

## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF LESOTHO**

Madam chair, the delegation of Lesotho wishes to congratulate you and vice chairs for the excellent manner in which you chair the Sessions of WIPO General Assembly this biennium. We assure you of our commitment to support you as you lead this Session to its successful conclusion.

We wish to express our appreciation to Director General Daren Tang for his comprehensive report, which highlights outstanding achievements he has made in the implementation of his four-pillar strategic plan as the Director General of WIPO. We thank the Secretariat for excellent arrangements for these series of meetings, despite challenges posed by the COVID - 19 Pandemic. Lesotho remains committed to supporting the work of WIPO

The Delegation of Lesotho aligns itself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of the Africa Group. We are satisfied that the mandate of the IGC has been extended and we look forward to progress in its work, as well as the conclusion of discussion on exceptions and limitations and protection of broadcasting organizations. Our delegation further looks forward to a successful conclusion of the draft Design Law Treaty, which will take the concerns of developing countries into consideration.

A lot of technical assistance programs meant for developing countries have not been fully implemented due to the Covid 19 pandemic. We urge WIPO to take this into consideration when making future workplan and increase resources allocated for activities in developing countries.

We urge WIPO continue to support its Member States, particularly those from developing countries, to use Intellectual Property (IP) as a key tool to unlock creativity and innovative potential for economic growth opportunities. We applaud WIPO for the Covid 19 packages it has developed. We hope these will build sustainable economic recovery for Member States following the pandemic, while paying special attention to the needs of SMEs, women, youth as well as local and indigenous communities, which have been less served in the past. Lesotho hopes to benefit from the packages that WIPO has developed specifically for LDCs.

Our delegation is particularly pleased with the DG's new strategic direction that is based on four pillars and focuses on the future. We are pleased that under Mr. Tang's able and dynamic leadership, WIPO has extended its activities to a wider audience including Women, Universities, Research Institutions, Youth and Small and Medium sized Enterprises. It is evident from the Director General's Report that this strategic direction is being implemented effectively. This will contribute constructively towards creation of jobs especially in developing countries.

Lesotho continues to benefit from WIPO's assistance in the development of its IP system, and we are grateful to WIPO for the progress made on the following projects:

Upgrading of the Industrial Property Automation System (IPAS). The deployment of IPAS 4.0 is at its final stages, and we hope it will go live soon

Establishment of Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISCs) in Lesotho. With the assistance of WIPO, we have started a training program for the TISCs Host Institutions.

Development of a modern legislative framework which will take into consideration latest technological developments as well as our obligations under various Treaties to which Lesotho is party. WIPO has already provided us with Model Provisions which will serve as a baseline for development of modern legislation

We look forward to a successful completion of these projects. In addition to the above, we request WIPO's Technical assistance for;

Training on processing of applications filed under the Madrid System. addressing data capture backlog;

Development of a National IP Strategy and Policy as well as Institutional IP Policies for Universities and Research Institutions in Lesotho.

In line with the DG's 4-Pillar strategic direction, we look forward to collaborating with WIPO as well as ARIPO in outreach activities that focus on empowering our Universities and Research Institutions, SMEs, Women groups and communities in general. We are grateful for WIPO's continued support as we continue to modernize our IP system and take it to the people.

In the field of Copyright, we request WIPO's assistance in strengthening our established CMO.

We once again would like to thank the Director General and his Secretariat for arranging for the series of meetings of WIPO Assemblies in hybrid format, as it allows for wider participation of all Member States.

The delegation of Lesotho looks forward to fruitful deliberations and constructive participation by all Member States on core issues.

We thank you for your kind attention.