towards optimal balance was to allocate the vacancies to underrepresented geographical regions as reflected in the joint proposal of the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group on the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee. The Group therefore called for a better representation of the African Group in the Coordination Committee by allocating, at least, two seats to Africa from the seven available seats, in line with the principle of equitable geographical representation. The African Group reiterated that the balanced and equitable membership of the Coordination Committee was fundamental for the legitimacy of this important Committee and its ability to execute its core mandate. The Group looked forward to constructive discussions on the issue for a positive and mutually agreeable outcome.
7. Speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, the Delegation of Poland said that the Group’s members were of the view that there was need for reflection upon the composition of the Coordination Committee. As contained in the CEBS Group’s proposal, the membership of this very important body should reflect developments of recent years and be adjusted accordingly. According to the CEBS Group, the six seats allocated to the Group had made it one of the most underrepresented regional groups in the Coordination Committee. This unfavorable situation was further amplified by the enlargement of the CEBS Group in recent years, which had not been reflected in the allocation of additional seats to the Group. Furthermore, all CEBS members had, for a long time, been parties to the Paris as well as the Berne Conventions, meeting this important criterion for membership in the Coordination Committee. At the same time, CEBS Member States accounted for the biggest number of ratifications per country on average. The Group declared that the fact that CEBS members fulfilled the criteria related to Coordination Committee membership, combined with continued growth of registrations made from CEBS countries across various IP systems, necessitated the revision of the decision regarding the composition of the Coordination Committee and an adjustment to the current situation. The Group saw the need for an in-depth discussion relating to the criteria for the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee and, as some of them were no longer relevant, noted that there was a need for inclusive and transparent discussions about redefining the principles underlying the Coordination Committee composition process. The CEBS Group also reiterated the interest of its members to engage in the work of the Coordination Committee and to participate actively in the decisions that were critically important for the future of WIPO and declared that its members were ready to engage in the discussions concerning the composition of the Coordination Committee.
8. The Vice‑Chair then invited the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly to provide an update on the consultations regarding the agenda item.
9. The Chair stated that as Chair of the WIPO General Assembly she was mandated by Member States to conduct consultations on the allocation of vacant seats of the WIPO Coordination Committee with the view to reach agreement on the new composition of the Coordination Committee that would be elected at the 2023 WIPO Assemblies. The Chair, in this regard, wished to thank all Group Coordinators that were involved in these consultations for their cooperation and constructive spirit in the attempt to reach agreement. She announced that many proposals were received, not only from the Groups that had just taken the floor, but also from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), as well as Group B. Discussions about the composition and allocation of the vacant seats had taken place with the participation of all WIPO Groups. The Chair said she had been hopeful that she would have been able to report that an agreement had been reached on the composition of the Coordination Committee but, despite the constructive discussions, she announced that consensus on this matter was still beyond reach. At the same time, the Chair noted that there was a strong interest in moving the issue forward and in making progress with regard to the allocation of the vacant seats. She noted that there was still no common position and, in her view, there was need for more vacant seats in order to accommodate the wishes of all delegations. Observing that there were several proposals on the table, the Chair encouraged delegations to continue the consultations and hoped that an agreement would be reached later during this session. She invited Group Coordinators to continue submitting nominations for the seats in the Coordination Committee, based on the existing allocation, and to inform the Legal Counsel accordingly. Consequently, the Chair announced that she would be holding continued consultations during the remainder of the current week and early the following week. The Chair expressed her desire to conclude the consultations on this matter swiftly and assured delegations that she would revert to the agenda item in the first half of the week to come.
10. Thanking the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly for her intervention, the Vice‑Chair invited delegations to take the floor.
11. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for preparing document A/64/4 and took note of the joint proposal by the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group contained in document A/64/9, as well as the proposal of the CEBS Group contained in document A/64/10. Group B observed that there had been a series of Coordination Committee expansions in the past and reminded the Assemblies to keep in mind that some WIPO groups benefited from those expansions more than others. Group B observed that some delegations focused on geographical representation as the only criterion whereas, in its view, geographical representation could only be one of the criteria to be considered in determining the allocation of new seats. The other essential criterion that must also be considered was the number of IP filings and registrations. In that respect, Group B highlighted that stakeholders from Group B countries, through their fees, made fundamental contributions to the smooth functioning of WIPO’s services and other activities. It was of the view that an allocation of one seat per regional group would seem the most sensible and fair approach and, requested that one of the seven available seats be allocated to Group B.
12. The Delegation of Lithuania expressed its support for the proposal submitted by the CEBS Group, which aimed to address the long-standing issue of an equitable geographical representation in the Coordination Committee. It was a matter of great concern that, despite fulfilment of the current criteria related to the membership in the Coordination Committee, the CEBS Group remained one of the most underrepresented regional groups. The Delegation noted that failure to ensure geographical diversity in decision‑making bodies of WIPO undermined the credibility and the further development of the Organization and added that its Delegation was ready to engage constructively in discussions on the issue.
13. The Delegation of Samoa believed that without diversity creativity remained stagnant. If Member States embraced a diverse mixture of voices it would lead to better discussions, decisions, and an outcome that were representative of all. The Delegation noted that, as indicated in Appendix A of document A/64/9, in a fair approach the Asia and the Pacific Group should hold 24 per cent of the seats whereas they were currently only holding 15 per cent. The Delegation further noted that the Africa Group should hold 26 per cent, and yet currently held 19 per cent of the seats and wondered if that was how this body defined diversity. In the Delegation’s view, the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group were highly underrepresented in the Coordination Committee. Therefore, it was arguable that very important decisions were made in the interest of a few and were not representative of the majority of WIPO membership. The Delegation said that it was for this reason that Samoa strongly supported the joint proposal made by the Asia and the Pacific Group and the African Group.
14. The Delegation of the Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, stated that it shared the view expressed by other regional groups that the Coordination Committee needed a better allocation of the vacant seats. Calling upon a constructive spirit, and based on the principle of equality between the different groups that should exist in a multilateral forum, GRULAC was pleased to submit a proposal for allocating the vacant seats based on the idea that each regional group should have equal influence in decision-making within the Coordination Committee. GRULAC hoped that Member States could consider the proposal constructively and expressed its willingness to discuss the matter with a view to reaching consensus.
15. The Delegation of Poland said it fully aligned itself with the statement it had just made on behalf of the CEBS Group on this agenda item and expressed support for the statement made by the Delegation of Lithuania. It was the position of the Delegation that there was a strong need to look into the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee. The Delegation understood that there were various criteria, but membership within WIPO Groups was one of the very important elements, especially for the CEBS Group, which has seen its enlargement through the accession of one relatively big country. The Delegation therefore believed that it was a good moment to have a thorough discussion among Member States about the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee.
16. The Vice-Chair thanked all delegations for their statements and observed that it was clear that the meeting was unable to conclude the item at that moment. She announced that she had been informed that Group Coordinators wished to be given sufficient time to have informal consultations and that they would eventually revert to her and the Secretariat in due time. She promised to keep the plenary informed of developments on the consultations meetings and would revert to the agenda item as soon as possible. The Vice‑Chair recalled that the issue had been the subject of long discussions in past Assemblies and during the course of the consultations that had been conducted since then. Noting the fact that there was need to allow for further consultations on the matter and seeing no objection, the Vice‑Chair adjourned the agenda item.
17. Reopening the agenda item, the Vice‑Chair recalled that it had been opened the previous week and, at the time, Member States had agreed to engage in further informal consultations. The Vice‑Chair informed the Assemblies that delegations had been actively consulting on the matter since then and wished to thank Group Coordinators and the delegations involved for their cooperation. She then invited the Legal Counsel to give an update on the agenda item.
18. The Legal Counsel said that she was pleased to announce that, following informal consultations among Member States, there was agreement on the composition of the three bodies concerned. The Legal Counsel recalled that as explained in the working document, the new composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee was to consist of 90 members, an increase above the current membership of 83. However, in the absence of agreement on how to best allocate the seven additional seats of the Coordination Committee, consensus among Member States was that the Coordination Committee should remain, exceptionally, at 83 members. Moreover, there was agreement that the allocation of the vacant seats of the Coordination Committee should be considered further and, in that context, the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly would undertake consultations with Member States on the allocation of the vacant seats with a view to reach agreement at the WIPO Assemblies in 2025. The Legal Counsel stated that an informal document, displayed on the screen, listed the 83 members proposed for the Coordination Committee. The proposal therefore consisted of 41 countries, nominated for membership in the Paris Union Executive Committee, 40 countries nominated for membership in the Berne Union Executive Committee, one *ad hoc* member designated by the Conference, and the host State as *ex officio* member. If approved by the WIPO Conference, the Paris Union Assembly and the Berne Union Assembly, the proposed composition of membership in the Paris and Berne Union Executive Committees and the Coordination Committee would take effect from the close of the present sessions of the Assemblies until the close of the 2025 sessions.
19. Noting that there were no requests for the floor, the Vice-Chair thanked all delegations for their support and the continued efforts made for the successful conclusion of the agenda item, as well as for the cooperation of the Group Coordinators and all the delegations that had been involved in the whole consultation process. Based on the presentation by the Legal Counsel, the Vice‑Chair proposed the following decision paragraph.
20. Following informal consultations among Member States,
21. The Paris Union Assembly unanimously elected the following States as *ordinary* members of the *Paris Union Executive Committee*: Argentina, Brazil, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Finland, Gabon, Ghana, Hungary, Iceland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America,   
    Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe (41).
22. The Berne Union Assembly unanimously elected the following States as *ordinary* membersof the *Berne Union Executive Committee*: Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Namibia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Portugal, Senegal, Serbia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uganda, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen (40).
23. The WIPO Conference unanimously designated the following State as *ad hoc* member of the *WIPO Coordination Committee*: Ethiopia (1);
24. The WIPO Conference and the Assemblies of the Paris and Berne Unions noted that Switzerland will continue to be an *ex officio* member of the *Paris Union* *Executive Committee* and of the *Berne Union Executive Committee*.

As a consequence, the WIPO Coordination Committee for the period starting from the close of the present sessions to the close of the next ordinary sessions of the Assemblies of the Paris and Berne Unions and of the WIPO Conference that will meet in 2025, is composed of the following States:

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia (*ad hoc*), Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland (*ex officio*), Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe (83).

1. The Assemblies of WIPO, each in so far as it is concerned, decided that the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly will undertake consultations with Member States on the allocation of the vacant seats at the WIPO Assemblies in 2025, for the election of the composition of the WIPO Coordination Committee, and of the Executive Committees of the Paris and Berne Unions, at the same WIPO Assemblies.

## ITEM 8 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Composition of the Program and Budget Committee

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 9 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

## Revision of the General Rules of Procedure of WIPO and the Special Rules of Procedure of the Governing Bodies of WIPO

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/5](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=607017).
2. Introducing Agenda Item 9 on the Revision of the General Rules of Procedure of WIPO and the Special Rules of Procedure of the Governing Bodies of WIPO and the Unions Administered by WIPO, the Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegates to document A/64/5 and recalled that at their Sixty‑Third Series of meetings held from July 14 to 22, 2022, the Assemblies decided to modernize the WIPO General Rules of Procedure and adopted various amendments that have since been implemented and were duly reflected in both the WIPO General and Special Rules of Procedure, available on the WIPO website. In the same decision, the Assemblies requested the Secretariat to continue the revision of the General and Special Rules of Procedure with a view to updating language references and proposing other necessary revisions, and to present the proposed changes to the Assemblies at their 2023 sessions. As a result, document A/64/5 proposed amendments to provisions with language references in the General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure in line with the Revised Policy on Languages at WIPO, adopted by the Assemblies during their Sixty‑Second Series of Meetings held from October 4 to 8, 2021. The Legal Counsel informed delegations that further to the decision of the Assemblies to request the Secretariat to continue the revision of the General and Special Rules of Procedure, document A/64/5 also proposed additional amendments to selected provisions thereof, which were explained in the document and reproduced in its annexes for the consideration of the Member States. The Secretariat stood ready to continue its revision of the General and Special Rules of Procedure as the need arose and as Member States so requested.
3. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for preparing document A/64/5 containing proposed amendments to the General and Special Rules of Procedure of WIPO. For the Group, these amendments reflected contemporary needs and practices at WIPO, which it supported. Group B also welcomed the use of gender-neutral language in the Rules of Procedure and the removal of the reference to the age of the Vice‑Chairs in Rule 10(1). The reference to four additional UN official languages, in Rule 40, relating to languages of documents, and the reference to passive interpretation in Portuguese in Rule 41 were appropriately indicative of the diversity of WIPO’s membership, and the Group hoped that it would facilitate and strengthen participation. Finally, Group B requested the Secretariat to present to Member States during future Assemblies any proposed revisions to the General and Special Rules of Procedure as this was essential for transparency reasons.
4. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned,

(i) adopted the amendments of the respective WIPO General Rules of Procedure and Special Rules of Procedure, as set forth in the Annexes to document A/64/5.

(ii) requested the Secretariat to continue its revision of the General Rules of Procedure and the Special Rules of Procedure as the need may arise, with a view to presenting any proposed change to a future session of the Assemblies of WIPO.

## ITEM 10 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Reports on Audit and Oversight

(i) Report by the Independent Advisory Oversight Committee (IAOC)

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

(ii) Report by the External Auditor

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=611091).
2. On behalf of the External Auditor, Mr. Damian Brewitt, Director, National Audit Office of the United Kingdom, delivered his report as follows:

“On behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General of the United Kingdom, I am pleased to have this opportunity to present the findings from our audit, and I am sorry that on this occasion I am unable to do this in person. Presenting to you is an important part of the governance process, to ensure we are available to you as we highlight the main issues arising from our work, providing you with our independent and objective insight. We were pleased to meet and present in person to the Program and Budget Committee last month.

“In my presentation to you this afternoon, I would like to go over the four main areas of our work, firstly the audit of the financial statements and financial management, then our review of governance and internal control, I will then cover the two substantive performance topics covering estates management, and sustainability reporting.

“Turning first to the results of our audit of the financial statements, I am pleased to confirm that the External Auditor’s opinion was unqualified, and that the audit revealed no errors or weaknesses, which we considered material to the accuracy, completeness, or validity of the financial statements. Our audit also confirms that the transactions have occurred in line with the Financial Regulations set by you as Member States.

“WIPO’s financial reporting remains of high quality, supported by sound systems of internal control. Our audit results were positive and identified no significant errors or control weaknesses. We have reported the details of our work to the IAOC, with whom we have had a good productive engagement.

“On financial management, WIPO continues to enjoy a sound financial position, this is primarily due to WIPO’s cash generating business model. WIPO holds substantial investments in its property and investments through its retained reserves, which are more than sufficient to meet total liabilities. In this context, we recommend that Member States may wish to review fee levels given the sustained surplus positions and to confirm that these outcomes remain aligned with intentions.

“We continue to highlight the scale of the employee benefit liabilities, predominantly those relating to the staff member’s After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI). During 2022, the overall liability for staff benefits decreased by some 111 million Swiss francs, primarily due to increases in the discount rate for future liabilities; these were due to movements in the financial markets. Assuming current assumptions remain consistent, WIPO forecasts that the liability for the after-service health insurance will increase by 79 million Swiss francs by 2026.

“In response to our previous recommendations on the growth of these liabilities, WIPO commissioned an “Asset and Liability Management (ALM) Study” and we intend to follow‑up on any decisions taken by Member States in our next audit. We remain of the view that opportunities to control costs will always serve as the best mitigation to future risk.

“Moving now to the first topic area of our performance reporting, which speaks to the issues of governance and internal control, these help to provide you as Member States with confidence and assurance over the management of resources.

“Our audit has continued to conclude that WIPO has sound systems of internal control and no significant weaknesses have come to our attention during the audit process. The Organization continues to be proactive in its approach to internal control, and we have noted further improvements following our report last year, as management better focused compliance and assurance effort on those controls, which were of greatest significance to the Organization.

“Since the start of our mandate, we have advocated the control and efficiency improvements that can be gained by the effective use of data analytics. The concept has been recognized by WIPO, which has been progressing its plan to deliver analytic functionality and to incorporate this within its compliance processes.

“Many of WIPO’s business processes have evolved over time from the historical “automation” of a rules based manual process, which has not focused effort on addressing specific transactional risks. WIPO has started an exercise to review certain business processes. Its review of the home leave travel process identified there was disproportionate effort for relatively low risk and low value transactions. WIPO identified options for either, enhancing the existing process, or changing the basis for the entitlement to simplify the arrangements. We support this type of analysis; it can drive cost efficiencies and ensure greater effort is focused on high-risk areas where business processes may validly require more manual interventions.

“We considered the existing policies related to the Ethics function. Overall, we found that the policies contained the key elements expected in these areas. We did identify however that there were no references to the risks which arise from the very specific nature of WIPO’s operations, namely ethical issues arising from potential or perceived intellectual property conflicts. Given WIPO’s priorities to safeguard intellectual property we found this surprising. We have recommended that WIPO should give more explicit ethical guidance and review the adequacy and extent of current disclosures of staff members engaged in activities where they are exposed to sensitive information. We also consider that the existing financial disclosure arrangements do not fully extend to spouses and close family members, which is a requirement in many other system entities.

“A key source of independent and objective assurance to support the Director General is the work of the Internal Oversight Division (IOD). We have noted there will be a change in the Director position during this year, and it will be an opportunity to consider the future focus of audit effort. This should include reviewing the alignment of IOD’s work with operational risks and key controls, and cost effectively supporting the development of the second line. Future plans should position IOD to deliver on the commitment to provide an annual audit opinion.

“Turning now to our review of estates management, we considered how WIPO is using and maintaining the considerable resources which it has dedicated to its property estate with a carrying value in the financial statements of 344 million Swiss francs. For any organization to demonstrate its effective use of property resources, it is important to have a clearly articulated estates strategy, linked to the overall objectives. This should be supported by a regularly updated operational plan. Given the scale of investment it is important that WIPO demonstrates it is using the estate efficiently and effectively to deliver its operations.

“While WIPO has detailed multi-year plans to maintain and improve the condition of its buildings, these plans have not been developed within a framework of a clearly articulated estates strategy. It is therefore difficult to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of these resources in the delivery of those objectives. The development of a strategy would provide the opportunity to reflect more fundamentally on the most efficient use of WIPO’s buildings. This is important following the changes in working practices and occupancy levels following the pandemic.

“Developing a strategy could also encompass wider thinking, such as alternative delivery models, outsourcing or delivery from lower cost locations or regional offices. The strategy could also encompass the commitment to sustainability across the estate. The Capital Master Plan anticipates significant investment in the existing buildings in the short term, including major refurbishment of the AB building. In our view, WIPO should develop a comprehensive estates strategy before committing substantial further investment in its existing infrastructure.

“Moving now to our comments on Sustainability reporting, we have reported on WIPO’s commitments to sustainability and how the Organization has highlighted its Environmental, Social and Governance initiatives in its financial report, through its website and other publications to demonstrate sustainability performance. It has also invested in new systems to better capture environmental performance data to facilitate this reporting. WIPO is often a system leader, and we believe there is scope to further develop its reporting of sustainability metrics in its financial statements, prior to the formal introduction of a common reporting framework across the system. In our view, this could form part of a wider review of reporting, which could consider the alignment of the use of resources with high-level performance and delivery metrics within an overall annual report.

