

**(Unofficial Transcript)**

**Ethiopia.**

Mr. Juneydi Saddo, Minister for Science and Technology

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ministers, Director General, Distinguished Participants. It is a great honor and an immense pleasure for me to address this august body on behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for your election as the Chairman of the General Assembly of WIPO and express my Government's confidence in your stewardship in guiding our deliberations to fruitful conclusion. I want to thank the outgoing Chairman for his ability, knowledge and services rendered to all of us. Ethiopia is very much proud of him. Mr. Chairman, I want to assure you that the Ethiopian Delegation will do its level best in assisting you to accomplish your mission. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for Director General, Mr. Francis Gurry, for the way in which he ran the organization during his first year in office and for introducing changes including the convening of the high-level segment of the General Assembly, the establishment of the Global Issues Sector, the economic Division and the strengthening of the responsibility and human resources of the Division for Least Developed Countries. Mr. Chairman, the Ethiopian economy is dependent on agriculture. The sector contributes about 46% of the GDP of the country while accounting for about 90% of the foreign exchange earnings, 85% of employment and 70% of the raw material requirements of the local industry. The level of development of the industrial sector which comprises manufacturing, handicrafts, mining and acquiring, construction, utilities in Ethiopia is at its infancy in the country's industrial basis is low and accounts for about 13% of the GDP.

Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ministers and Director General, my Government recognizes the importance and need for the protection of IP, the promotion of local creative and innovative

activities, as well as facilitating the acquisition and exploitation of IP for development.

Today, Ethiopia is witnessing an increase in the participation of the people in cities and rural areas to know more about the use of intellectual property system as a tool for development.

At the same time, the intellectual property system itself is assuming importance in the development process of Ethiopia. The various policies issued by the Government clearly recognize the importance and need for the protection of IP, the promotion of local creative and innovative activities, as well as facilitating the local conditions for proper technology transfer, acquisition and exploitation of foreign technology. The Ethiopian Intellectual Property Office in the short time since its establishment mainly focused on the conventional intellectual property protection, then facilitating the use of IP for technology transfer and technology development. It is a matter of urgent priority for Ethiopia to review and re-focus the IPO so that it can effectively play the most historical role. Accordingly, there is a plan already undergoing at the moment. I must stress here that we need a defined organizational and human resources capacity-building from WIPO and other development partners.

Following the establishment of the Ministry of Science and Technology under my leadership, the Office has embarked on drafting a national policy that will not only address policy gaps and issues but also help to integrate intellectual property into the national socio-economic development plan and policies of the country. It is believed that the ongoing efforts to use intellectual property as a tool for development will further be enhanced as national science and technology policy is adopted by the Government and implementation started.

Mr. Chairman, this unique high level segment of the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO is taking place only two months after the high level Forum for LDCs. On that occasion, the Director General, Mr. Francis Gurry, launched an immediate project for the benefit of the least developed countries. The effort undertaken by the Director General to establish technological information center for the benefit of LDCs not only needs to be

recognized but also needs to be highly commended. It will promote the national IP system and educate the public concerning the use and the usefulness of patent information for technological capacity building, stimulating industrial, economic and business development and expansion. This major initiative will also stimulate cooperation among the least developed, developing and developed countries. Ethiopia attaches importance to WIPO and its activities and values the technical cooperation it continues to receive in the areas of IP and institutional building. Our cooperation with WIPO contributes to my Government's innovative development strategy and programs. In this context, Ethiopia attaches importance to the WIPO Development Agenda and other related activities undertaken in Ethiopia. We appreciate very much the impact-oriented activities that the Director General is undertaking through the Division of the Least Developed Countries. Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ministers, Director General, Distinguished Participants, Ethiopia attaches importance to WIPO's mandate and activities in the protection of traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic resources. Our deliberations within the IGC leaves more to be desired. I would like to inform this special segment of the Assembly that Ethiopia is one of the top-25 biodiversity countries in the world. And with these rich resources always come traditional knowledge, folklore and genetic resources that need to be developed. We need WIPO's cooperation to focus on the benefit of traditional knowledge and folklore for the economic development of Ethiopia. The ability of a nation to make best use of its technological competence prime power will shift its place in the present century. This requires a thorough understanding of practical problem solving to approve excellence and research teaching in the areas of science and technology. Science and engineering, which first helped to advance the industrial evolution, have become critical in advancing the developing and the least developed economies and their strive to use IP for development. As Ethiopia has designed a program in this area, it would be worthwhile for me to request the Director General to fully involve in

science and technology capacity building, science and technology infrastructure development including IP of my country. In this context, my Government attaches great importance to the concrete project launched by the Director General during the high level Forum for LDCs in July of this year and to the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the end of that Forum. We request the immediate implementation of the various actions areas of the Ministerial Declaration as a matter of priority. Categorization of patent information in areas such as medicines, pharmaceuticals, genetics, biology, engineering, information and communication technologies will facilitate the speedy implementation of the new initiative of the Director General for the benefit of LDCs. These sectors provide great services to societies especially in the LDCs, they also create new jobs and facilitate competitiveness of development. In summary, Mr. Chairman, the gaps between the developed and the developing, there are lots in the rich and the poor countries of the world, the gap between capability and innovation. We, in the LDCs would have hardest work to do. The developed world, in the specialized agencies such as WIPO, is required to assist us in a substantive and practical way. It is not sufficient to react only after situations are out of control. Mr. Chairman, to the effect of what I said above, Ethiopia has clearly identified its policy options on science and technology for rapid economic growth and development. We have reformed our general and technical education systems, university reforms are already under way, the manufacturing sector is oriented to make proven benchmarks and upgrade product quality and productivity. Moreover, the national innovation system, national priority research programs to be with the creation of the right science and technology landscape is under creation. What is outstanding is entering the full implementation phase, the fine tunings that come next, the real capacity building on the job that is manufacturing, certification, marketing as a frontline work, wide practical research, teaching infrastructure for science and technology needs the cooperation and collaboration of our partners for development. Knowledge, planning and hard work is the

surest basis of success for development and well being of citizens. In conclusion,  
Mr. Chairman, once again wishes you success in your role as a Chair and expresses its  
readiness to cooperate with you in this regard. Thank you very much.