

ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO  
Fifty-Fifth Series of Meetings  
Geneva, October 5 to 14, 2015

Agenda item 5: GENERAL STATEMENTS

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

The Delegation of Croatia wishes to express its appreciation to the WIPO for its efforts since the last Assemblies meeting to maintain the Organization's place as the global intellectual property authority and for undertaking activities and initiatives in the development of all fields of intellectual property system. This delegation congratulates the Organization and the Secretariat for the positive financial results and sound financial management in the outgoing biennium and welcomes achieved improvements in programs and financial planning. We encourage joint efforts of the WIPO Secretariat and the Member States in considering further advancement of the WIPO governance as a contribution to mastering the challenges ahead of the Organization in response to increased complexity of its work.

The Croatian delegation expresses hope that the WIPO Member States will, by engaging in a constructive dialogue, be able to overcome the differences in their positions in regard to the Lisbon Union and other open issues, with the aim to come to an agreement regarding the 2016 – 2017 programme and budget.

Croatia particularly supports the WIPO's activities undertaken in providing effective functioning and further development of the international intellectual property registration and filing systems as the key assets of the Organization.

Croatia highly appreciates fruitful cooperation with the WIPO as a part of the WIPO's cooperation policy and is committed to further developing the cooperation framework between the WIPO and its Members States having in mind specific requirements of each Member State. In particular, Croatia encourages the WIPO's activities aiming at promoting a global intellectual property system and the innovation and creativity worldwide. In this respect, we would recommend considering a more nuanced and targeted approach based on the parameters related to the Member States' performances in the field of intellectual property. Recent WIPO's commendable body of work in the field of economic studies and intellectual property related statistics provides a solid and valuable base for such a more sophisticated approach.

We regret that no or little progress has been made in the work of most of the WIPO's specialized committees during the last year, particularly in the scope of further norm-setting activities. The Delegation of Croatia is, as it has been in previous years, attaching great importance to the cooperation as a way towards the adoption of a formality treaty on industrial designs from which the users from all the Member States, regardless of their level of development, would undoubtedly benefit. With this aim, Croatia is supporting the convocation of a diplomatic conference for the adoption of the design treaty, which now regretfully seems to be even less within the reach than it has been in the preceding years. We are yet hoping to see more constructive approach of delegations in the future work at the WIPO that would allow accomplishing the progress in the work of all the WIPO committees, in particular making progress towards the adoption of the Design Law Treaty. Croatia strongly supports and is committed to accomplish these goals.

Our delegation furthermore attaches a great importance to delivering training and education on different aspects of the intellectual property system to the public and in this respect it recognizes importance of appropriate programs and activities of the WIPO Academy. We support the ongoing reform process to reposition the Academy as the organization-wide vehicle for professional training and capacity building and we support allocating appropriate resources to expedite the process of turning the Academy into a fully-fledged centre of excellence in this respect. At the national level, the Academy of the State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Croatia is active in developing and offering training for various user groups, based on its own initiatives and resources or in collaboration with other organizations. We are supporting further enhancement of the concept of the WIPO's regional summer schools and we are ready to contribute thereto with our experience of organizing six such summer schools in Croatia in cooperation with the WIPO Academy. We particularly appreciate cooperation with the WIPO Academy in successful establishing a regular distance learning program – a General Intellectual Property Course in Croatian (DL-101 HR) as a localized version of the respective most popular WIPO's general distance learning programs. Being organized regularly twice a year since the beginning of 2014, this program now provides an excellent opportunity for public education in the field of intellectual property; not only in Croatia but also in the neighbouring countries, making use of national expertise. In the same vein, we express our appreciation for the WIPO's support and cooperation in the organization of the national public seminar "Copyright in the Digital Age" held in February this year in Zagreb, which accomplished a remarkable success in attracting a record number of more than 170 participants by its highly pertinent topics and quality experts.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that our delegation recognizes a growing problem of counterfeiting and piracy making a significant negative impact on the economy, employment and security and that awareness-building, training and education could contribute to limiting this impact. Joint activities are therefore continuously undertaken by enforcement bodies and other stakeholders in Croatia on raising public awareness regarding the recognition of and respect for intellectual property rights, marking increasing public interest for this topic. A well-functioning coordination mechanism among enforcement bodies and other stakeholders, in place in Croatia for a number of years now, has a crucial role not only in these but also in other activities aimed at further strengthening of the enforcement of intellectual property rights in Croatia. In this respect, we are ready to exchange our experiences with other Member States within the framework of the Advisory Committee for Enforcement.

As a final point, the Delegation of Croatia would like to express its appreciation to all the Member States for their cooperation, and wishes to all the Members States fruitful deliberations and a successful 55th series of meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States.

Geneva, 5, October, 2015