“Mr. Chair to conclude, I can confirm that progress has been made in closing seven of our recommendations from previous years, with five recommendations remaining in progress.

“Finally, I wish to express my thanks to the Director General and the staff of WIPO for their support and cooperation in facilitating our audit.

“I would like to thank the Assembly for its kind attention and I would be happy to take any questions or provide further feedback on our audit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.”

1. The Vice-Chair thanked the External Auditor for his presentation.
2. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the External Auditor of the UK National Audit Office (NAO) for the detailed report on the 2022 WIPO Financial Statements as contained in document A/64/6. The Group commented that the report was of great importance and that it had been analyzed carefully. The Group stated that it was pleased to note that six of the twelve open recommendations for 2021, as well as those from earlier years that had remained open, had now been closed. As five recommendations were still open or in progress, the Group strongly encouraged WIPO to pursue quickly with the implementation of those recommendations. Regarding substantive comments, the Group recalled its statement that was delivered to the 36th session of the Program and Budget Committee (PBC).
3. The Delegation of Poland, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, commended the External Auditor for his work and thanked him for the comprehensive report and detailed presentation. Furthermore, the Group stated that it had reviewed the report and taken note with satisfaction that the Financial Statements had received a high assessment. The CEBS Group expressed that it was pleased to hear that WIPO had a sound internal controls and reporting system, which showed that effective governance without any significant weaknesses formed an integral part of the Organization. The Group also welcomed WIPO’s continued strong financial performance delivery in 2022, and stated that despite the continued geo-economic and geopolitical challenges, the Organization maintained its strong financial condition and was able to respond to the global economic uncertainty. The Group recognized that the External Auditor’s recommendations were well elaborated and encouraged the Secretariat to continue working on their sound implementation. The Group also recalled its statement on that issue at the 36th PBC session.
4. The Delegation of Colombia thanked the External Auditor for his work and for the presentation of the report. The Delegation took note of the report as presented to the Assembly in document A/64/6. The Delegation expressed that it had noticed the conclusion of point 2.20 of the report and the relevance to the UN. The Delegation also took note of the response that had been provided at the 36th PBC session which indicated that the system that was currently built would be operational by the end of the year.
5. The Delegation of the Russian Federation thanked the Vice-Chair and commended the External Auditor for the preparation of the External Auditor Report. The Delegation reiterated the need for a regular efficiency review of WIPO’s investment policies as it was of the belief that a complete account of potential risks was sine qua non to the Organization’s stable financial status. The Delegation expressed that it was hopeful that the Secretariat would fully implement, in a timely manner, the recommendations of the External Auditor.
6. The Vice-Chair thanked the Delegation of the Russian Federation for its statement.
7. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, took note of the “Report by the External Auditor” (document [A/64/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=611091)).

### (iii) Report by the Director of the Internal Oversight Division (IOD)

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 11 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Appointment of the External Auditor

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 12 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Report on the Program and Budget Committee (PBC)

