

**OPENING STATEMENT BY THE SIERRA –LEONE DELAGATION AT THE FIFTY FIFTH SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLIES' OF MEMBER STATES OF WIPO**

Mr. Chair,  
Honorable Ministers,  
Director General,  
Excellencies, Permanent Representatives,  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Sierra Leone Delegation, I start by congratulating you on your election as to chair the proceedings of this August body, and also on the election of your two Vice Chairpersons. Sierra Leone Delegation looks forward to you ably take us through the Agenda smoothly, in a timely manner, and successfully, through the Agenda as adopted. This you have already started demonstrating.

The continued dedication of the Director General as is manifested in the activities successfully completed and as reflected in his report for the year under review, evidenced also, in the growth of the financial status of the Organisation. We look forward to his taking this Organisation to higher heights. For these achievements, we especially extend our profound thanks.

Also, Sierra Leone appreciates the amount of work involved in preparing for the success of a function such as this one, and for that, we extend our profound thanks to the Senior Management Staff in general, and the International Bureau in particular, for coming up with well structured documentation supporting items on the Agenda.

Sierra Leone aligns herself with the statement delivered by the African Group, and the Group representing Least Developed Countries.

Mr. Chairman,

It is now recognized that the African region is today the fastest growing economy in the world also with lots of talents amongst our population yet to be captured, promoted, and protected. The World economy today, being knowledge driven, unless the WIPO Development Agenda is reconstructed to introduce affirmative action in its implementation, it will be difficult for Africa to attain sustainable development.

In the same vein, Sierra Leone anxiously looks forward to the expected establishment of External Offices in Africa, that will definitely make for better addressing our continent's challenges and constraints, in developing our intellectual systems.

As is worldly known, Sierra Leone was one of the three countries affect by the outbreak of the Ebola virus. While it cannot be said to have been totally eradicated, we can safely states that Sierra Leone is out of the woods. Appreciating how devastating and deadly the Ebola virus is, the fact that desperate attempts to come up with a lasting cure is much encouraging, and in that respect, Sierra Leone expresses her appreciation and gratitude especially to WIPO for playing a formidable role through the public-private partnership initiatives which aims to come up with a lasting cure for Ebola's affected persons.

The last of the three IP Bills, a new Trade Marks Act was passed last year in line with international best practices. Regrettably, a *Validation Workshop* scheduled to take place last October for the adoption of the Intellectual Property Strategic Development Plan prepared with the assistance of WIPO, had to be postponed for obvious reasons. We look forward to WIPO's active participation in rolling out activities there in contained in the nearest future.

Finally, The Sierra Leone Delegation on behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, once again express its profound appreciation and support to WIPO, for its continued endeavor and success for the development of the IP system for the protection and promotion of IP rights in Member States.

Honourable Arrow Bockarie  
Deputy Minister of Justice  
Sierra Leone