1. Discussions were based on documents [A/64/11](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=614059) and [A/64/7](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=613991).
2. The Chair noted that Agenda Item 12 covered all PBC matters except the Reports on Audit and Oversight, which had been discussed under Agenda Item 10. One document would be considered under the Item, as stated in the “List of Documents,” namely document A/64/7, “List of Decisions Adopted by the Program and Budget Committee” which contained decisions taken at the 35th and 36th PBC sessions.
3. The Secretariat stated that two PBC sessions were held in May and June 2023. The 35th and 36th PBC session agendas covered a number of items, including audit and oversight matters, performance and financial review, planning and budgeting. The agendas also covered items and proposals following decisions taken at the 2022 Assemblies and the 34th and 35th PBC sessions. The 36th PBC session also included the election of officers for the 2024‑2025 PBC sessions. Member States had engaged very constructively throughout the PBC sessions and had taken note or had recommended, for approval by the Assemblies, a number of items, as listed in document A/64/7. The Secretariat stated that document A/64/INF/3 Add. provided an update to the status of payment of contributions as of June 30, 2023, and noted that furthermore, since July 1, 2023, contributions had been received from Uganda, Côte d’Ivoire, and Gabon, thereby reducing the arrears to just over 9 million Swiss francs. At the 35th and the 36th PBC sessions, the Committee had considered the Draft Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices. The Committee had recommended to the WIPO General Assembly that the Draft Terms of Reference of the 2021 Evaluation of WIPO External Offices, contained in Annex II to the 36th PBC session “List of Decisions” (document WO/PBC/36/12), be further discussed at the 37th PBC session. In addition, at the 35th PBC session, the Committee had completed a comprehensive review of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and had taken note of 19 outstanding issues for further consideration at the 36th PBC session. Thereafter, at the 36th PBC session, the Committee had reached consensus on almost all outstanding issues, and had decided to refer a few issues to the 64th series of the meetings of the Assemblies.
4. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for its statement and recalled that delegations had already engaged very constructively and had ample opportunity to express their views on all those matters at the PBC session which was held just two weeks prior. Those statements at the PBC had been duly recorded and would be reproduced in their entirety in the report. The Chair explained that the Assemblies had a full agenda ahead and requested that delegations give concise statements to avoid repeating statements already given at the PBC. The Chair stated that the PBC had taken decisions and made clear recommendations on all items, except one, which was the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Chair took it that the Assemblies were in agreement with all the other recommendations and stated that she did not intend to return to those agreed items. She pointed out that the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 was the outstanding item that required work by the Assemblies. The Chair appreciated the engagement by Group Coordinators, Ambassadors, and all delegations that had made progress already on the outstanding issues. Based on the discussions held during the 35th and 36th PBC sessions, and noting the comments made under this matter, the Chair understood that there was agreement on the text of the various proposals, however, noted that there were three outstanding issues that required further work. The Chair had been informed that delegations and Group Coordinators had been working very hard to resolve those outstanding issues and intended to refer to those issues at present. Firstly, with respect to financing matters regarding the participation of Member States and Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ representatives at sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) and the Diplomatic Conference, the Chair believed that delegations had made progress on this issue, as she had been informed by certain Group Coordinators and delegations. She then opened the floor to delegations to make statements on this issue.
5. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, confirmed that they had been working intensively but that more time was needed. The Delegation asked if the decision on this Item could be deferred.
6. The Chair asked the Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) to clarify if she would be able to report progress on the same day.
7. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, informed the Assemblies that a coordination meeting would take place that afternoon. Thereafter, it would be able to provide more information. GRULAC asked if it could revert by the next day.
8. The Chair thanked the Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) for the update and moved on to the next outstanding issue, that is, the funding of External Offices.
9. The Delegation of the United States of America recalled its statement at the 36th PBC session reiterating that it was not in a position to recommend the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 for approval. The Delegation expressed its deep disappointment that the proposed budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had not changed. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation continued to rage a brutal invasion of Ukraine and the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25, through its significant funding allocated for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, suggested that the Russian Federation’s aggression toward a fellow WIPO Member State was not occurring and that all was business as usual, which it was not. Respect for state sovereignty and equality was one of the foundational principles of the Convention establishing WIPO. The Delegation elaborated that the Russian Federation’s actions violated those principles. The Delegation maintained that the budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation should be significantly less than what had been proposed in the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. That External Office had utilized a fraction of approximately 10 per cent of its allocated budget for the 2022/23 biennium. The Delegation stated that the reason for that low rate of utilization was not the pandemic, as was the case with other External Offices, but was the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which had limited the activities of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation.
10. The Delegation of the United Kingdom supported the statement made by the Delegation of the United States of America. The Delegation believed there were substantive grounds to reduce the funding to the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, in light of the underutilization of the Office’s budget in the 2022/23 biennium. Considering the need for WIPO to exercise financial prudence in difficult economic times at present, and in light of the actions of the Russian Federation, the Delegation believed it was important to allocate funds appropriately and carefully.
11. The Delegation of Ukraine supported the statements made by the Delegations of the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for their hard efforts in preparing the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation was also pleased to recognize the work of WIPO’s management in ensuring the financial stability of the Organization in such a challenging geopolitical environment. The Delegation reiterated its support for the statements made by delegations at the 36th PBC session regarding the reduction of the budget of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. It stated that the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine continued to cause profound damage and destruction to the Ukrainian nation, its cultural heritage, intellectual and creative potential. The wrongful acts committed by the Russian Federation had undoubtedly affected the distribution of WIPO knowledge and projects as well as the utilization of the outcomes of the External Offices activities. The Delegation called for the immediate termination of funding for the projects in the Russian Federation, specifically the financing of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. It emphasized that this should be considered an interim and ardent measure, as the only viable way to restore justice would be to fully close the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. The Delegation believed that this practical solution would not only allow WIPO’s finances to be better directed towards achieving the SDGs, but would also prevent the Russian Federation’s actions to justify and support its military aggression through WIPO resources and global IP services.
12. The Delegation of Belarus stated that proposals to reduce the financing of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation were not supported by properly grounded arguments, which would back-up that proposal and implementing it. The Delegation believed that there were no grounds for it and that the proposals were pushed by certain Member States of WIPO who were, unfortunately, pushing their own political ambitions and agenda. It believed that any politically motivated proposals put forward in international organizations, including WIPO, were unacceptable. Furthermore, in the Delegation’s view it was WIPO putting this forward and added that this matter did not concern the Russian Federation in WIPO, but was about the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. The Delegation stated that those supporting the proposals were undermining the Organization as such, by breaking up its network of External Offices. This proposal would not only harm WIPO, and infringe its mandate, but it would damage positive work that had been done over many years. It would also be an act of discrimination against many ordinary people who were creators and innovators. The Delegation concluded that the proposals were completely unacceptable and that it could not agree with it.
13. The Delegation of Poland, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, thanked the PBC Chair and Vice-Chairs for their efforts to reach an agreement on the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The CEBS Group agreed that the Program of Work and Budget needed to be aligned to WIPO’s values and vision, which were reflected in the MTSP Plan of 2022-2026. The CEBS Group reiterated its support for the position expressed by some Member States on the proposals to reduce the budget of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. It stated that the mission and goals of the External Offices were very much inscribed in the main vision and aims of WIPO to contribute to the growth of a healthy IP ecosystem globally. The deliverables of a WIPO External Office, hosted by a country that not only violated international law, but also deliberately caused severe damage to one of the WIPO Member States and continued to do so, should be perceived as questionable. The Delegation and the CEBS Group recalled that it had not received more detailed information about the operations of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation despite several requests. The CEBS Group believed that there was no objective reason to base the proposal of the Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 on 2021 provisions. The CEBS Group concluded that as the Russian Federation continued its unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine, not sparing civilians and civilian infrastructure, therefore business as usual in cooperation with any of the UN affiliated international Organizations was not an option.
14. The Delegation of China stated that budgeting for the WIPO External Offices was a highly technical matter. It should fully consider the operation of the External Offices as well as the opinions of the hosting country. It was inappropriate to discuss budget cuts for a particular Office. At the same time, it would also have a negative impact on the WIPO External Office network. The Program of Work and Budget was the foundation of WIPO’s operations, as well as of the role of WIPO to lead a multilateral effort to ensure the implementation of strategic planning. The Delegation hoped that stakeholders would consider the long term of WIPO and constructively engage in the Program of Work and Budget, to ensure that discussions were technical and non-political.
15. The Delegation of Lithuania aligned itself with the statements delivered by the Delegations of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Ukraine and Poland. The Proposed Program of Work and Budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation found no justification based on the questionable operational effectiveness of this entity and its contribution to the implementation of WIPO’s mandate. In addition, the general principle of law stated that no one could benefit from its own wrongdoing. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine was in violation of the UN Charter and UN principles and the values of humankind. At the same time, the Russian Federation had unleashed a war on intellectual property rights (IPRs). The Delegation believed that the most appropriate solution to address the deteriorating situation was to close or relocate the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, following prospective precedents in other international Organizations in Geneva.
16. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic expressed its support for the statements made by the Delegations of Belarus and China. The Delegation believed that there was no justification to reduce the allocations for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. A reduction would affect the overall budget, the activities and the personnel of External Offices. The Delegation stated that WIPO External Offices should undertake a non-political function and that the budget should not be reduced for political reasons.
17. The Delegation of Germany agreed with the Delegation of the United States of America’s assessment that the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation was currently underutilized due to the Russian Federation war of aggression in Ukraine. Further, recent Russian legislation and decrees had undermined the protection and enforcement of IPRs for foreign right holders in the Russian Federation. Therefore, funding of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation should be adjusted.
18. The Delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea recognized that WIPO’s External Offices, including the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, played an important role as the bridge between WIPO and its Member States. The Delegation expressed that the proposal to reduce the budget of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation was unreasonable and unjustifiable, and clearly this issue was being fully politicized. Accordingly, the Delegation opposed the proposal to reduce the budget of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation.
19. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that it had not used its right to raise a point of order in order to respect other delegations and to save time, but some of the Member States had not shown the same level of respect towards other delegations. Those Member States continued to repeat unfounded politically motivated accusations that had nothing to do with WIPO’s mandate and urged that this kind of behaviour should be prevented. The Delegation stated that there were no legal grounds for reducing the funding of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. It noted that politically motivated assessments had been made by a certain group of countries, who were not the majority and did not represent the opinion of the Organization, even though they were trying to pretend the opposite. The Delegation reiterated that legal grounds for the reduction of the budget to the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation did not exist adding that according to the assessments made by the External Auditor, the budget for the External Offices was not excessive. It was a standard figure which had always been used for the financing of External Offices, and was covered in the accounts. Those had not been questioned at any time in the course of the relevant session and apart from politically motivated statements, there were no grounds for such a decision. The Delegation urged WIPO to refrain from politicizing its work, from letting it be politicized, and from letting its decisions be motivated by politically motivated assertions made by a limited group of Member States.
20. The Delegation of Latvia aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegations of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Poland, Lithuania and Germany. The Delegation was unclear what was meant by lack of argumentation by many Member States, and what was meant by political statements, because those statements made were about simple facts. It could not be disputed that there was actually a war against Ukraine. It was not a political statement made by any of these Member States to state what had happened to the IP system in Ukraine because of that. The discussion was on the underutilization of budget in the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation in the current biennium. Outside that argument, there should be sound arguments as to why a budget allocation was needed, if for certain reasons, it had been underutilized. As mentioned by the Delegation of Poland, detailed information on the funding of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had been requested. The Delegation stated that there were no clear reasons to maintain the financing of the budget. The Delegation believed that the focus should not be on arguments of political nature, or why there were requests for the reduction of the budget, but that there should be arguments on why the budget should stay the same, and those were not clear. The Delegation concluded by reiterating that it aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegations of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Poland, Lithuania and Germany, and it dissuaded that discussions be focused on whether there were political statements, or whether the statements were fact based or not, and called for clear arguments as to why the budget should remain as it was.
21. The Delegation of Estonia aligned itself with the statements made by the Delegations of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Germany and Latvia.
22. The Delegation of the Czech Republic recalled that there had been a comment that there were a limited number of delegations supporting requests to reduce the budget of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. Its Delegation agreed with the proposal to reduce the budget in the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation.
23. The Chair stated that there was no agreement on that outstanding issue. The Chair elaborated that divergent views had been expressed by several delegations as some called for closing the External Office, others proposed reducing the budget, and others proposed to keep the existing budget. The Chair encouraged delegations to work with each other to make progress on this outstanding issue and emphasized that she stood ready, with the support of the Secretariat, to facilitate the work of the delegations. The outstanding issue would remain pending. The Chair moved to the third outstanding issue, and noted that there were some concerns on the budget related to the Lisbon Registry.
24. The Delegation of the United States of America reiterated that it had addressed its concerns regarding the Lisbon Union, including the proposed increased budget on July 10 under Agenda Item 17, and during the 35th and 36th PBC sessions. The Delegation noted that those statements were on the record and did not want to repeat them. The Delegation looked forward to hearing how the Secretariat and Lisbon members would address the Delegation’s concerns on the Proposed Program of Work and Budget.
25. The Delegation of Portugal, speaking on behalf of a cross-regional coalition of African, Asian, Latin American, and European countries, recalled that during the 35th PBC session, the coalition had clearly expressed the need for an increased budget for the Lisbon System. The coalition welcomed and supported the increased budget for the Lisbon System in the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. As compared to the Program of Work and Budget for 2022/23, the Delegation had emphasized the need for an appropriate increase in resources, including adequate staffing, in order to improve the capacities in the Lisbon Registry, to urgently address the current backlog in geographical indication filings and address other deficiencies. The increase was also needed to address the anticipated workload resulting from the growing membership, the delivery of technical assistance, the full deployment of the functionalities of the new IT platform, e-Lisbon, and the updating of the Lisbon Express Database. The Delegation stated that the growing membership of the Lisbon System required much more resources than under the 2022/23 biennium and stated that many of the coalition members were concerned about the slow response by the Lisbon Registry to its requests. The Delegation believed that this situation would deteriorate if the Program of Work and Budget was not increased for 2024/25 and invited the Lisbon registry to share its views about the potential consequences of a stagnating budget for its operational activities. It recalled that it had heard concerns from one delegation about the proposed increase of resources for Lisbon promotional activities and it underlined that these activities aimed at ensuring the adequate implementation of the treaties covered under the Lisbon System for existing members, as well as to provide information to countries on their requests. The Delegation invited the Lisbon Registry to explain what was included under its promotional activities.
26. The Delegation of Cambodia endorsed the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition. As a least developed country, the Delegation placed great value in geographical indications to bring IP benefits to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and grassroots communities for their economic development and job creation, to work towards poverty alleviation in rural areas by all means so that no one was left behind. The Delegation called for Member States and the Secretariat to increase the Lisbon budget to address the current challenges and backlogs of the Lisbon System. Doing so was crucial for the Lisbon System to be effective, efficient and responsive to meet the needs of the current increasing membership. Improving the Lisbon System would facilitate the Delegation’s upcoming application to register under the Lisbon System smoothly and, in a timely manner.
27. The Delegation of Italy aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional collation. The Delegation expressed satisfaction with the proposals on the allocation of income and expenditure for the Lisbon Union as described in Annex IV of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. At present, resilience should be the collective priority, which was the reason that WIPO actions addressed to value and protect small businesses that were the most vulnerable players in the economic system, particularly in rural areas, should be encouraged. The Delegation believed that the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 was aligned with this goal and reflected the expectations for further increase of the Lisbon Union’s membership. Resources were necessary in order to enable the Lisbon Registry to perform effectively in its core services and activities. Hence, in the interest of WIPO Member States and IP users, in this regard, the impact of future inflation should be considered. Furthermore, the Delegation highlighted that the estimated increase in income of the Lisbon Union, deriving from its own fees, was indeed a positive indicator and it took into serious consideration WIPO’s long-term financial sustainability. The modest deficit of the Lisbon Union did not represent a threat for an organization, which had an ongoing substantial surplus and a balanced and comprehensive budget. In conclusion, the Delegation supported the adoption of the proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 on the basis of the long-standing principle of financial solidarity among the different WIPO Unions and confirmed its commitment to ensuring equal treatment for all IPRs.
28. The Delegation of France supported the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal, on behalf of the cross-regional coalition and it also fully supported the budget proposed for the Lisbon System. The Delegation stated that the budget was justified by the increase in the number of tasks required by the service for the registration and operations under the Lisbon System, and that there had not been an increase for many years. As pointed out, the increase in the budget was because of the need for managing all of these transactions, as the result of new Lisbon members and its Delegation believed it was important that WIPO had the means to administer these registrations.
29. The Delegation of the Russian Federation was delighted that they had acceded to the Lisbon System in 2023 and had become a full participant in all WIPO international registration systems. The Delegation fully supported the initiative taken to increase the budget of the Lisbon System for 2024/25 because those funds would be necessary for the further development of the Lisbon System, to attract new users, and expand its membership. The Delegation believed that it was justified to approve this budget to ensure a smooth functioning and development of the Lisbon System.
30. The Delegation of Ghana stated that the African Group saw the merits in the improvement of the finances allocated to the Lisbon Registry, especially considering that there had been more accessions to the Lisbon System.
31. The Delegation of Tunisia stated that it had been a recent signatory of the Geneva Act, on July 6, 2023, and underscored the importance of strengthening the Lisbon System by providing it with the necessary financial and human resources. The Delegation welcomed the increase in the budget for the Lisbon System for 2024/25, because increasing the budget would enable the Lisbon Registry to respond more effectively to the increasing number of applications from Member States.
32. The Delegation of Switzerland strongly supported the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition and also supported the statements made by members of the coalition. The Delegation believed that it was vital to increase the human and financial resources in order to improve the current and future functioning of the Lisbon Registry and to provide members with the level of services they have a right to expect from a global system of registration and protection administered by WIPO. The Delegation concluded that it supported the budget proposed for 2024/25.
33. The Delegation of Slovakia aligned itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition. The Delegation saw the merits and supported the increased budget for the Lisbon System. It was necessary to improve the capacities in the Lisbon System to handle its growing membership, address the current backlog in geographical indication filings, and to prevent similar backlog issues in the future. The Delegation concluded that to realize these objectives, more resources were required.
34. The Delegation of Peru supported the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition and expressed support for the increased budget for the Lisbon System. An increased budget was essential to ensure that the System could operate efficiently and meet the growing demand for assistance made to it. The Delegation stated that it had added to that demand by recently joining the Lisbon System. The Delegation noted that there had been support for the increased budget from several countries that indicated how membership had been increasing. This required commitment from WIPO to ensure that the Lisbon System could continue to provide high quality services to all its members, especially those from developing countries. One of the four pillars of the MTSP 2022-2026 stated that WIPO should provide high quality IP services and that was not possible if the System did not have the necessary resources. In order to drive a wider and more effective use of IP, all WIPO’s services must be of high quality. The Delegation urged that the proposed increased budget to the Lisbon System be approved.
35. The Delegation of Georgia fully supported the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. Geographical indications played a significant role in economic development of the Delegation’s country as well as regional economic development. An increased budget for the Lisbon System would be beneficial, not only for existing Lisbon members but for potential ones. The Delegation reiterated its full support for the proposed budget increase for the Lisbon System and endorsed the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross‑regional coalition.
36. The Delegation of Hungary fully supported the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition and endorsed the views expressed by like‑minded delegations. The Delegation believed that the proposed increased budget of the Lisbon Registry would be essential to ensure the functioning of the Lisbon System.
37. The Delegation of Niger supported the statement made by the Delegation of Portugal on behalf of the cross-regional coalition and also expressed support for an increase for the Lisbon System to ensure it could operate properly and provide high quality services to its current and future members.
38. The Delegation of the Czech Republic supported the increased budget proposal for the Lisbon System.
39. The Delegation of the United States of America requested that an outstanding question from a delegation on the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation be addressed. The Delegation recalled that a number of delegations had asked a very pertinent question. The Delegation had asked for the justification for that External Office’s budget being five times larger than what was utilized in the 2022/23 biennium and requested to know what activities justified that budget.
40. The Delegation of the Russian Federation did not understand why one delegation had brought up External Offices’ financing to link it to the outstanding issue on the Lisbon System in the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation stated that the document did not include information or provisions concerning the budget for External Offices for 2024/25 and reiterated that it did not understand what kind of expenditure was proposed to be cut back on in the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation stated that in 2022, in conditions of global, legal and other unpredictability including unilateral coercive measures, none of the WIPO External Offices had managed to fully use the budget that it had, and that included the WIPO Coordination Office in New York. The Delegation added that unpleasant politically motivated statements and comments had been made on this proposal. It pointed out that concerning the 2022 figures on expenditure unrelated to staff costs, the WIPO Coordination Office in New York had spent only 280,000 Swiss francs out of 724,000 Swiss francs for the period 2022/23. However, in the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25, the budget for the WIPO Coordination Office in New York had been increased to 732,000 Swiss francs. Following the logic of delegations making this proposal, the budget of the WIPO Coordination Office in New York should be 560,000 Swiss francs. The Delegation could not comprehend the proposal and did not consider it acceptable to take a selective approach to the financing of WIPO External Offices, including the WIPO Coordination Office in New York, which the Delegation regarded it as double standard.
41. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) believed it was not appropriate to jump from the Lisbon discussion to another issue which had already been discussed and to link those issues. The Delegation supported the Lisbon budget and, at the same time, believed that WIPO External Offices undertook fully technical work and should not be affected by politicized considerations.
42. The Chair took note of the statement made by delegations and urged the delegations to consult with each other to reach consensus on the three outstanding items. The Chair was relatively optimistic that consensus could be reached on the three outstanding issues, and that good progress would help to advance on this agenda item. The Chair encouraged Group Coordinators to facilitate reaching agreement and would await for Group Coordinators to inform her when they were ready to move ahead with this agenda item.
43. Reopening Agenda Item 12, PBC Report, the Chair recalled that discussions had been held when the agenda item had been opened earlier on during the WIPO General Assembly in plenary. The Chair had been informed that there had been good discussions and progress made on resolving the open issues and opened the floor to delegations for comments.
44. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, stated that considerable progress had been made on the GRULAC proposal. GRULAC had held consultations with delegations and had sent a draft text to them for their consideration. GRULAC stated that there was consensus from all delegations on the proposed paragraphs that could be included in the Decision of the ‘Report on the Program and Budget Committee’. The first paragraph referred to the Secretariat continuing to provide assistance for the participation in the IGC of delegates from eligible Member States by providing the necessary financing. The second paragraph referred to the participation of Indigenous Peoples in the Diplomatic Conference on an exceptional basis and its Group had taken into account all the points that had been made on that matter. The third paragraph stated that, with respect to the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in special sessions of the IGC, this would continue to be financed through the WIPO Voluntary Fund. GRULAC proposed that the relevant text could be displayed on the screen at a time the Chair deemed appropriate.
45. The Delegation of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Group, echoed the earlier statement by the Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, concerning the joint proposal from GRULAC and the African Group. The Group was pleased that an agreement had been reached on the proposal.
46. The Chair thanked the delegations for reconfirming their commitment and for the hard work that had been done to resolve the outstanding issues.
47. The Representative of the Native American Rights Fund - National Congress of American Indians thanked GRULAC and the African Group for their proposal for the exceptional funding from WIPO’s budget to support the participation of Indigenous Peoples’ representatives in the 2024 Diplomatic Conference and thanked all Member States for their support. The subject matter, under discussion by the IGC and at issue in the upcoming Diplomatic Conference, went to the very heart of Indigenous Peoples’ cultures and lifeways. Indigenous Peoples had rights to their traditional knowledge (TK), including TK associated with the use of Genetic Resources (GRs) and associated IPRs, as had been recognized in Article 31 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As the subject matter of the Diplomatic Conference had a direct impact on Indigenous Peoples’ IPRs, WIPO Member States must act to ensure Indigenous Peoples’ full and effective participation, in accordance with Articles 18, 19, 31, and 41 of the Declaration. As was widely acknowledged, any treaty or other instrument resulting from the Diplomatic Conference could only have legitimacy if it was developed with the participation of Indigenous Peoples. In this regard, in its report of its 22nd Session held in early 2023, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had specifically called upon WIPO and its Member States to ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in its meetings, including the Diplomatic Conference in 2024 and related preparatory meetings. The convening of the Diplomatic Conference would necessarily entail significant expenditure by WIPO and the participating Member States. Providing funding and taking other steps to facilitate Indigenous Peoples’ full and effective participation was not only consistent with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but was also a wise investment that helped to ensure that all the efforts and resources put into convening the Diplomatic Conference could have a successful, legitimate outcome. The Representative was pleased that Member States had reached an agreement on funding for Indigenous participation and looked forward to discussing further aspects of Indigenous Peoples’ full and effective participation in the Diplomatic Conference, including through the adoption of Rules of Procedure during the Preparatory Committee meeting in September 2023 that would fully reflect the unique status and interests of Indigenous Peoples in these negotiations.
48. The Representative of MALOCA Internationale supported the statement made by the Native American Rights Fund – National Congress of American Indians. The Representative recalled their previous statements at various WIPO meetings where they had mentioned that convening a Diplomatic Conference to conclude an International Legal Instrument Relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge associated with Genetic Resources without ensuring a broad geographical spread of participation among the seven geo‑cultural regions, would have been an illegitimate attempt to overcome this problem. The seven geo-cultural regions had tried to resolve this issue when taking part in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York. It believed that representatives of Indigenous Peoples needed to take part in the Diplomatic Conference otherwise, it would not be seen as legitimate. The expert meeting that was to take place in Geneva the following week would be looking at that matter. The Representative stated that WIPO had been part of the UN System since 1974 and therefore, WIPO was obliged to follow Article 41 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which stated, “The organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations System and other intergovernmental organizations shall contribute to the full realization of the provisions of this Declaration through the mobilization, *inter alia*, of financial cooperation and technical assistance. Ways and means of ensuring participation of Indigenous Peoples on issues affecting them shall be established.” The Representative hoped that Indigenous Peoples, particularly from least developed countries (LDCs) and developing countries, could take part in decision-making on GRs and TK because the decisions would affect them as well.
49. The Chair thanked the delegations for the good progress made on the outstanding issues to reach consensus on the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. She explained that the Secretariat would need a brief period to draft a decision on Item 12.
50. The Delegation of the United States of America expressed its profound disappointment that its concerns regarding the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had not been addressed. However, the Delegation would not stand in the way of consensus in approving the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation reaffirmed its strong desire to resolve issues, even difficult ones, by consensus, for the sake of the long‑term health of the Organization. Therefore, the Delegation disassociated itself from consensus on the WIPO General Assembly’s approval of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and reiterated its deep concerns about the proposed increase of the Lisbon Union budget.
51. The Delegation of Poland reiterated its position concerning the need to reduce non‑human resources for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation because the current situation had made it impossible to adequately utilize the budget allocated to the Office in 2022. The Delegation fully acknowledged the importance to reach an agreement on the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and understood that this matter, as it was one of the few outstanding issues, should not stand in the way of concluding on provisions based on the broad consensus among WIPO members. The Delegation would therefore accept the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 with the current proposal of resource allocation for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation on the understanding that this issue was subject to further assessment and evaluation, including in the context of geo‑economics and geopolitical risks that could impact the operations of External Offices.
52. The Delegation of Ukraine expressed gratitude to the Secretariat and distinguished delegates for their dedicated efforts to present the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and extended its appreciation to the Chair for her leadership in guiding the Assemblies’ deliberations. The Delegation dissociated itself from the consensus regarding the approval of the budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. Its Delegation would continue to look very closely at the activities of that Office in the future, in order not to allow an aggressor State to exploit WIPO’s resources and global IP services to justify and support the Russian Federation’s military aggression against Ukraine. The Delegation believed that the non-personnel budget that had been allocated to the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation was inflated and urged the Secretariat and Member States to exercise caution in the distribution of these funds. It therefore advocated for continuous monitoring and swift response to the allocation of this budget, particularly in light of the ongoing war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Delegation requested that their concerns be placed on the record and reiterated its firm stance regarding the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, emphasizing the imperative closure of the Office. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation had blatantly violated WIPO’s principles and its statutory obligations, and did not deserve the privilege of hosting a WIPO External Office.
53. The Delegation of the United Kingdom expressed its disappointment that the budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had not been further reduced. The Delegation believed that the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation’s high budget was unnecessary for an External Office that had clearly been unable to utilize it fully in previous years. However, its Delegation wanted to see an Organization with clear financial direction and with financial clarity. With that in mind, and as the Delegation believed in an exercise of constructive cooperation, it would not stand in the way of consensus to allow for the adoption of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25.
54. The Delegation of Croatia expressed its disappointment with regards to the decision on Item 3, Admission of Observers. The Delegation believed it to be a rather routine and technical matter on the agendas of other international organizations. With wide public accessibility to the majority, if not to all of the documents, as well as widely available online participation to the majority of meetings of WIPO bodies, the status of ‘observer’ had a more symbolic rather than practical importance. The Delegation pointed out that one delegation had strongly opposed to grant the observer status to one of the proposed organizations on the grounds that this organization published information that was contrary to a UN Resolution, regarding the sovereignty and territorial matters of this Delegation’s state. Several other delegations had supported this delegation, echoing the need for observing international legal norms and UN Resolutions. It observed that there was one WIPO Member State that had been violating the basic principles of international legal order and the UN Charter, which had been explicitly confirmed by the UN General Assembly Resolution ES‑11/1, as well as in five other related UN Resolutions. The violation of the basic UN principles by this Member State had been occurring for more than 500 days. However, Member States that had invoked principles of international legal order concerning the observers did not see any problem that this specialized UN organization had an Office in this particular Member State. The Delegation recalled that hosting a WIPO External Office was neither a right of a WIPO Member State, nor a precondition for cooperation with WIPO or for receiving technical assistance. On the contrary, only a handful of Member States had a WIPO External Office and added that for many years, a number of other Member States had endlessly negotiated about where the next WIPO External Office should be established. The Delegation recalled that the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had been established under non-transparent circumstances, which had led to the proliferation of requests for opening WIPO External Offices. Therefore, in light of commendable concerns from some Member States to observe international legal order and UN resolutions when it came to observer organizations, they should apply the same high standards in the case of Member States observing international legal order and UN resolutions. The Delegation called for the closure of the operations of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation and for the redeployment of its staff and financial resources to existing or new WIPO External Offices. The Delegation considered it unacceptable that a UN agency had an External Office in a Member State that violated basic UN principles and called for other Member States to consider the closure of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation.
55. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea deeply regretted the lack of constructive discussion in recent years concerning the opening of new WIPO External Offices. The Delegation strongly believed that WIPO External Offices were WIPO’s extended arm, and that WIPO Member States should facilitate the use of the global IP system and promote innovation activities by opening new External Offices that could adequately meet the needs of global IP system users. The Delegation emphasized that with the stagnation of the discussion, it was time to take a new, clear and definitive approach by decoupling the discussion on the opening of new External Offices from the evaluation of the existing External Offices. This had been proposed by the distinguished Delegation of India at previous PBC sessions to achieve progress and effectively fulfil the responsibility.
56. The Delegation of Germany was disappointed that funding for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation had not been reduced. The Delegation, however, assigned a very high value to the principle of consensus and therefore agreed with the adoption of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25.
57. The Chair thanked all the delegations for their statements. While good progress had been made to reach consensus on the outstanding issues, the Chair noted that some delegations expressed disappointment, disagreement, and disassociation from a part of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Chair was pleased that there was support for the adoption of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and requested a short break to allow the Secretariat to circulate the proposed decision on Item 12 to all delegations.
58. The Chair read out the proposed decision on Item 12, which was adopted.
59. With respect to all matters under this agenda item, except for the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for the 2024/25 Biennium, the Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned:
60. took note of the “List of Decisions Adopted by the Program and Budget Committee” (documents WO/PBC/35/7 and WO/PBC/36/12); and
61. approved the recommendations made by the Program and Budget Committee as contained in the same documents.
62. With respect to the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for the 2024/25 Biennium: The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned:
63. approved the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for the biennium 2024/25 (document A/64/11);
64. emphasized that, in line with the mandate of the GA 2021, the Secretariat shall continue to assist the IGC by providing Member States with necessary expertise and funding, in the most efficient manner, for the participation of experts from developing countries, countries in transition and LDCs, taking into account the usual formula for the IGC;
65. agreed that, on an exceptional basis and subject to the approval of the list of invitees in the Preparatory Committee of the Diplomatic Conference to Conclude an International Legal Instrument relating to Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources, WIPO will provide adequate funding to facilitate the participation in the Diplomatic Conference of 2 representatives of Indigenous People and Local Communities from each sociocultural region used by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues. The funding will be provided by WIPO’s Voluntary Fund and, in case of insufficient resources, through the budget allocated to the Diplomatic Conference. The modalities of allocation for such funding will follow the rules of WIPO’s Voluntary Fund;
66. noted that, participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities representatives in regular sessions of IGC will continue to be funded by the WIPO Voluntary Fund and Member States’ direct funding of such representatives;
67. requested the Secretariat to conduct outreach to encourage all Member States to contribute to the Voluntary Fund and/or directly fund participation of the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities’ representatives;
68. emphasized the importance of financial prudence in the prevailing context of global geopolitical and economic volatility;
69. requested the Secretariat to continue its close monitoring of program implementation and budget utilization during the biennium 2024/25, across the Organization, and to adjust budget allocations accordingly as relevant.
70. The Delegation of Croatia expressed its discontent with the outcome of the deliberations. However, since its concern was not related only to the budget issue, it would not stand in the way of accepting the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation requested its statement to be reflected in the General Report of the Assemblies and asked that this issue be considered on the next occasion when the question of WIPO External Offices would be addressed.
71. The Delegation of Australia strongly supported progress on the work of the IGC and considered that participation of Indigenous Peoples’ was key to ensure the legitimacy of the IGC’s work. The Delegation thanked all delegations for their constructive engagement to find a solution to provide funding from WIPO’s budget to support Indigenous Peoples’ attendance at the upcoming Diplomatic Conference. This would provide greater certainty in regards to indigenous participation. It was also important to ensure Indigenous Peoples’ participation at the upcoming Special Session of the IGC and Preparatory Conference. The Delegation thanked the Delegation of Germany for their recent contribution to the WIPO Voluntary Fund and encouraged other Member States to consider contributing to the WIPO Voluntary Fund.
72. The Delegation of Sweden thanked the delegations for their flexibility and constructive work. The Delegation was pleased that the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 had been approved. It was important to have clear, robust and transparent systems. The Delegation stated that ideally each respective Union should be self-financed. A transparent accounting system was of utmost importance so that the economic development of each system could easily be followed. At the 2017 WIPO General Assembly, the Delegation had raised concerns in relation to the Lisbon Union, which had still not been addressed. The Delegation remained positive that the members of the Lisbon System were willing to find a long‑term solution to make the system financially sustainable.
73. The Delegation of China addressed the Delegation of Croatia’s remarks on the issue of the admission of observers. The Delegation believed that in the framework of the Program of Work and Budget, discussing any issue related to observers exceeded the mandate of this meeting. The Delegation stated that some delegations had made statements contrary to reality regarding the admission of observers and recalled that some delegations had expressed concerns related to observers. The WIPO General Assembly had reached a decision on the basis of the consensus on that matter, and the Delegation urged delegations to respect that decision. The Delegation reiterated that it had explained its positions on both the issue of the admission of observers and on the issue of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 and wondered whether some delegations had closely followed the discussions. The principles and the purposes of the UN Charter and international law should be respected and followed and if some individual countries were still not clear about the Delegation’s position, they should consult the meeting record on WIPO’s official website. The Delegation stated that it had always advocated that all parties should consider the whole picture, including the common good and sound development of WIPO. The Delegation stated that some countries making accusations against other countries should reflect on themselves and their own actions.
74. The Delegation of Canada supported the decision on the participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the 2024 IGC Diplomatic Conference. The Delegation felt that the decision had struck the right balance between the exceptional nature of the proposition in question, and the importance of having the Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the room at the Diplomatic Conference that pertained to them. This was key for the legitimacy of the Diplomatic Conference’s work and eventual outcome therefore the decision required flexibility from all involved. The Delegation was very pleased that delegations had been able to come together on this issue and also thanked the Delegation of Germany for the contribution to the WIPO Voluntary Fund and looked forward to further contributions.
75. The Delegation of Ukraine recognized the significance of the decision and pledged its support for further work towards its implementation. Despite a clear interest in addressing certain outstanding issues, the Delegation had not broken the consensus out of respect for the efforts of the distinguished delegates and the Secretariat. The Delegation requested that its statement, delivered earlier that day regarding the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, be reflected in the Assemblies General Report.
76. The Delegation of Lithuania aligned itself with the statements by delegations who had expressed concerns on the proposed budget for the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, which found no justification based on the operational effectiveness of the entity, and its contribution to implement WIPO’s mandate. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine was in blatant violation of the UN Charter, UN principles, and values of humankind. The Russian Federation had unleashed a war on IPRs and closure of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation would have been the most appropriate solution. At the same time, the Delegation respected the principle of consensus on this important matter.
77. The Delegation of Latvia supported the statements made by the Delegations of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland and Lithuania. The Delegation also supported the statement by the Delegation of Croatia. The Delegation stated that it honestly could not put into words its dissatisfaction with the fact that the adopted Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 showcased that the Organization, which had very high standards, did not care that one of its Member States clearly was disregarding international rules and regulations. The Delegation believed that hosting a WIPO External Office was a privilege that should not be granted to a country that blatantly violated international law and did everything possible to hinder the provision of support to the country where they were waging a gruesome war. It did not leave a good aftertaste. The Delegation asked if Member States and WIPO wanted to associate with and support that. The Delegation supported the decision on the Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 which contained necessary activities that had to be done but urged not to forget about the topic of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. The Delegation emphasized that the approach should be re-thought in the future and then thanked everyone for the good work done.
78. The Delegation of Brazil thanked the delegations, the Secretariat, and the Chair for the way in which they had worked to reach agreement on the GRULAC proposal to finance the representatives of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the IGC on GRs, TK, and Folklore. The convening of the 2024 Diplomatic Conference was an important step to ensure there was a more inclusive and broader participation from those who were directly responsible for the preservation and the conservation of global heritage. In an ever-changing world, this collective work ensured that there was legitimacy to ensure that there would be greater global governance of GRs and associated TK through increasing the access to these resources and through patents. An important international instrument was an important step in this negotiation process. The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) System would be strengthened if there was a balance between the users and the rights holders of GRs. It was important to strike a balance between the global IP system and humanity’s ability to keep creating and innovating in a sustainable and progressive manner. This would thus align WIPO’s mission to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: a balanced and effective global IP system, which recognized, above all, that this sector played a crucial role in certain aspects, for example economic development, equality and well-being, as well as health.
79. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that at the 35th and 36th PBC sessions and at the current 64th Assemblies, they had witnessed purely politicized discussions on the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Delegation did not believe that delegations had provided solid and financially balanced arguments to underpin their claims that the financing of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation should be reduced. The Delegation had heard repeated baseless claims that the 2022/23 budget had been underutilized and how that should impact the planning of future implementation. The Delegation recalled its earlier statements that underutilization of funds had been recorded in all External Offices, including in the WIPO Coordination Office in New York. The suggestion to reduce financing had only been made with respect to the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation. The Delegation believed that this was politicized and created a double standard. The Delegation was not entirely satisfied with the draft decision, nor with the content of the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 as a whole. It was supposed to contain methodology for the calculations regarding WIPO’s proposed expenditure, inflation assumptions, and a detailed picture of staffing, including post levels, staffing numbers, and other important parameters on which the budget proposal was being made. Despite the fact that none of this information had been included in the document despite repeated requests, the Delegation had shown a constructive attitude, had met the Secretariat, and had agreed to accept the Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25 in this proposed form. The Delegation requested that future Proposed Program of Work and Budgets be prepared taking into account the comments the Delegation had made.
80. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, thanked the Chair for her leadership and the Secretariat for always quickly responding to GRULAC’s questions. GRULAC thanked the delegations for their contributions and involvement over the previous days to guarantee the presence of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the Diplomatic Conference. GRULAC thanked donors who had contributed to the WIPO Voluntary Fund and encouraged other delegations who had spoken that day to do the same.
81. The Delegation of Poland, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, expressed its satisfaction with the Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25, and thanked the Secretariat and delegations for their constructive work. The CEBS Group recalled the statements made by CEBS countries during the PBC meetings in which they had requested more detailed information regarding the operations of the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation, information which it had not yet received. The CEBS Group noted that they would continue to request such information in the future.
82. The Delegation of Poland requested that its statements with regard to the WIPO External Office in the Russian Federation be put on the record.
83. The Delegation of Chile thanked the delegations for their collaborative spirit, which had enabled agreement on the proposal put forward by GRULAC and the African Group to ensure that Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities could take part in the Diplomatic Conference on Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge associated with Genetic Resources. The Delegation thanked delegations that had contributed to support their participation.
84. The Chair thanked the delegations for their statements and appreciated their work done at the 35th and 36th PBC sessions and the 64th Assemblies to reach consensus on the outstanding issues in the Program of Work and Budget for 2024/25. The Chair acknowledged the difficultly in agreeing to budget-related issues in WIPO and in other organizations. She had hoped that the outstanding issues would have been resolved during the PBC sessions but that had not been the case. The Chair announced that she had partaken in a meeting with the PBC Chair and delegations to discuss how to, in the future, they could better prepare to reach an agreed proposal, one that would have been discussed at the specialized, technical level. The Chair thanked the delegations for their constructive engagement and celebrated that on the issue of financing of Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ representatives at the IGC, consensus had been reached.

## ITEM 13 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA REPORTS from WIPO Committees

1. The Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR)
2. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
3. The Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SCP)
4. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
5. The Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT)
6. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
7. The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) and Review of the Implementation of the Development Agenda Recommendations
8. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
9. The Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC)
10. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
11. The Committee on WIPO Standards (CWS)
12. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).
13. The Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE)
14. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 14 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA PCT System

1. See the report of the session of the PCT Union Assembly (document [PCT/A/55/4](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619999)).

## ITEM 15 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Madrid System

1. See the report of the session of the Madrid Union Assembly (document [MM/A/57/2](/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=620000)).

## ITEM 16 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Hague System

1. See the report of the session of the Hague Union Assembly (document [H/A/43/2](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=620024)).

## ITEM 17 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Lisbon System

1. See the report of the session of the Lisbon Union Assembly (document [LI/A/40/2](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=620025)).

## ITEM 18 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center, including Domain Names

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 19 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Patent Law Treaty (PLT)

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO General Assembly (document [WO/GA/56/14](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619997)).

## ITEM 20 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks (STLT)

1. See the report of the session of the Singapore Treaty Assembly (document [STLT/A/16/2](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=620026)).

## ITEM 21 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

## Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property SYSTEM

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/8](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=611353).
2. The Chair opened Agenda Item 21, Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation, and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System, and invited the Director General to present the agenda item.
3. The Director General indicated that following the decision of WIPO Member States at the last Assemblies on Agenda Item 19: Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System, the Secretariat conducted the requisite assessment, engaged in consultations, implementation and other activities as requested by Member States. The Director General stated that through the gathering of data and evidence, as well as the collection of anecdotal evidence from respondents, the Secretariat set out how the invasion of Ukraine had significantly affected Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem. These impacts included infrastructure damage, reallocating financial resources towards national security and defense priorities, social damage, mental health consequences, and brain drain. The Director General noted that data showed damage to the IP ecosystem, including a decline in filings: Ukrainian applications to the PCT had been down by one third last year and the Secretariat recorded a 20 per cent fall in international trademark applications under WIPO’s Madrid System. On the other hand, the innovative sector and ecosystem showed resilience and adaptability. As reported, while the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell, information technology (IT) service exports grew and despite the circumstances, new Ukrainian start-ups had joined the ranks of global unicorns. The Director General underscored that WIPO had continued cooperating closely with Ukraine to deliver assistance and support. The Director General noted that areas where support was most needed had been identified together with Ukraine, and activities focused on concrete and tangible results, including the provision of access to information and technologies, legislative advice and support for IP training institutions, had been provided. The Secretariat had also been ensuring that IP applicants from Ukraine, as well as the country’s IP Office, continued to have access to the full range of WIPO’s services. The Director General added that in addition to relief, recovery, restoration and rebuilding have been discussed. The Director General noted that the assessment undertaken and the needs identified would be instrumental in ensuring that WIPO’s support would be directed where most needed. Moreover, The Director General added that on Saturday, a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Ukraine was signed that would guide the collaboration in the years to come. The Director General indicated that as stated in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) country report of Ukraine, the Ukrainian economy faced exceptionally high uncertainty associated with the scale, duration and intensity of the war. Similarly, this could further impact the scale of damage to the innovation and creative ecosystem. The Director General noted that the assessment also provided insights about how war in general impacts human innovation and creativity, and reiterated that peace was the only environment to nurture an ecosystem that benefited everyone everywhere. The Director General then turned the floor to the Director of the Transition and Developed Countries (TDC) Division, to provide an overview of the key takeaways of the assessment, consultations, implementation and other activities related to the assistance and support for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system as requested by Member States.
4. The Secretariat extended its gratitude to the Director General for setting the stage for the important agenda item and provided the details of the report. Firstly, the Secretariat noted that in terms of assessment methodology, questionnaires, interviews, desk research, and data analysis had been used. Approximately 100 stakeholders had actively participated, providing valuable insights into the situation on the ground. The process included the preparation and collection of surveys from key stakeholders, such as government authorities responsible for the protection and enforcement of IP, education and research institutions from different regions of the country, technology and innovation parks, startups, IP associations, and practitioners, representatives of creative industries, namely artists, performers, musicians, publishers, collective management organizations, as well as the Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs). The Secretariat added that the International Bureau also consulted and reviewed publicly available sources, including official reports of international and regional organizations and institutions such as the UN, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the World Bank, national government authorities and official webpages of relevant stakeholders and summaries and reports of research centers. The Secretariat shared that the findings from the assessment showed that the war had significantly affected Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector. Among the most significant impacts of the war on Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem, the Secretariat enumerated the negative effect on the mental health, performance and well-being of students, educators, creators, scientists, and researchers; brain drain - many creators, educators, scientists, and researchers have left the country leading to a loss of human capital and shortage of skilled professionals; filing decreases - all international filings under the PCT, Madrid and Hague Systems relating to Ukraine, as well as national filings have experienced significant decreases; creative industry losses; infrastructure damage and limited financial resources; resilience and adaptability – nevertheless, governmental institutions continued to operate and reacted to the challenges by undergoing structural optimization, launching initiatives and devising strategies to support and protect the IP, creativity and innovation sectors and attract international partners. The Secretariat took the opportunity to thank all stakeholders who, despite the circumstances, provided their feedback for the preparation of the report. Secondly, the Secretariat informed that consultations were continuing, maintained, and initiated with Ukraine to understand their specific needs related to the innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem, involving exchanges of letters, communications at all levels, and virtual and in-person meetings held in Geneva with the relevant governmental stakeholders from Ukraine. The Secretariat reported that over 25 online and in-person consultations in Geneva had taken place, involving relevant governmental stakeholders from Ukraine, including the Ukrainian Intellectual Property Institute (Ukrpatent), Ukrainian National Office for Intellectual Property and Innovations (UANIPIO), the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine and the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations Office in Geneva. Further, the Secretariat underlined that all WIPO sectors had been involved in the process. The Secretariat informed that based on the consultations, current and future needs were identified. Thirdly, the Secretariat stated that the consultations were instrumental in paving the way for implementing technical assistance, legal assistance, capacity building, and other forms of support to restore and develop Ukraine’s IP sector and ecosystem. The Secretariat reported that it had prioritized activities with concrete impact, focusing on rebuilding a stronger IP ecosystem that benefited all stakeholders. The requested activities were initiated and remained ongoing as part of WIPO’s support to Ukraine. The Secretariat shared that the activities had been aimed at supporting governmental institutions, including UANIPIO, the TISCs network, IP Training Institutions, the legal and enforcement system and the users of IP services in Ukraine. The activities undertaken and ongoing included: provision of access to information and technology to support the business continuity and development of UANIPIO and other governmental institutions; provision of policy and legislative advice, particularly on the development and implementation of the new national IP strategy, copyright law and bylaws and collective management system of Ukraine; support for IP business development of UANIPIO; IP Training Institution; IP enforcement and alternative dispute resolution policy and outreach activities; support and assistance to government institutions, SMEs, creators and inventors in identification, valuation and benefit from their IP, as well as capacity building through participation in projects, training programs and workshops for various stakeholders from Ukraine. The Secretariat reported that for the implementation of the decision, it had ensured adequate financial and human resources through reallocation within the approved Program of Work and Budget for the implementation of technical and legal assistance, capacity building and other support for Ukraine, as appropriate and as required for the restoration and rebuilding of Ukraine’s IP sector and ecosystem. The Secretariat pointed out that these latter activities were aimed at building a stronger IP ecosystem that benefited stakeholders through the development of a comprehensive and impactful national IP strategy, providing financial relief to IP ecosystem users in Ukraine through free access to specialized patent information programs, and strengthening the potential for government institutions in Ukraine to benefit financially through enhanced future management of government-owned IP rights through an IP audit project. As to WIPO services, the International Bureau ensured that IP applicants from Ukraine, as well as UANIPIO, continued to have access to the full range of WIPO’s IP services and that measures had been put in place to grant appropriate extensions, exemptions and other remedies as provided for in relevant WIPO treaties, rules and regulations. The Secretariat ensured that appropriate measures had been undertaken regarding Ukraine and the International Searching and Preliminary Examining Authority under the PCT and deployment of online filings, and ePCT filings. The Secretariat informed that it helped to facilitate the business continuity of UANIPIO and supported the deployment of online filing by the preservation of Office users’ accounts and access to WIPO services. Finally, the Secretariat reiterated the International Bureau’s commitment to support the IP ecosystem in the country and assist in rebuilding Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector, which had been significantly impacted by the war. The Secretariat highlighted that the signing of the MoU on cooperation in the sphere of IP between WIPO and Ukraine, which had been based on the findings of the report, provided an important framework for cooperation to ensure that WIPO’s support and assistance yield concrete benefits for creators, innovators and members of the IP community suffering the impact of the war. The Secretariat expressed readiness to provide any additional information requested by Member States.
5. The Delegation of Ukraine expressed its sincere gratitude to the Director General, for his exceptional leadership in the preparation of the report and for his statement. The Delegation also extended thanks to the Deputy Director General in charge of the Regional and National Development Sector, for his support as well as to all the departments of the International Bureau for their tremendous efforts in this endeavor. In particular, the Delegation acknowledged the remarkable facilitation, balance, and objectivity demonstrated by the Director of the TDC Division, throughout the assessment process. The Delegation expressed heartfelt appreciation to all the distinguished WIPO Member States that co-sponsored and supported last year’s decision on Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and IP System, as outlined in document A/63/8. Ukraine drew strength and determination from the overwhelming support and solidarity expressed by Member States during these Assemblies. The Delegation underscored that the report effectively focused on mitigating the adverse effects of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine and emphasized the importance of rebuilding an innovative and creative ecosystem in Ukraine. Moreover, it highlighted the adaptability and viability of the Ukrainian economy, underscoring its strengths in digitalization, SME endurance, and the potential of its human resources and noted the inclusion of vital aspects such as mental health and the losses faced by the creative industry in the report. The Delegation stated that beyond the numerical figures, it was crucial to recognize the profound and enduring impact of the war of aggression against Ukraine on its people’s ability to create and work. The Delegation indicated that the broader perspective helped to understand the daily context within which Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system operated. Nevertheless, the Delegation declared that while the report represented a thoroughly objective and well-researched assessment, it could not be considered complete and comprehensive. It further noted that this limitation was not a reflection on the International Bureau but rather an unfortunate consequence of the ongoing aggressive war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. As long as the Russian Federation’s troops remained within Ukrainian territory and continued to target civilian objects with their missiles, this report could only conclude with an ellipsis. The Delegation emphasized that the Russian Federation’s war against Ukraine had meant, above all, loss of life and livelihoods, and stated that just a few days ago, while esteemed Member States made their general statements, the Russian Federation’s missiles had struck the city of Lviv, located a mere 50 km from the Polish border, causing the deaths and injuries of dozens of Ukrainians. It noted that behind every decreasing percentage and number in the report, behind every source and calculation, laid the shattered lives of individuals. Its Delegation addressed the distinguished delegates because it laid partly within the power of delegates to ensure that these opportunities were not lost forever. The Delegation firmly believed that through close collaboration with WIPO and its esteemed Member States, Ukraine would be able to counteract the significant damages inflicted by the Russian Federation’s aggressive actions on Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system. In this regard, the knowledge, experience, and resources of WIPO and its esteemed Member States would be invaluable in assisting Ukraine. Therefore, the Delegation requested the consideration of extending grace periods for Ukrainian applicants, facilitating access to global IP services and knowledge sources, assisting internally displaced persons from Ukraine, and engaging in programs to support Ukraine’s innovation, creativity, and IP system. The Delegation acknowledged that the actions in support of Ukraine were an investment in a sustainable and peaceful future for innovation and creativity globally and invited other delegations to join them in further efforts to isolate the Russian Federation from affecting international platforms and decision-making within these esteemed walls. The deliberate actions of the Russian Federation officials to exploit WIPO’s resources in legitimizing the temporary occupation of Ukrainian territory or to harness WIPO’s resources and expertise to strengthen their armed aggression must be stopped. The Delegation stated that only through unity and courage in the face of this threat, the high goals and mission of this Organization could be achieved, for the threat posed by the Russian Federation had long transcended national and regional boundaries and had become a global concern.
6. The Delegation of Poland, delivering the statement on behalf of the CEBS Group, thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing the report concerning Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System contained in document A/64/8. The Delegation stated that the report confirmed a significant negative impact of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine, that was reflected not only in the unprecedented damage to the infrastructure of scientific, educational, research and cultural institutions, but most importantly in the loss of the potential and capacity of stakeholders of the Ukrainian IP ecosystem. The Delegation underscored that the wide‑ranging negative effects of the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, from the deteriorated mental health of the IP stakeholders, the brain drain caused by the humanitarian crisis, amplified by the infrastructure damage as well as reduced financial resources, were subject to serious concerns for CEBS countries. The reported decrease in the number of filings, as well as losses incurred by the Ukrainian creative industry were clear evidence that the continued the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine overshadowed international efforts aimed at supporting economic growth and development, also through IP. Further, the Delegation emphasized that taking into account the detrimental effects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine, it would take years, decades, if not longer, to recover the pre-war dynamic growth of innovation infrastructure and potential of the Ukrainian IP system. The Delegation indicated that international support and assistance was more than needed in these extraordinary circumstances. It welcomed all of WIPO’s efforts aimed at supporting and delivering assistance to Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector presented in the report. The Delegation added that WIPO’s continued cooperation with Ukraine to assist members of the Ukrainian IP stakeholders with an aim to adequately mitigate the adverse effects of the unprovoked and unjustified war by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and rebuild its creative ecosystem was necessary. As the Russian Federation continued its illegal, targeted and unprovoked attacks against civilian infrastructure, the Delegation reemphasized the necessity of the international community to take any possibility to support the Ukrainian people in addressing the negative and long lasting effects of this war. In conclusion, the Delegation, on behalf of the CEBS Group, reminded all WIPO members of their obligation to respect international law. The Delegation recalled that the UN General Assembly resolution ES‑11/1 which deplored in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as well as UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/4 condemning attempted illegal annexation of Ukraine’s territories, had clearly identified the Russian Federation’s gross violations of international order. The Delegation regretted that despite all resolutions and condemnations, the Russian Federation had continued such violations until today. The Delegation assured that the CEBS Group stood with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people as long as it took.
7. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Secretariat for preparing the Report on Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and IP System (document A/64/8) and the Director General for presenting it. The Delegation welcomed the analytical outline of identified challenges made in the report and noted the detailed list of support activities undertaken and envisaged by the International Bureau. The Delegation also noted the tremendous detrimental impact of the war on the innovation and creativity sector in Ukraine and the continuing damage to the IP ecosystem, decrease in IP filings, and loss of income for innovators and creators. The Delegation requested more information on how the Secretariat intended to prioritize the multitude of activities listed and described on page 20 and the following pages, whether the Secretariat had identified any activities or issues that could be addressed first, and how the overall security situation in the country affected the planned technical assistance. The Delegation expressed considerable interest of Group B in following up on these developments.
8. The Delegation of Spain, delivering the statement on behalf of the European Union and its member states, reiterated the persistent support and solidarity with Ukraine, which was facing a continuous war of aggression of the Russian Federation for more than one year. The Delegation called on the Russian Federation to immediately cease all violations of international law, instantly and completely withdraw its troops from the whole territory of Ukraine, and to fully respect Ukraine’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders. The Delegation underlined that Ukraine was now a candidate country for the membership of the European Union. The Delegation stated that the European Union and its member states welcomed the Director General’s presentation of the report and WIPO’s commitment to continue to implement technical and legal assistance, capacity building, and other support for Ukraine, as appropriate and as required for the restoration and rebuilding of Ukraine’s IP ecosystem. The Delegation stated that the Report left no doubt about the significant negative consequences on the Ukrainian IP ecosystem of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine. The Delegation acknowledged WIPO being the best place to address the IP-specific implications of the war, as well as to assess and provide the assistance necessary for the restoration and rebuilding of Ukraine’s creative industry and its IP system. The Delegation noted that the continued adequate and timely support and assistance of WIPO to the innovation and IP ecosystem was necessary to mitigate those impacts. The Delegation concluded that the report showed clearly that the proper implementation of the provisions of the decision taken at the WIPO Assemblies last year on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System continued to be key to ensuring adequate support to the efforts of the Ukrainian communities, aimed at restoring operational and adequate functioning of the IP ecosystem.
9. The Delegation of the United Kingdom thanked WIPO for the Report on Assistance and Support to Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation applauded WIPO for reacting to the devastating and illegal war in Ukraine. The Delegation stated that WIPO had taken valuable actions to detail the impacts and provide support for Ukraine’s innovation and creative sector and IP system setting a path towards recovery. It referred to the statement of the Delegation of Ukraine noting that, since the Russian Federation’s illegal and unjustified invasion, Ukraine had suffered attacks on its buildings and infrastructure, which had a devastating impact on its economic activity, and use of IP. The Delegation noted from the Report, the impacts, such as the toll on mental health, brain drain, infrastructure damage, funding cuts, filing decreases and creative industry losses. The unjustified actions of the Russian Federation stood in clear contradiction to WIPO’s mission to promote IP to improve the lives of everyone everywhere. The Delegation commended and offered solidarity with the staff of Ukraine, who had been working incredibly hard in difficult circumstances to continue to deliver important services to their citizens. Its Delegation was pleased to see that the report provided a clear mandate for WIPO to continue its important work to support the operation and long-term recovery of the IP ecosystem of Ukraine. The Delegation called on WIPO not to lose momentum but to continue to provide assistance to Ukraine’s innovation and creative system and ecosystem. The Delegation thanked WIPO for its transparency and looked forward to further updates on the implementation of the resolution and thanked WIPO Member States for standing in solidarity with Ukraine in this critical time.
10. The Delegation of the United States of America referred to the somber and tragic fact that the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and brutal war against Ukraine still continued, nearly a year after the Assemblies had called for this report. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation’s attacks on Ukraine had damaged every sector and facet of society, with no one and nothing being spared, including Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem. It drew attention to the stark numbers and noted a litany of destruction and lost opportunities for Ukraine - 350 educational institutions had been destroyed and thousands more damaged – as reported by the International Bureau. The Delegation referred to the reported damage to nearly 120 scientific and higher education institutions as well as 253 cultural sites, four scientific institutions that had been completely destroyed. The Delegation referred to the details of the report on the losses beyond physical destruction, such as the toll the Russian Federation’s war had taken on the mental health of Ukraine’s students, educators, creators, scientists and researchers, and diminishing resources available for the education, science, and creativity sectors, because Ukraine was forced to channel more and more funding into defending itself from the Russian Federation’s aggression. The Delegation noted that the Russian Federation often claimed that to discuss the impact of its brutality was to politicize this and other technical institutions. The Delegation stated that standing up for the fundamental tenants of the UN Charter was not a political act but rather a profound responsibility of everyone. The Delegation declared that the Russian Federation’s war against Ukraine threatened all aspects of their fellow Member State, including their activities in and contributions to WIPO. The Delegation stated that the Report made crystal clear today’s Agenda Item was not about politicization but about the generational damage the Russian Federation was inflicting on Ukraine’s vital innovation and creativity sectors. The Delegation referred to the report’s examples of devastation, diminishment and loss to Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector. The Delegation acknowledged that Ukraine was bearing the full brunt of the Russian Federation’s violence, but the loss was theirs as well, as they were being robbed of the full force of Ukraine’s inventiveness, creativity and contributions to the Organization. It thanked the Director General and International Bureau for researching and drafting this report and looked forward to further reporting. The Delegation hoped that by the time the Assemblies would convene next year the Russian Federation would have stopped its aggression and withdrawn its forces from Ukraine and the Ukrainian partners were able to contribute fully to WIPO through unhindered innovation and creativity.
11. The Delegation of Japan appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat for the report summarizing its activities to assist and support the Ukrainian innovation and creativity sector and IP system, and perceived the report as a response to the decision adopted last year. The Delegation welcomed the commitment of the Secretariat to continuing its close cooperation with Ukraine, as stated in paragraph 116 of the document. The Delegation mentioned that as clearly captured by the report, the creators, innovators and members of the IP community in Ukraine had been severely damaged by the unjustified and unprovoked aggression by the Russian Federation. The Delegation urged ensuring the ongoing support and assistance that provided concrete benefits and impact, focusing on mitigating the adverse effects of the war and rebuilding an innovative and creative ecosystem in Ukraine that benefited all stakeholders and strengthened the country’s economy, and looked forward to following up on this matter. In conclusion, the Delegation reiterated its solidarity with the people of Ukraine and the support in rebuilding its IP infrastructure and IP ecosystem.
12. The Delegation of France aligned itself with the statements delivered by the European Union, by the CEBS Group, and the statement from Group B. The Delegation thanked the Director General for the presentation of the report, which the Delegation found very detailed on the consequences of the war. The Delegation also thanked the Secretariat team, which had prepared the report. The Delegation noted that technical assistance was a mechanism that WIPO made available to all Member States who requested it, but in the particular case under discussion, the Delegation would like to see the adoption of a decision to pursue the implementation by WIPO of technical assistance measures to help rebuild the innovation and creativity sectors and IP system in Ukraine. The Delegation stated that at that very moment, in the heart of Europe, the sovereignty and internationally recognized borders of Ukraine had been trampled all over by the Russian Federation through an unjustified invasion, in violation of UN General Assembly resolutions on the matter. Consequently, the Delegation observed that the support measures were essential and appropriate, since a big part of Ukraine’s IP infrastructure had been destroyed. Furthermore, the Delegation, reiterated the clear relevance of putting in place support and technical assistance mechanisms to assist Ukraine.
13. The Delegation of the Philippines conveyed its support for the Chair’s leadership and shared the commitment to a successful Assemblies that would benefit the parties. The Delegation believed that the report was timely in light of current circumstances in Ukraine. The Delegation believed that the current situation justified the continuation of the extended support and assistance to Ukraine as it had been first evaluated and approved at the 63rd Series of meetings of the Assemblies. The Delegation took note of the assessment report that revealed a significant impact of the conflict on Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem in Ukraine. The Delegation acknowledged the excellent work that had gone into the presentation of a factual report for the benefit of decision and policy making by Member States at these Assemblies. Considering the urgent circumstances, the Delegation believed that WIPO and its Member States should assume a critical role in mitigating the adverse impact of the conflict on creators, innovators and the IP sector in Ukraine, rebuilding the damaged innovative and creative ecosystem that benefited all stakeholders, and ensuring the survival of the IP ecosystem in Ukraine. Further, the Delegation believed that this role could and should be applied to other countries similarly impacted by conflict or natural disaster should there be a similar proposal submitted by a Member State. The Delegation supported, as it had done in the last Assemblies, the call for support and assistance to the Ukrainian innovation and creative ecosystem.
14. The Delegation of Canada associated itself with the statements made by the European Union, the CEBS Group and Group B. The Delegation stated that based on the comprehensive report developed by the International Bureau, WIPO Member States had been made aware of the fact that all sectors across Ukraine’s innovative economy felt the impact of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression: from film and music, to publishing and art, to research and innovation, to television and radio, and to the downstream supporting fields. The Delegation stated that the result was profound, and regretted the deplorable actions that led to such devastating effects. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for this important work. The Delegation fully recognized and appreciated the extensive support that WIPO offered to Ukraine in its time of need, and hoped that such support could continue. The Delegation expressed its unwavering support and solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and called on the Government of the Russian Federation to cease immediately its illegal and unjustifiable war against Ukraine.
15. The Delegation of Israel conveyed its ongoing concern about the Russian Federation’s attack against Ukraine and associated itself with the comments made by the CEBS Group and Group B. The Delegation expressed its solidarity with the Ukrainian people and committed to continue providing humanitarian assistance. The Delegation reiterated its concern that the conflict in Ukraine was destroying the innovation and creativity sector. The Delegation expressed its support for WIPO’s assistance in the restoration and development of the Ukrainian IP sector and ecosystem and for impact focus technical assistance, legal assistance, capacity building support and any other assistance in this regard. The Delegation urged the Secretariat to continue its support to Ukraine and provide concrete benefits to the creators, innovators and members of the IP community in order to strengthen the country’s economy. The Delegation expressed its support to the decision tabled under this item.
16. The Delegation of Lithuania aligned itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the European Union and the CEBS Group. The Delegation condemned in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation’s unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine and demanded that the Russian Federation immediately ceased its military actions and unconditionally withdrew all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respected Ukraine’s territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for the report and the Director General for presenting it. Referring to the report, the Delegation stated that the war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine had caused a significant long lasting detrimental impact on the innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem in Ukraine with wide and multifaceted damage. It highlighted in particular the decrease of filings and brain drain at the same time noting the resilience and adaptability of governmental institutions to operate. The Delegation welcomed WIPO’s commitment to continue providing support and assistance with a focus on mitigating the adverse effects of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine and rebuilding Ukraine’s innovative and creative ecosystem. Since the Russian Federation continues its aggression against Ukraine, the Delegation expressed a need to address properly the immediate, medium and long-term impacts of the war of aggression on Ukraine’s IP ecosystem. In this regard, the Delegation expressed confidence in WIPO’s readiness to continue providing information to Member States on its ongoing activities as regards support and assistance to Ukraine’s IP system following the relevant decision at the WIPO Assemblies adopted last year.
17. The Delegation of Norway joined colleagues who expressed support to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people and supported the statement of the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B and took note of the Secretariat’s report in document A/64/8. The Delegation condemned the Russian Federation’s attacks against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms and stated that the Russian Federation’s aggression was a clear violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and also condemned Belarus for enabling and assisting the Russian Federation’s aggression. The Delegation expressed its deep concern about the harm caused by the Russian Federation’s attack on civilians as well as civilian infrastructure. It stated that the Russian Federation’s attack on its neighbor Ukraine has devastating effects on the innovation and creativity sector and IP system. The Delegation stated that the people of Ukraine were paying a high price in economic terms and most of all in human suffering and loss and declared its solidarity with the people of Ukraine, expressed support to their legitimate and self-defense in the face of the Russian Federation’s aggression. The Delegation stated that its support was about freedom and democracy, but also about defending the principles on which Europe’s freedom and peace were based. The Delegation drew attention to respect for international law noting that a threat to that principle was a threat to all.
18. The Delegation of Poland, speaking in its national capacity, supported the statements made by the CEBS Group, Group B, the European Union and other delegations including Japan, Israel, France, United States of America, United Kingdom, and the Philippines. The Delegation stated that the unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine adversely affected WIPO’s work and the use of IP as an accelerator for the economic and social development of Ukraine that was evidently reflected in the Report on Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for the work on the report and,in order to complement the facts presented in the report, the Delegation shared Poland’s perspective, stating that since February 24, 2023, almost 13 million refugees from Ukraine had crossed the Polish border. It noted that the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine had caused thousands of deaths and forced millions of civilians to flee their country in fear of their life and safety. The Delegation shared that from day one of the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, Poland stood ready to assist refugees but also gave a helpful hand to Ukrainian entrepreneurs, students and innovators to withstand the drama caused by this war. The Delegation reported that, literally overnight, Poland was faced with a challenge to provide basic conditions for the Ukrainian entrepreneurs to continue their operations and since March 2022, Ukrainian citizens had set up over 25,000 new businesses in Poland, showing a fourfold increase to the pre-war time with the majority of the companies being SMEs, including creative and innovative businesses created by young Ukrainians. The Delegation also mentioned that the Diia Business Center established in Warsaw with support of the Polish Minister of Economic Development and Technology continued to support Ukrainian entrepreneurs forced to relocate their operations due to the war with most of its beneficiaries being the Ukrainian startups, scaleups and companies for tech, IT and creative sectors. The Delegation shared that the Poland’s business harbor program additionally offered a comprehensive support package facilitating the relocation of businesses to Poland. It emphasized that Polish Universities, Research and Academic Institutions had opened their doors to the students, researchers and scientists who were forced to flee their homes as a consequence of war. The Delegation noted that currently there were more than 21,000 Ukrainian students at the Polish universities, 60 per cent of them had been enrolled in autumn 2022 due to the impossibility of undertaking or continuing their education in Ukraine. The Delegation reported that Polish academic institutions also offered online programs for those Ukrainian students who had been unable to leave their country. The Delegation further stated that these were only a few examples illustrating the far-reaching consequences of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine and addressing them would require significant resources, time and, most importantly peace and stability, that would restore the Ukrainians belief in a better future. The Delegation stated that for Poland, the question was not if but how the international community could support Ukraine in addressing the serious consequences of the Russian Federation’s war. The Delegation strongly supported WIPO’s commitment to continue its engagement and efforts aimed at rebuilding Ukraine’s innovative and creative ecosystems and mitigating the consequences of the war. Poland would continue to engage in this international endeavor with a view to addressing the adverse effects of the war in the Ukrainian IP sector. The Delegation reiterated the need for continuing reporting on the matter during future WIPO Assemblies and, once again expressed solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people and demanded the Russian Federation to immediately stop its unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine.
19. The Delegation of Vanuatu thanked the Secretariat under the leadership of the Director General for producing the Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creatively Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation stated that the Report highlighted a number of issues, concerning the damage to the infrastructure and the national IP ecosystem of Ukraine. The Delegation stated that the IP ecosystem was the lifeblood of a country’s economy, and reiterated that when the IP ecosystem of a Member State was being damaged, the Member State was entitled to receive technical assistance from WIPO to enable and assist in the reconstruction of its IP ecological system. It highlighted everyone’s benefit from the environment that had the necessary infrastructure to promote creativity and innovation to flourish. The Delegation noted that Ukraine had invested a lot in its knowledge economy and had suffered losses and damage done to its national IP system and it welcomed the initiative taken by WIPO to assist in the reconstruction of Ukraine’s IP system.
20. The Delegation of Liechtenstein thanked the Director General and his team for the presentation of the comprehensive report prepared by the International Bureau on assistance and support for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system as requested by the decision of the Assemblies last year. The Delegation aligned itself with the statement made on behalf of Group B, and deeply deplored the negative impacts of the war in Ukraine on the country’s infrastructure including its innovation and creativity sector; it further emphasized the need to minimize the negative consequences for the Ukrainian IP system, its society and economy, as outlined in the report. It urged the continuation of efforts by international organizations and states to support de-escalation of the current situation and to assist the reconstruction efforts in Ukraine. The Delegation also endorsed the continuation of the assistance and support provided to Ukraine by WIPO as introduced at the last Assemblies, and welcomed the support measures envisaged by the International Bureau.
21. The Delegation of Australia condemned the Russian Federation’s illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine, which had significantly damaged Ukraine’s innovation and creative economy and IP sector, and welcomed WIPO’s provision of technical and financial assistance to support Ukraine’s IP system. The Delegation called on the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukrainian territory, consistent with the legally binding decision of the International Court of Justice of March 16, 2022.
22. The Delegation of Estonia aligned itself with the statements delivered by Poland on behalf of the CEBS Group, by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B, and the Delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union. The Delegation noted with appreciation the report of the Secretariat on assistance and support for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system mandated by last year’s Assemblies. It stated that the need for continuous long-term support, including by WIPO, to help rebuild Ukraine’s intellect property system damaged by the war of aggression was evident. The Delegation expressed its full support for regular reporting on the implementation of the activities carried out by WIPO in support of Ukraine adding that Estonia would continue to condemn the Russian Federation’s unjustified and unprovoked war against Ukraine standing with Ukraine and its people for as long as it would take.
23. The Delegation of New Zealand stated that it stood with the international community in condemning the Russian Federation’s unjustified and illegal attack on Ukraine adding that the Russian Federation’s war in Ukraine had very real implications for global peace, security and economic stability. The Delegation stated that the actions of the Russian Federation were a grave breach of international rules, the use of force to change borders and targeting civilians being strictly prohibited under international law. New Zealand stood in support of Ukrainian creators and innovators whose endeavors continued to be significantly impacted by the Russian Federation’s aggression. The Delegation welcomed the International Bureau’s continued support for the Ukrainian IP community.
24. The Delegation of the Republic of Korea expressed appreciation to the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing document A/64/8, as well as for the effort made by WIPO to implement the decision on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System contained in the document A/63/8. The Delegation stated that in order to fulfil the objective of WIPO as enshrined in article 3 of the Convention Establishing WIPO, to promote the protection of IP throughout the world through cooperation among states, it was crucial for WIPO and its Member States to develop a balanced and efficient international IP system that supported innovation and creativity. In this regard, the Delegation reiterated its commitment to closely cooperate with WIPO and its Member States, especially in enhancing the capacity of young individuals for rebuilding its IP ecosystem.
25. The Delegation of Slovakia thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing the Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation associated its national position with the statements made on behalf of the CEBS Group and the European Union. The Delegation stated that the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine had detrimental effects on Ukrainian IP ecosystem and had caused unprecedented damage of Ukraine’s IP infrastructure that was clearly reflected in the report. It underlined that the international support and assistance from WIPO was therefore more than needed and WIPO’s continued cooperation with Ukraine was also necessary in order to recover from the effects of the unprovoked and unjustified war against Ukraine. The Delegation condemned the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as well as the illegal annexation of Ukraine territories and expressed its solidarity with Ukraine and Ukrainian people.
26. The Delegation of the Netherlands aligned itself with the statements made by Group B and the European Union. The Delegation sincerely thanked the Director General and the WIPO Secretariat for the follow up on last year’s resolution to provide technical assistance to Ukraine, as reflected in the report provided. The Delegation acknowledged the membership for adopting this important resolution last year which allowed WIPO to assess how the war that the Russian Federation waged against Ukraine impacted Ukraine’s IP ecosystem. The Delegation acknowledged the Ukrainian stakeholders for upholding the IP ecosystem in the way that they did in these more than adverse circumstances. It welcomed the findings in the report, notably where they confirmed that the most pressing need at this stage could indeed be at least partly countered by capacity building and technical assistance. This justified the decision taken by WIPO’s membership last year and its Delegation therefore urged WIPO to continue the support. The Delegation agreed with the Director General’s statement that peace is the only environment conducive to innovation. Stating that as much as it welcomed the technical assistance that would be provided, no measure would be as beneficial to the restoration of the Ukrainian IP sector as an unconditional and immediate end to this unjustified and unprovoked aggression against the sovereign country. The Delegation declared that it stood with Ukraine.
27. The Delegation of Sweden thanked the Director General for presenting the report and aligned itself with the statement by the Delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Unions and its member states as well as by Group B. The Delegation had heard clearly the devastating effects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine and how this affected innovation and the creative sector. It mentioned that one often said that necessity was the mother of innovation, however, the reality was that this very situation was not due to necessity but due to the fact that the Russian Federation, a member of the UN and WIPO, had launched an unprovoked and unjustified invasion against its neighboring country Ukraine. The Delegation stated that the report just presented described in plain terms the negative effects for both human capital, innovation and the IP system, but also the needs for rebuilding these important sectors. The Delegation believed that WIPO had an essential role in helping Ukraine rebuilding their innovation and IP ecosystems and expressed its support for WIPO’s continued efforts to provide assistance and support to Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IPRs system.
28. The Chair invited the Secretariat to present comments to the questions that had been put forward by Group B.
29. Answering to the first part of questions on prioritization of the activities, the Secretariat stated that the prioritization was done in close cooperation with Ukraine, and that short-term, medium-term and long-term priorities had been identified, which were indicated on page 19 of the Report. The Secretariat also added that the MoU had been signed, which included all the relevant activities for the future. Regarding the security concerns, the Secretariat indicated that during the assessment and preparation of the Report, they had been able to mitigate this by using online delivery and a flexible and adaptable approach. It was also noted that the MoU had been developed on the basis of the urgent needs identified in Ukraine, and its provisions provided that the format and details of the activities would be coordinated between the parties, considering the restrictions associated with the legal regime of martial law in Ukraine. The Secretariat added that due to the very dynamic situation, the International Bureau would continue to adapt activities to the circumstances and emerging needs and take all necessary steps and provide continued support both directly from headquarters and through established partners in Ukraine in order to ensure implementation of the technical assistance in a timely manner and with the highest quality for the beneficiaries.
30. The Chair thanked the Secretariat and expressed hope that the information provided answered the questions that had been put forward and ensured that more detailed information could be provided later by the Secretariat.
31. The Delegation of Luxembourg fully supported the statements made by the Delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union, by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B, and by the Delegation of Poland on behalf of the CEBS Group. The Delegation pointed out that Luxembourg condemned the unjustified, unprovoked war by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which was a flagrant violation of international law and the very basis of this Organization as well. It reiterated its firm support and unwavering solidarity with the people and the state of Ukraine. The Delegation thanked the Director General for introducing the Report following the decision by the Assemblies last July, which contained an assessment of the impact of the war on the innovation and creativity sector in Ukraine. It was quite clear in reading the Report that the war had had a very significant impact on the innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem in Ukraine, as well as the unprecedented damage on infrastructure and losses for the creative industry and damaging impact on the mental health of students, young people, creators and many other people. The Delegation welcomed the activities underway and proposed by the WIPO Secretariat to face this disastrous situation and its commitment to continue its close collaboration with Ukraine to try to restore and rebuild the Ukrainian IP infrastructure and ecosystem and expressed its wish for follow up in the response to the decision of July last year.
32. The Delegation of the Russian Federation pointed out that this initiative was a follow-up of the odious decision taken on item 19 of the agenda of the last year’s session of the Assemblies. The Delegation recalled that this decision had been essentially a political declaration in terms of its content, which went beyond the mandate of the Organization and had been introduced in flagrant violation of the Rules of Procedure. The Delegation stated that, against that background, it was not surprising that Agenda Item 21 retained the politically biased and largely confrontational nature of the decision of the previous series of Assemblies. It also pointed out that the one-sided nature of the sources of information that had formed the basis for the conclusions contained in the document was noteworthy, specifying that according to the document, it was reported that about one hundred respondents had taken part in the survey, but all of them had been from Ukraine. Additionally, the Delegation noted that the statistics and data provided by them had not been verified, and the information cited with reference to international institutions, such as data on the number of civilian victims or refugees, did not always correspond to reality. The Delegation emphasized that the question of compliance with the WIPO mandate needed to be addressed in terms of social damage and consequences of mental health. The Delegation further noted that the statistics of the report on the destruction of the cultural and religious sites in Ukraine did not take into account the results of similar actions taken by the Ukrainian side. It was noted that in 2022 alone, 145 statues had been pulled down in that country, of which 28 were of Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, several dozen were to Soviet soldiers who liberated Ukraine from fascism, not to mention other cultural and historical figures. The Delegation stated that the report also failed to contain any information on the prohibition in Ukraine of publishing and printing in the Russian language, which is a direct infringement of IPRs. It was highlighted that these bans were openly imposed based on ethnic and linguistic grounds and that is in obvious contradiction with the principle of the unacceptability of discrimination on ethnic and national origin and grounds. The Delegation stated that it was hardly surprising that the conclusions and judgements in the report went beyond the mandate of the Organization and recalled that WIPO does not have any authority in matters of defining conflicts or the status of territories involved in conflicts or in respect of international humanitarian law. The Delegation stated that it considers that speculation about the activity of IP specialists in territories which the National Association of Patent Examiners of Ukraine referred to as “temporarily occupied” to be absolutely unacceptable. The Delegation recalled that in the course of last year’s session of the Assemblies and in the course of this year’s session of the Assemblies, there had been statements in favor of expanding the range of beneficiaries of support to the innovative and creative sector and the IP system to other interested States in urgent need of assistance from the Organization due to the pandemic, turbulence in commercial markets and so on. The Delegation stated that, unfortunately, the voices of these countries had not been heard so far. In these conditions, the Delegation reaffirmed its belief that singling out a particular Member State for technical assistance, especially for purely political reasons, was unacceptable. It added that such an approach contradicted the principle of equality, which is at the foundation of international relations. The Delegation highlighted the failure to follow the Rules of Procedure of the Organization in considering projects that are related to the provision of technical assistance. It was emphasized that the carrying out of such projects required a clear understanding of the financing mechanisms and justification of the expenditure involved, as well as modalities and concrete steps to be taken to for providing that technical assistance. The Delegation stated that these questions fell within the competence of the PBC and the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP). However, this initiative had not been discussed in those relevant WIPO bodies. The Delegation considered it unacceptable and advocated for observing the existing procedure of the Organization for the approval of such projects. The Delegation stated that it had consistently opposed the artificial politicization of WIPO’s work . It highlighted the problems of the politically biased nature of the report and Agenda Item 21 as a whole. The Delegation further stated that, in general, this initiative had reflected the desire of a certain group of States to increase the level of politicization of discussions at the Assemblies by keeping controversial proposals on the agenda, which clearly did not receive universal support. The Delegation expressed concern that such actions diluted the mandate of the Organization and undermined its credibility as a specialized expert body within the UN system.
33. The Delegation of Belarus stated that it had considered the report of the Secretariat on the provision of support and assistance to the intellectual system and innovative and creative industries in Ukraine. The Delegation expressed their agreement with the assessment made regarding the politicized nature of the document and stated that it was impossible not to question its lack of balance, one-sided nature and the controversial information contained in the report. The Delegation pointed out that this was obviously a consequence of the fact that the very initiative to prepare such a report had not been in line with WIPO’s mandate from the outset. The Delegation believed that this represented an artificial and deliberate politicization of the agenda of WIPO by the initiators of this issue, which it considered totally unacceptable. It was emphasized that the agenda and the activities of WIPO should remain inclusive and equally responsive to the interests of all Member States of the Organization. The Delegation expressed their concern that this initiative did the opposite and continued to apply unequal conditions to discriminate against other countries that also needed support and help from the Organization, and was therefore an abuse of WIPO’s multilateral platform. The Delegation highlighted that in the current global cascading crisis, a number of countries, including those under illegal economic sanctions, were also in dire need of WIPO’s assistance and support. The Delegation called upon the Member States of the Organization to return to a professional discussion of the practical tasks before WIPO and to cease abusing the Organization’s platform to fulfil the political ambitions of individual Member States.
34. The Delegation of Nicaragua stated that it had taken note of the report and indicated that it had not accepted the decision contained in document A/64/8. The Delegation opposed the politicization contained therein, which hinders the relevant technical work of the Organization. The Delegation stated that the content of the report confirmed their concerns, as the report contained a number of provisions related to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political structure, indicating biased information and not reflecting the real situation. The Delegation underscored that WIPO was set up with a view to promote IP protection worldwide and of all its members, and that it was unacceptable to support one particular State, because there were significant number of members of the Organization, which required just as much financial and technical assistance. The Delegation believed that such approach breaks the spirit of the Organization, defined by Article 1 of the UN Charter, which refers to the sovereign equality of Member States. The Delegation stated that it did not accept the content of the report and it encouraged Member States not to politicize the technical work of the Organization and underscored that such an approach did not contribute to constructive decision-making but rather resulted in division and a lack of consensus within the Organization.
35. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking in their national capacity, supported the statements made by the Delegations of the Russian Federation, Belarus and Nicaragua. The Delegation rejected the artificial politicization of the work of WIPO to the detriment of its substantive work. The Delegation stated that technical assistance in the Organization should not focus on one State because many States required WIPO’s assistance for many reasons, for instance States facing other crises such as natural disasters, effects of climate change, or States that were the victims of illegal unilateral coercive measures, like Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The Delegation recalled that last year many delegations spoke of the need for technical assistance and it had not been taken into account that the conditions of technical assistance for all Member States should be subject to the standard procedures within WIPO, namely the CDIP and the PBC. With regard to the report, the Delegation stated it had taken note of it, but that the report also had a biased view of the conflict because it only included information from one party in the conflict and undermined the work of this Assemblies and its effectiveness as a specialized agency.
36. The Delegation of Monaco supported the statement delivered by the Delegation of Switzerland on behalf of Group B, associated itself with the statement made by the Delegation of Poland on behalf of the CEBS Group and the statement made by the Delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for the comprehensive report that had been prepared with a very solid approach and considerable research with the authorities, Ukrainian users and international sources. The Delegation expressed its belief that any attempt to undermine its objectiveness is not fair and that the report was a fine example of the type of work that WIPO does. The Delegation stated that this is why a large majority of WIPO Member States had decided that there was a need to have an agenda item and a report on this matter. The Delegation stated that Ukraine is facing terrible and extraordinary circumstances and challenges and in this regard, the Delegation expressed its belief in the necessity of the report and stated that it would likely require additional reports on the matter to review WIPO’s ongoing support to Ukraine. The Delegation stated that the work of WIPO on technical assistance was not undermined. It underscored the fine cooperation that Monaco has with WIPO, in particular since the recent signature of a cooperation agreement. The Delegation stated that any Member State of this Organization could request technical assistance, which WIPO would provide to the same degree of quality. The Delegation reiterated that this was an extraordinary situation, and that the same would be done for any other country facing such situation.
37. The Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that it attached considerable importance to IP and its contribution to development, particularly in developing countries facing tremendous economic crises, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the various challenges presented. The Delegation noted that many countries were facing unilateral coercive measures undermining their development and national efforts. The Delegation emphasized the importance of adopting a global and balanced approach in this regard, and highlighted the need for WIPO to provide assistance to developing countries and countries facing unilateral coercive measures. Technical assistance was crucial to help them build up their IP systems. The Delegation stated that support for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector was the result of a decision adopted without consensus and it was not within WIPO’s mandate. The Delegation noted the politicization of the report, which had been based on information from just one side or party of the conflict. The Delegation expressed its opinion that it should be up to the CDIP or the PBC to address this type of matter, and that preference should not be given to one country over others, as it would undermine the credibility of the Organization. The Delegation highlighted that many countries were facing crises and unilateral coercive measures and emphasized the importance of adhering to the principle of non‑discrimination within the Organization, which is a non-political but technical agency in nature. The Delegation underscored the importance of providing technical assistance to all countries, without any form of discrimination and with complete transparency, and emphasized the need to avoid politicizing the work of the Organization.
38. The Delegation of Zimbabwe noted the report contained in document A/64/8 and recalled that at the 63rd Series of Assemblies in July 2022, Zimbabwe did not oppose assistance to distressed WIPO Member States. The Delegation stated that it continued to advocate for broadening support to a wider category of states beyond Ukraine, noting that challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, health-related epidemics, rising geopolitical and trade tensions, and increasing illegal unilateral coercive measures continually tested the very foundation of peace and stability, which is so essential for global IP ecosystems to thrive. The Delegation expressed deep concern about what they saw as the selective and arbitrary selection of one Member State ahead of others, which in their view, are equally as deserving of such support. The Delegation expressed firm opposition to any form of selectivity or discrimination in the treatment of WIPO Member States. It recalled with regret that this agenda item was introduced at the expense of the long cherished tradition and convention in WIPO to reach decisions through consensus. The Delegation emphasized the importance for WIPO Members to consider whether they wish to build an inclusive and transparent IP system or a system that was designed to benefit a few countries. The Delegation expressed regret over the politicization of discussions within this specialized technical Organization, pointing out that there were other, more appropriate forums with the mandate to address highly sensitive political issues.
39. The Delegation of Germany aligned itself with the statements made by Group B and the European Union. The Delegation emphasized full solidarity with the people of Ukraine. It recalled an impressive exhibition on innovative Ukraine that had been hosted by WIPO during the 2019 Assemblies. This exhibition demonstrated the significant progress achieved by Ukraine before the Russian Federation’s unprovoked war of aggression, as well as the positive prospects for the future of Ukraine’s IP ecosystem that have since been destroyed. The Delegation noted that it was deeply affected by the damage done to Ukraine’s innovation and creativity ecosystem described in the report prepared by the Secretariat. The Delegation thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the report of excellent quality. It noted the report was of a merely technical nature and remained within the technical mandate of WIPO. The Delegation urged WIPO, as the technical international organization competent in IP, to continue and expand its technical cooperation with Ukraine and support Ukraine, referring to the statement of the Delegation of Monaco regarding the extraordinary circumstances because of the war of aggression against Ukraine.
40. The Delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea reiterated its position against the decision taken last year at the 63rd Series of Meetings of the WIPO Assemblies as the basis of this report. The Delegation stated that the decision was politically motivated and biased against a single country, while constituting double standards. The Delegation maintained the position that WIPO’s technical assistance should be equitable to all countries and regions affected by conflicts and natural calamities, and which should be performed on the basis of consensus among all Member States. The Delegation proposed once again to end all kinds of politicization at WIPO meetings in order to focus on discussing the important and basic issues in conformity with the mandate of WIPO.
41. The Delegation of China stated it had taken note of the Report in document A/64/8. The Delegation expressed its continuing stance for the respect of territorial integrity and sovereignty of all Member States and that the purpose of the principles of the UN Charter should always be abided by. It further noted that the legitimate security interests of all States should be given importance, and every effort conducive to peaceful solutions of crises deserves support. The Delegation stated that recently a number of countries had tabled peace initiatives to resolve the issue of Ukraine. The voice promoting dialogue and peace is getting stronger. The Delegation expressed its view that relevant parties should respond to the voice of reason from the international community and encourage parties to the conflict to remain calm and exercise restraint, as well as strengthen the contact and communication so as to accumulate momentum for the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis. The Delegation referred to WIPO as the multilateral organization most influential within the area of IP and an important platform for all Member States to set up healthy ecosystems for global IP. The Delegation expressed its hope that the parties would focus the discussion on the professional and technical areas of WIPO and avoid the complication and politicization of the technical issues of WIPO, as this would not only serve the long-term health and development of WIPO, but also the common interests of all Member States. The Delegation stated that some Members had expressed the view that WIPO would provide support to all developing countries as well as those that have been under unilateral coercive measures. The Delegation highlighted that this issue deserved attention.
42. The Delegation of the Republic of Moldova aligned itself with the previous statements expressing support to Ukraine and of the request addressed to the International Bureau in continuing its close cooperation with Ukraine to ensure assistance to creators, innovators and members of the IP community, to mitigate the adverse effects of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine. The Delegation stated that it took the floor on this particular item as the Republic of Moldova became a direct eyewitness of how this war destroys lives, property and the spirit that could allow for innovation and creativity to thrive in Ukraine. The Delegation referred to over 800,000 Ukrainian refugees that had crossed the border of the Republic of Moldova since the beginning of the war. The Delegation stated that, with these figures in mind, the report’s findings on the 33 per cent decrease in the number of patent applicants of Ukrainian origin, or that the IP use might be further affected following the exceptionally high uncertainty associated with the scale, duration and the intensity of the war, came as no surprise. The Delegation added that the assessment made with the respect to the impact of the war on Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and ecosystem clearly indicated the relevance of discussing this topic within WIPO as a forum in particular, as well as the need to continue this assistance for the next year. The Delegation reiterated the demands of the UN General Assembly resolutions to the Russian Federation to immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and immediately, completely, and unconditionally, withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.
43. The Delegation of Cuba reiterated its position that politicization of the work of the Organization should not be allowed. The Delegation expressed its commitment to WIPO and its work and underscored that WIPO is a technical specialized agency. The Delegation shared and supported the right for all the developing countries to be given technical assistance on an inclusive, balanced basis, furthermore stating that countries that suffer from particular situations that affect their development because of unilateral measures taken against them should be also be granted that assistance.
44. The Delegation of Latvia aligned itself with the statements delivered by the European Union, the CEBS Group and Group B, as well as other distinguished delegations. The Delegation thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing the comprehensive report on assistance and support for Ukraine, and Ukraine’s innovative and creativity sector and IP system. The Delegation expressed its strong support of WIPO’s commitment to actively provide assistance to Ukraine with the aim of rebuilding the Ukrainian innovation and creative ecosystem and to play its part in mitigating the consequences of the gruesome and unprovoked war raged by the Russian Federation. The Delegation stated its concern regarding the mixing together of completely different arguments and recalled that the topic of Item 21 was about support for Ukraine, resulting from the decision of the last Assemblies, without any discriminatory intent to any other Member State. The Delegation stated that the report shed light on the devastating impact of the Russian Federation’s unjustified war against Ukraine on mental health, brain drain, financial and many aspects of the IP system in Ukraine, as well as on its people, economy and the government. The Delegation noted that Latvia’s highest priority would always be to tirelessly continue to support and assist Ukraine in any way possible, including, when the time comes, the rebuilding of its innovation and creative sector. The Delegation stated that to rebuild, the war must be over and this was not close to a reality. The Delegation, in referring to the statements of other Delegations about WIPO’s competencies, political statements and one-sided facts on which the report had been based, stated its opinion that it was shocking that on that topic there were debates, and such different perceptions of reality. In the Delegation’s opinion, this could not distract from the fact that the Russian Federation was blatantly disregarding international law, calling into question its ability to be a responsible international player and trusted party to the agreements. The Delegation stated its concerns related to the Russian Federation’s recent accession to the Geneva Act adding that as long as the Russian Federation continues to violate international law, it is not acceptable for WIPO to return to business as usual in cooperation with the Russia Federation. The Delegation called on the WIPO Secretariat to pay special attention to ensuring that in its everyday work, the Secretariat showed respect for Ukraine’s territorial integrity and was not legitimizing violations of the UN Charter by one of its members. The Delegation further acknowledged WIPO’s assistance and support to Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector. The Delegation welcomed the International Bureau’s commitment to continuing its close cooperation with Ukraine, to delivering concrete benefits to Ukraine, as well as its readiness to provide additional information, and requested the International Bureau to report on the implementation of these activities in future Assemblies. In conclusion, the Delegation invited all countries to step back from any suggestions of political statements and different perceptions of reality and facts, and to support WIPO’s continuous assistance for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector.
45. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, took the floor to add some clarifications in response to some of the statements heard. The Delegation stated that Group B is supportive of technical assistance provided by WIPO to any interested WIPO Member State. It requested the Secretariat to confirm that so far the funds used for ongoing technical assistance to Ukraine had not generated any negative impact on the financing of other ongoing technical assistance and capacity building activities. The Delegation noted that according to the draft program of work and budget for 2024/2025, the overall development expenditure in the proposed budget had increased by 2.5 per cent and constituted 21.4 per cent of the total budget. The Delegation reiterated that technical assistance to Ukraine would not generate any negative impact on the development expenditure in the next biennium.
46. The Delegation of Mali took note of the report submitted by the Secretariat to the Assemblies under Agenda Item 21 on assistance to Ukraine. The Delegation stated that one of the essential goals of the Organization is to provide a balanced global IP ecosystem, to further creativity and innovation across the world. It stated with regret that certain fundamental principles that should guide every strategic decision taken by the Organization did not seem to have been taken into account. As an example, the Delegation recalled the principle of balance, which should ensure fair and equitable treatment for all Member States when it comes to technical assistance and cooperation. The Delegation stated that many countries around the world are currently facing multiple crises, having to spend a great deal on, *inter alia*, national defense and security, which is to the detriment of other strategic sectors such as innovation and creativity. The Delegation expressed its belief that it was unfair and not equitable to isolate one state in order to give it special support and assistance, as in the eyes of many that might seem to constitute preferential treatment and a precedent for the Organization.
47. The Delegation of the Czech Republic associated itself with the statements made by the Delegation of Poland on behalf of the CEBS Group, and the Delegation of Spain on behalf of the European Union and expressed gratitude for the support and assistance provided by WIPO to Ukraine in the past year, based on the relevant decision of the 63rd WIPO Assemblies. The Delegation thanked the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing the report on the assistance, which provides clear evidence of the level of devastation caused by the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine. The Delegation found that the report provided an objective assessment of the situation of the country, which had been illegally invaded by another country, and failed to see what criteria for objectivity should be employed according to certain other delegations in cases such as this one. The Delegation stressed that the assistance provided to Ukraine or another country does not prevent any other country to request and benefit from assistance. The Delegation would have preferred to already be taking stock of the process of Ukraine’s reconstruction after the war, instead, further damage from the Russian Federation’s aggression, after more than 500 days, still continued. The Delegation stated that no matter how long it could take, these extraordinary circumstances could not be accepted as a new normal. The Delegation was of the view that WIPO Member States should renew the decision on assistance and support for Ukraine’s innovation and creativity sector and IP system.
48. The Delegation of Portugal reaffirmed its full solidarity with Ukraine, as the victim of an illegal invasion, as stated by the Minister of Justice of Portugal in her opening statement at the Assemblies, when she had indicated support for including Agenda Item 21 on the agenda, to consider the Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System. The Delegation welcomed the findings of the report prepared by the Secretariat, and expressed gratitude for the report, as well as its belief that it was vitally important that technical assistance would be provided as agreed.
49. The Chair asked the Secretariat to provide comments in response to the request for clarification put forward by Group B in relation to the development assistance.
50. The Secretariat confirmed that the assistance to Ukraine would have no impact whatsoever on other countries in any region and the Secretariat would continue to support and assist all Member States from all regions. The Secretariat noted that the decision referred to a special allocation, but confirmed that it was not going to be taken away from the budget of any other country.
51. The Chair mentioned that after listening to the introduction of the report by the Director General, and its presentation followed by the clarifications provided by the Secretariat, there were different views and positions expressed by the Member States in regard to the report. The Chair requested a break in order to consult with the Group Coordinators and delegations to identify a proposal for the following actions.
52. Upon returning to the plenary, the Chair announced the allocation of additional time for consultations among the groups, and adjourned debate on Agenda Item 21 until the following day.
53. Upon returning to the plenary the following day, the Chair recalled the consultations with all groups, following the presentation of the report by the Director General, the Deputy Director General, and Director of the TDC Division, as well as the debate in the room. The Chair noted that discussions were still ongoing and requested a break to hold further consultations with the groups that had outstanding questions and proposals for the agenda item, as well as to allow consultations among groups, with an aim of finding consensus.
54. After the consultations, the Chair resumed plenary by thanking all groups and Group Coordinators for their efforts, and presented the Chair’s proposed decision text, as shared on the screen, based on discussions with the groups. The Chair believed that, although not embraced fully by all delegations, the proposed text would have the biggest potential to bring consensus and move the agenda item forward. The Chair asked if there were any suggestions, objections, or if the proposal could be supported by all. The text of the draft proposal was the following:
55. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned:
    * + took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8;
      + requests the International Bureau to continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, pursuant to the decision of the 2022 WIPO Assemblies (see document A/63/10, paragraph 312); and
      + requests the International Bureau to provide an updated report at the 2024 WIPO Assemblies.
56. The Delegation of the Russian Federation expressed its gratitude to the Chair and the Secretariat for their efforts to reach consensus. The Delegation stated that unfortunately, it was not in a position to support the draft decision as proposed by the Chair. The Delegation suggested amendments to the text, where bullets one and three remain unchanged and paragraph 2 would state “requests the International Bureau to continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, pursuant to the decision of the 2022 WIPO Assemblies (see document A/63/10, subparagraphs 1-6 of paragraph 312)”. The Delegation highlighted the addition of the reference to subparagraphs 1 to 6 of paragraph 312 and hoped that the amendment could be acceptable to everyone.
57. The Chair clarified that although the entire text of the proposal could be improved, adjusted and modified, the proposed text was based on the discussions held during the consultation process, and if amendments to the Chair’s proposed language were not supported, there would be no proposal from the Chair.
58. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking in its national capacity, expressed its gratitude for the efforts made in presenting the document and supported the amendment proposed by the Russian Federation.
59. The Chair, without commenting on the merits of the proposal to amend her text, clarified that there would be no further drafting exercise on the Chair’s text, as she clearly stated to the delegations in the consultation process. The Chair stated that she considered the proposal of the Delegation of the Russian Federation as a new proposal. The Chair noted that she would offer the floor to other delegations before deciding if the entire proposal would be withdrawn.
60. The Delegation of Nicaragua supported the amendment presented by the Russian Federation.
61. The Delegation of Belarus supported the proposal by the Russian Federation.
62. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) expressed its gratitude for the efforts during the two days of discussions and deliberations on the issue. The Delegation also supported the proposal and amendments made by the Russian Federation.
63. The Delegation of Zimbabwe expressed appreciation for the report provided on the consultations and the efforts to reach consensus. The Delegation expressed gratitude to all Group Coordinators and groups involved in the discussions. It noted the proposal and welcomed efforts towards flexibility that could assist these Assemblies in reaching consensus. Finally, the Delegation supported the amendment by the Delegation of the Russian Federation.
64. The Delegation of Poland requested a short break for additional time for consultations on the proposed amendments with the CEBS Group.
65. The Chair, in the spirit of finding consensus, agreed to provide some additional time for consultations.
66. Following the consultations, the Chair invited the groups that requested the additional time for consultations to take the floor.
67. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B and the CEBS Group, stated its understanding that although the text tabled by the Chair was not subject to further drafting, this had not been respected by one delegation in the room. The Delegation stated that, on an exceptional basis, it was ready to engage on the new proposal by adding one additional word, namely to add “including” between paragraph 312 and subparagraphs one to six, as proposed.
68. The Delegation of the Russian Federation stated that it did not accept the proposal.
69. The Chair expressed her concerns that delegations were proposing amendments that were not in line with the discussion during the consultation process. As the Chair did not see a path for decision by consensus, she announced the withdrawal of the Chair’s proposed text and opened the floor for delegations, requesting from them a clear path on the action forward.
70. The Delegation of Poland expressed its disappointment that there was no agreement on the language, which the Delegation thought was a constructive solution. The Delegation made a proposal for the decision text, on behalf of the CEBS Group, Group B and the European Union. The Delegation shared the text with the Secretariat, for Member States’ consideration. The text of the draft proposal was the following:
71. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned:

* took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8;
* requests the International Bureau to continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, pursuant to the decision of the 2022 WIPO Assemblies (see document A/63/10, paragraph 312);
* requests the International Bureau to provide an updated report at the 2024 WIPO Assemblies.

1. The Chair referred to the proposal now on the screen and opened the floor for any delegations wishing to speak regarding the text that had been put forward by the group of countries.
2. The Delegation of the Russian Federation retained the proposal it had made earlier, but since it had not been supported, the Delegation proposed a new draft decision that read as follows: “The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned, took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8”.
3. The Chair understood that there was a new proposal put forward by the Delegation of the Russian Federation. The Chair asked the Delegation of the Russian Federation to confirm that the proposal made by the Delegation of Poland on behalf of a group of countries, did not meet with consensus on the part of the Delegation of the Russian Federation.
4. The Delegation of the Russian Federation confirmed that it did not support that proposal, and recalled that a number of other delegations also did not support this text.
5. The Chair asked the delegations that had put forward proposals for clarification as to the specific action that they were requesting on the proposed texts.
6. The Delegation of Poland regretted that their proposal had not been met with a positive response, at least by one delegation, and asked for the decision of these Assemblies to be taken in the form of a vote upon the proposal submitted by the Delegation.
7. The Delegation of Ukraine seconded the motion put forward by the Delegation of Poland to call a vote on the proposal. The Delegation stated that the text of the proposal had been carefully crafted by many delegations and supported by almost all the groups in the room. The Delegation encouraged delegations to support this proposal and vote in favor.
8. The Chair stated that there were two proposals on the floor and according to the rules of procedure they should be examined in the order in which they were presented. The texts of the proposals, also showed on the screen, were as follows:

Proposal 1

The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned:

* took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8;
* requests the International Bureau to continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, pursuant to the decision of the 2022 WIPO Assemblies (see document A/63/10, paragraph 312);
* requests the International Bureau to provide an updated report at the 2024 WIPO Assemblies.

Proposal 2

The Assemblies of WIPO each as far as it is concerned, took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8.

1. The Chair asked the Delegation of the Russian Federation if it had any additional comments before proceeding with the vote, or any call for action, as its proposal did not meet consensus.
2. The Delegation of Russian Federation stated that it did not have any further proposal and any additional comments.
3. The Chair stated there was no consensus on the proposal by the Delegation of the Russian Federation and asked for confirmation that there was no call for action on its side for its proposal.
4. The Delegation of Russian Federation confirmed that the rules of procedure to be followed required them to proceed with a vote on Proposal 1.
5. The Chair asked the Secretariat to leave on the screen only the text of the proposal of the Delegation of Poland, as that was the text that would be put to a vote, as proposed by the Delegation Poland and seconded by the Delegation of Ukraine. The Chair asked the Legal Counsel to make the necessary announcements regarding the voting process.
6. The Legal Counsel stated that, as announced by the Chair, a vote had been requested. The Legal Counsel recalled that the Delegation of Poland had submitted, in accordance with Rule 21 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the proposal shared on the screen, on which a vote was requested. The Legal Counsel noted that the proposal had been duly supported by the Delegation of Ukraine. Therefore, in accordance with Rule 25, the proposal would be put to a vote. The Legal Counsel drew the attention of delegations to document A/64/INF/1 Rev, Paragraph 2, containing the list of Member States of the WIPO Conference. Delegations representing those Member States of the WIPO Conference were invited to vote. The Legal Counsel further recalled that according to Article 7(3)(c) and (e), subject to the provisions of Article 17 of the WIPO Convention, the WIPO Conference shall make its decision by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast and abstentions shall not be considered as votes. With regard to the necessary quorum, which is constituted by one-third of the States Members of the WIPO Conference, pursuant to Article 7(3)(b) of the WIPO Convention, the Legal Counsel stated that it had been informed that the necessary number of Member States were present. Finally, the Legal Counsel recalled that in accordance with Rule 29 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, after the Chair had announced the beginning of voting, no one shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of such voting.
7. The Chair announced the beginning of the voting according to Rule 29 of the General Rules of Procedures of WIPO. The Chair furthermore invited the Legal Counsel to guide the process.
8. The Legal Counsel informed that, in accordance with Rule 27 of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the vote would be conducted by roll-call. The Legal Counsel reminded delegations that, in order to proceed with the vote by roll-call, the roll-call would be called in the alphabetical order of the names in French of the States Members of the WIPO Conference. The Legal Counsel asked those delegations that wished to vote remotely to raise their hand on the online platform as soon as the first delegation was called, so it is known in advance that they would be connecting and voting remotely. The Legal Counsel requested the Chair to draw by lot the Delegation to be called first.
9. The Chair drew by lot Ghana as the Member State that would vote first.
10. The Legal Counsel thanked the Chair and restated for the delegations that the proposal submitted by Poland, on which the vote was being conducted, was as displayed on the screen. The Legal Counsel recalled that delegations would be called in alphabetical order and asked to state their vote. The Legal Counsel requested Member States supporting the proposal to vote ‘yes’, Member States not supporting the proposal, to respond ‘no’, and those Member States wishing to abstain from the vote, to respond ‘abstain’. The Legal Counsel recalled that Rule 27(3) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure prescribed that the vote of each delegation shall be recorded in the report of the session. The Legal Counsel announced the beginning of the voting.
11. The Result of the vote was as follows:

The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French, beginning with the country that was drawn by lot – of Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Nepal, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Czech Republic, Romania, United Kingdom, Samoa, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Türkiye, Ukraine, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Albania, Germany, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Colombia, Croatia, Denmark, Ecuador, Spain, Estonia, United States of America, Finland, France, Gambia and Georgia voted “yes” (68). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French beginning with the country that was drawn by lot – of Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mali, Nicaragua, Syrian Arab Republic, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, Belarus, China, Cuba and Russian Federation voted “no” (11). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French, beginning with the country that was drawn by lot – of Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mongolia, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Pakistan, Qatar, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, El Salvador and Ethiopia abstained from voting (27). The Delegations – in the order of the voting, which followed the French alphabet and the names of the countries in French, beginning with the country that was drawn by lot – of Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Morocco, Mauritius, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nauru, Niger, Niue, Oman, Uzbekistan, Papua New Guinea, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Dominican Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Holy See, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tajikistan, Chad, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Afghanistan, South Africa, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Dominica, United Arab Emirates, Eritrea, Eswatini, Fiji and Gabon were absent (86).

1. The Chair informed that all votes had been counted and invited the Legal Counsel to announce the results.
2. The Legal Counsel announced the result of the vote. She recalled that pursuant to Rule 27(3) of the WIPO General Rules of Procedure, the vote of each delegation would be recorded in the report of the session. The Legal Counsel informed that the number of Member States entitled to vote was 192. The number of Member States absent was 86. The number of abstentions was 27. The number of votes cast was 79. The number of votes constituting the required majority was 53. Finally, the Legal Counsel noted that of the votes cast, there were 68 “yes” votes, and 11 “no” votes, which meant that the proposal had been adopted.
3. The Chair announced the decision based on the results of the vote.
4. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it was concerned:

(i) took note of the “Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System” by the International Bureau, as contained in document A/64/8;

(ii) requests the International Bureau to continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, pursuant to the decision of the 2022 WIPO Assemblies (see document A/63/10, paragraph 312);

(iii) requests the International Bureau to provide an updated report at the 2024 WIPO Assemblies.

1. The Chair asked if there were any delegations wishing to take the floor.
2. The Delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) wished to put on record its explanation after the vote. The Delegation stated its belief that WIPO a, as a specialized agency of the UN, was a global forum for IP services, policy information and cooperation, with the mission to lead the development of a balanced and effective international IP systems that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. The Delegation welcomed the provision of technical assistance by WIPO to all countries and in this context, supported WIPO’s technical assistance to Ukraine. The Delegation further stated that, however, it would not support any attempt toward politicization of technical assistance by entering WIPO into issues that were beyond its mandate. The Delegation reiterated its principled position that WIPO was not an appropriate platform or forum for raising issues of a political nature and that Member State actions should be in full and strict conformity with WIPO’s mandate, principles and rules. The Delegation stated that it was committed to the long-standing precedent of consensus, which had been the actual wealth of the Organization. The Delegation hoped that WIPO would focus on its mandate and avoid intervening in any contentious issue that might put at risk its mission, affect the Organization’s ability to fulfil its mandate, achieve its objectives, and undermine multilateralism.
3. The Delegation of Lithuania, on behalf of a number of Group B and CEBS Member States, stated its appreciation for the Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System contained in document A/64/8. The Delegation thanked the Director General for presenting the report and appreciated the role of the Director General and the Secretariat in supporting the discussions on the decision regarding Agenda Item 21. The Delegation emphasized that the decision of Member States ensured that WIPO would continue to provide concrete assistance and support as indicated in the conclusions of the report, focusing on mitigating the adverse effects of the ongoing war of aggression waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and rebuilding the innovative and creative ecosystem in Ukraine, which in turn helped to rebuild Ukraine’s economy. Further, the Delegation stated that the decision guaranteed that the Secretariat would report on activities to Member States at the next Assemblies in 2024. The Delegation referred to the Secretariat’s previous confirmation that assistance to Ukraine in these extraordinary circumstances did not detract from WIPO’s ability to provide technical assistance and capacity building to other countries who requested it.
4. The Delegation of the Russian Federation recalled that it had explained the problematic aspects of this agenda item in its previous statements. The Delegation believed this agenda item was politicized, fell outside the purview of the mandate of WIPO, and did not take into account the interest of other States who needed technical support and help from WIPO as much as, and perhaps more than, Ukraine. The Delegation stated that it had put in great efforts to try to build consensus on this question, despite its disagreement in principle with this item, and regretted that in this case it was unable to build that consensus. The Delegation stated that the vote had taken place with the support for the draft decision from only 68 states, which was less than a third of the total membership of WIPO, and clearly indicated that there was a lack of any united opinion on this particular question among the international community, as was the case last year when considering Agenda Item 19. The Delegation once again wished to draw the meeting’s attention to this particular point.
5. The Chair thanked all delegations for their continuous effort and noted that this was a slightly disappointing situation, but at the same time not surprising, as there had been an attempt to find a consensus solution, even though consensus was not reached. Once again, the Chair extended her thanks to all delegations and interpreters and adjourned the meeting, declaring Agenda Item 21 closed.

## ITEM 22 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Appointment of the Director, Internal Oversight Division (IOD)

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document [WO/CC/82/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619998)).

## ITEM 23 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Reports on Staff Matters

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document [WO/CC/82/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619998)).

## ITEM 24 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Amendments to Staff Regulations and Rules

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document [WO/CC/82/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619998)).

## ITEM 25 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (ICSC)

1. See the report of the session of the WIPO Coordination Committee (document [WO/CC/82/6](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=619998)).

## ITEM 26 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Adoption of the Report

1. Discussions were based on document [A/64/13](https://www.wipo.int/about-wipo/en/assemblies/2023/a-64/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=615723).
2. The Assemblies of WIPO, each as far as it is concerned:

(i) adopted the present Summary Report (document A/64/13); and

(ii) requested the Secretariat to finalize the Extensive Reports, post them on the WIPO website and communicate them to Member States by August 11, 2023. Comments should be submitted to the Secretariat by September 8, 2023, after which the final reports will be deemed adopted by September 22, 2023.

## ITEM 27 OF THE CONSOLIDATED AGENDA Closing of the Sessions

1. The Delegation of the Russian Federation said that it was of particular importance for the decisions of Member States to be made primarily on the basis of the principle of consensus. It was regrettable to note that, for the second year running, that practice had been violated by the political ambitions of certain countries. The only issue that had clearly failed to find universal support among Member States was a selective approach to providing technical assistance. The Russian Federation continued to be of the view that the provision of technical assistance should not be artificially politicized. At the same time, Member States were able to reach a consensus on the majority of issues, which inspired hope that there would be future constructive multilateral dialogue among them. The Delegation commended the Secretariat for its efforts to find consensus, and it hoped that WIPO would continue to fulfil its mandate in accordance with the letter and spirit of international law and would build its work on the principles of objectivity, transparency and inclusivity. The Russian Federation would adhere to the principle of consensus. Despite the aggressive and even discriminatory rhetoric and policies of certain countries, as well as flagrant attempts by some countries to disregard their international and legal obligations in the field of IP, the Russian Federation had complied, was complying and would, in good faith, continue to comply with the provisions of the international treaties to which it was a party. The Delegation called on all Member States to engage in constructive multilateral cooperation to further develop an effective and balanced global IP system for the benefit of all. The Delegation stood ready to continue to strengthen collaboration and cooperation with interested Member States and the WIPO Secretariat in order to work together to tackle pressing global issues in the field of IP.
2. The Delegation of Poland, speaking on behalf of the CEBS Group, thanked the Chair, Director General and entire Secretariat for their efforts to prepare and hold the WIPO General Assembly. It thanked the conference services, IT team and interpreters who had provided excellent working conditions for Members, and also thanked the regional coordinators in all Member States and other stakeholders for their work and cooperation. The Assemblies had proved that WIPO was able to assist Members in their efforts to grow, develop and respond to new challenges. In view of serious economic and geopolitical vulnerabilities, such as the post-pandemic recovery and the consequences of the war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the actions of WIPO had been relevant and valuable and should continue. The grave impact of that war on the IP infrastructure and innovation and creativity sector of Ukraine had been a source of concern for many CEBS Group members, who had been grateful for WIPO efforts to mitigate those negative consequences. In light of the continued Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, WIPO should continue to deliver timely and adequate assistance to the Ukrainian IP stakeholders affected. The WIPO General Assembly decision on the matter was welcome. The Group welcomed the approval of the Program of Work and Budget for the 2024/25 biennium, which was important to ensuring continuous WIPO engagement and the development of tailored programs aimed at supporting Member States in their efforts to expand IP ecosystems and foster innovation and creativity sectors. Work on normative issues should be expedited in advance of the Diplomatic Conferences to be held in 2024 in the hope of yielding concrete outcomes. The positive results of the Assemblies had been made possible by the flexibility of regional groups and delegations. The CEBS Group remained committed to helping WIPO to develop an efficient and effective IP ecosystem for the benefit of everyone.
3. The Delegation of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the African Group, thanked the Director General for his leadership, and congratulated the Chair and Vice-Chairs for successfully steering the Assemblies. It thanked the Secretariat for its hard work and dedication, and the interpreters and technical staff for their professionalism and efficiency. It welcomed the adoption of the Program of Work and Budget for the 2024/25 biennium, and thanked Member States for their active participation and constructive contributions.
4. The Delegation of China wished to thank the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly, the officers of the various bodies and the Secretariat for their hard work. Under the strong leadership of the Chair and with the active participation of all parties, the Assemblies had efficiently completed their agenda. Fruitful results had been achieved on issues such as the Program and Budget, Audit and Oversight, and the election of the officers of the Unions. The Delegation appreciated the flexibility and constructive spirit shown by all parties during the consultations on the issues before the Assemblies. In particular, it welcomed the adoption by consensus of the WIPO Budget for 2024/25, and thanked the Secretariat, the Chair and the regional coordinators for their hard work in that regard. China had always believed that consensus was a fundamental principle that the Organization had always followed and adhered to, and one of the cornerstones of the Organization’s smooth and effective operation over the years. Members should cherish and adhere to that principle, and respond to the common challenges that they faced with mutual understanding, compromise, solidarity and cooperation, so as to promote the Organization’s role in the development of the global cause of IP rights, and to make contributions to the well-being of humankind. Finally, the Delegation wished to thank the team of interpreters for the high quality of the services provided to the Assemblies.
5. The Delegation of Switzerland, speaking on behalf of Group B, thanked the Chair for her commitment and guidance, as well as the Secretariat, conference staff, interpreters and technicians for making the Assemblies possible. It also thanked all Member States and regional coordinators for their efforts. Group B was pleased to see the financial performance of WIPO for 2022, which had underscored the crucial financial role of the global IP filing and registration systems of WIPO. However, registrations and filings were dependent on the global economy, which was currently fragile; WIPO should therefore continue to adopt prudent and effective measures to maintain its positive financial performance in the 2024/25 biennium. Group B was ready to engage constructively in preparing for the two Diplomatic Conferences planned for 2024, and thanked Germany for its contribution to the WIPO Voluntary Fund, which would facilitate the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the Diplomatic Conference regarding the international instrument for generic resources and associated traditional knowledge. It welcomed the decision of the Assemblies to take note of the Report on the Assistance and Support for Ukraine’s Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System (document A/64/8) and requested that the International Bureau continued to provide concrete assistance and support to Ukraine, and an updated report on that issue at the 2024 Assemblies. Group B thanked the Chair for her efforts to arrive at a consensus decision, which would have been its preference. Group B reiterated its firm belief that consensus-based decisions are of utmost importance in WIPO and Group B members had shown their strong will to do so, which allows to move ahead with the normative agenda of WIPO.
6. The Delegation of Indonesia, speaking on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group, congratulated the Chair, and thanked the Director General, senior management and Secretariat for their guidance and efforts to deliver the Assemblies. It also thanked the Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Affairs Division, the interpreters, conference services, technical team and everyone else who had contributed to facilitating work during the Assemblies. While the Group welcomed the decisions discussed, it was regrettable that one decision had needed to be decided by a vote. The principle of multilateralism and consensus‑based decision-making were of great importance and had been the established way of working in the Organization. It was also of regret that it had not been possible to make a decision on expanding the membership of the WIPO Coordination Committee. Addressing the underrepresentation of the Group in the WIPO Coordination Committee on the basis of equitable geographical representation was highly important. It was positive that agreement had been reached on the financing and participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities at the IGC, which was of great value. The Group reiterated its commitment to constructively engage with all Member States to advance the Organization’s work in future sessions.
7. The Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), speaking on behalf of GRULAC, thanked the Chair, the Secretariat and the Organization’s partners, as well as the conference and interpretation teams for their efforts, which had facilitated discussion at the Assemblies. GRULAC reaffirmed its commitment to the multilateral system as a space for achieving consensus that make it possible, *inter alia*, to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the Diplomatic Conference on GRs, IP and associated TK, and was enormously grateful to Member States for their support. It also reiterated its belief in a balanced and inclusive IP system capable of promoting the development of all international communities involved. Education, research, heritage conservation and access for persons with disabilities were of the utmost importance and the Assemblies had proven that the IP system could contribute to those laudable aims.
8. The Delegation of Saudi Arabia thanked the Chair, the Director General, the Secretariat and all WIPO staff for the successful prosecution of the Assemblies’ work. It also thanked the groups and delegations of Member States, the interpreters, the Assistant Director General, Andrew Staines and his team.  The Delegation appreciated the opportunity it had been given to introduce his country through the exhibition it had held during the Assemblies and to celebrate Saudi Day together.
9. The Delegation of Samoa said that it aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Asia and the Pacific Group. It applauded the leadership of the Chair and thanked the Director General for his support during the Assemblies. It reaffirmed its commitment and readiness to engage with all Member States to advance the work of WIPO.
10. The Delegation of Croatia thanked the Chair for her leadership, and the Secretariat, technical team and interpreters for their work. It also thanked all Group Coordinators and delegations for their constructive approach to discussions during the Assemblies. It was regrettable that the WIPO General Assembly had once again been held in July. The Delegation requested that the Assemblies be rescheduled to take place at their established time in October in view of the need to address the adverse effects of climate change; rising temperatures and the increasing frequency and severity of record-breaking heatwaves in Geneva posed significant risks. It was crucial to recognize the inherent challenges of scheduling the WIPO General Assembly in July when Geneva experienced its most severe conditions. Temperature extremes were not isolated incidents but a symptom of a rapidly changing climate. Returning the WIPO General Assembly to October would mitigate the risk and show Members’ commitment to addressing climate change. It would also highlight the proactive approach of WIPO to sustainable decision-making, provide delegations with more time to prepare for substantive discussions and enable participation from a greater number of countries and organizations. Lastly, considering it unacceptable for a UN agency to have an external office in a Member State that violated basic UN principles, it called on Member States and WIPO staff to consider closing the WIPO external office in Moscow.
11. The Delegation of Jamaica said that it aligned itself with the statement delivered by the Delegation of Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of GRULAC. It thanked the Chair for her leadership, as well as the Director General and the Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Affairs Division, the WIPO staff who had accommodated bilateral meetings for Jamaica and other GRULAC members, and the interpreters. Throughout the Assemblies, Members had been able to work to ensure that WIPO continued to deliver on its mandate of promoting a balanced and effective global IP ecosystem. The WIPO agenda would continue to be busy as Members worked towards the two Diplomatic Conferences to be held in 2024. The Delegation was pleased that Members had supported the proposal on the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities at those events. It thanked the Member States that had contributed to the Voluntary Fund at the Assemblies and at the IGC meeting held in 2023. Jamaica would continue to support WIPO and its Members and leadership to ensure that IP enabled economic and social development.
12. The Closing Statement of the Director General is recorded as follows:

“Excellencies,

“Distinguished Delegates

“Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

“We have come to the end of this year’s Assemblies, a journey that started many months ago and peaked with the work we have done in the past eight days.

“It has been an intense Assemblies, our largest ever with 1200 participants. The agenda has been full. This discussions have been serious, and, on occasion, our hours have stretched into the night.

“But through your skillful, diplomacy, patience, energy and collaboration, we have been able to achieve much:

“Updates and reports by committees and working groups have been made, and their work and mandates affirmed and reaffirmed with guidance. Officers were appointed to lead our governing bodies. And internal processes and procedures were refreshed.

“The Program of Work and Budget for 2024-25 has been approved.

“A lot of work was done, but the action was not always in this hall. We had many social events where Member States celebrated special occasions with us and took the opportunity to showcase their culture, creativity and heritage, bringing alive the world in the name of our organization.

“With the closure of the substantive decisions we needed to make, I wish to convey our deepest appreciation for the many positive statements made by delegations on the implementation of the MTSP and the impact it is delivering on the ground in all regions of the world, as well as in solving and addressing our common global challenges.

“We take inspiration from this as well as the work many of you are doing to transform your IP officers into innovation agencies.

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“Dear Delegates,

“As I said in my opening address, multilateralism is the best means of ensuring that our interests are served, protected and advanced.

“And it is not just for the sake of multilateralism, but also because this work helps us to build a more inclusive IP ecosystem, which must take place on common ground.

“Our commitment both as a Secretariat and as international organization is that we will continue to support member states to find the space and the will to move forward together.

“Let me also put on record the Secretariat’s appreciation of the various stakeholders of WIPO.

“First, we thank Member States for the extensive engagement over many months. This started last year, when we asked you for feedback on the Program of Work and Budget; with the retreats and engagements we have had with Ambassadors and heads of IP officers; and the many bilateral and regional meetings at the expert levels in the lead-up, as well as doing these Assemblies.

“We also cannot forget the work of the Group Coordinators who have displayed the tools of their trade: dialogue, diplomacy and compromise, to advance positive outcomes on a wide range of issues.

“Beyond Member States, I am also very pleased that I took this opportunity during these Assemblies to have a WIPO-NGO dialogue, which was chaired earlier this week by Ambassador Muhammadou Kah of Gambia.

“I also have to mention our dear Ambassador Alfredo Suescum of Panama who has just chaired the WIPO Coordination Committee. Ambassador, we look forward to building a constructive relationship with you in the years to come, and to congratulate you once again on your election as a next Chair of the WIPO General Assembly.

“And of course, I have to recognize and appreciate on behalf of all of us, the strong leadership of our Chair, Ambassador Tatiana Molcean, who finishes her term as Chair at the conclusion of these Assemblies.

“Her energy and focus, as well, as her unwavering commitment to consensus, in difficult circumstances at times, is deeply appreciated not just by Member States, but also by the Secretariat.

“The role of Chair is very taxing, and I think I can be blunt by saying that no one quite understands it unless you have been through it.

“But I think the work you’ve done and the skill and the guidance you have given us for the last few years are a testament to what you’re brought to the role. Thank you so much, Tatiana, for that work.

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“Lastly, let me also take some time to recognize my colleagues here at WIPO, whose tireless work is essential to the smooth running of these Assemblies.

“Many chairs have told me that they strongly appreciate the work of the Secretariat, whose professionalism, flexibility and expertise they have come to rely on.

“I want to express my sincere gratitude to everyone on the podium over the last eight days as well as the wider Diplomatic Engagement and Assemblies Division and Office of Legal Counsel, not just for your work this week, but for your work in the weeks and months leading up to these Assemblies.

“My deep appreciation also goes to my many WIPO colleagues, upstairs in this building and elsewhere, who have, in the course of the last eight days, had extensive engagements with Members States. Many of you will have met them bilaterally, and I myself had close to 70 bilateral meetings.

“Also, special note needs to go out to the colleagues who work behind the scenes.

“Whether you have been involved in the preparation documents and agenda items or part of our interpretation, translation, audio visual, security, cleaning and catering teams, thank you for your contribution. You have really made the work of these Assemblies smooth and given a bit of that energy to us as we proceed with our work through the wee hours of the night sometimes.

“Lastly, as you prepare to depart Geneva, I hope you do so energized. Because we are ready to work with you to bring our collective vision of making IP an important catalyst for supporting innovators and creators anywhere in the world a reality.

“Thank you very much and have a safe journey home.”

1. The closing remarks of the Chair is recorded as follows:

“Distinguished delegates,

“Allow me to address all of you for the last time in my capacity as Chair of the General Assemblies. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as Chairperson and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the trust and support extended to me during these two years.

“It has been less than 2 weeks of very intense work and consultations. Not without challenges but I suppose nobody expected it to be easy.

“In this critical time, our work at the WIPO assembly holds immense significance. The challenges we have discussed represent only a fraction of the larger picture. Embracing multilateralism means valuing active dialogue, understanding each other, and taking meaningful steps towards collaboration, towards consensus.

“Despite all challenges I would like to express my gratitude to the delegations that have engaged during this time in a cooperative, efficient, and genuine dialogue. Thank you for your valuable contributions and commitment.

“I am immensely proud to have led historic discussions on the Diplomatic Conference on DLT and IGC and I very much appreciate the opportunity to have been part of it. Intellectual property serves as a catalyst for growth, for development. While in the middle of the UN 2030 Agenda we have been set back by the pandemic and by wars, we have to capitalize on innovation and IP in order to achieve progress and development.

“Thank you, Director General Darren Tang, DDGs, ADGs, Secretariat, particularly the team on the podium, Communication team and interpreters – you have been instrumental in guiding the Assembly’s work.

“I would also like to stress my appreciation to Group Coordinators.

“As we conclude this chapter our work does not end here. The challenges that lie ahead are complex and multifaceted in this ever-evolving global landscape. We must continue to strive for balance, ensuring that intellectual property rights are respected, and that multilateralism is preserved.”

1. The Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO was closed by the Chair of the WIPO General Assembly.

[Annex follows]