

61st Assembly of the Member States of WIPO General Statement of the Republic of the Philippines

Mr. President, Director General Francis Gurry, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, on behalf of the Philippine government, it is our pleasure to attend and participate in this 61st General Assemblies of the WIPO Member States despite the very challenging times.

While the pandemic may have redefined the new normal the Philippines advances forward armed with a renewed sense of purpose in providing an environment that fosters innovation and creation.

Mr. President, we are extremely pleased that the Philippines has achieved a milestone by landing in the top 50 in the 2020 Global Innovation Index jumping 50 notches higher over a period of 6 years from 100th place in 2014 and ranking 4th in the lower middle income group economies. This breakthrough is the result of the whole-of-government approach prioritizing innovation in the national agenda.

We started implementing laws that support innovation such as the Philippine Innovation Act and the Innovation Start-Up Act, completed the national IP Strategy with assistance from WIPO, intensified government innovation programs, mainstreamed innovation in development and investment priority plans, strategically linked government-funding on research and development to intellectual property protection; assisted micro, small and medium enterprises in using the IP system to enhance their competitiveness; harnessed collaboration among government agencies in promoting IP creation, protection and enforcement; commenced operations as an international authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty to facilitate the entry of local inventions to the global patent system, among others.

On IP protection, we received in 2019 a record-high in annual filings reaching 47,282 or nearly a 10% rise from the 43,300 applications in 2018. Trademarks applications posted the biggest annual growth at 10%

followed by industrial design with 7%, utility model increased by 4% and inventions posted a 2% climb.

Our network of Innovation Technology Support Offices (ITSOs) or Technology Innovation Support Centers increased to 100 institutions and still growing, accounting for 54% and 50% of 2019's total local invention and UM applications, respectively.

Mr. President, IPOPHL transitioned to the "new normal" anchored on the optimal use of information technology and infrastructure to ensure the continuity of accessible, convenient, user-friendly and safe services to our local and foreign stakeholders. In May 2020, we completed the deployment of end-to-end electronic processing of IP registration from online filing, payment until grant for trademarks, inventions, utility models, and industrial designs. In addition, we adopted electronic requests for copyright registration and deposit, applications and requests relating to technology transfer agreements as well as commercial patent search

Fully cognizant that our role as an IP Office transcends our regulatory functions; IPOPHL embraced the use of business solutions in our education and awareness programs offering free IP learning and capacity building to stakeholders and the public.

Even in the area of IP rights adjudication, we employed digital solutions allowing the filing of verified complaints electronically and the conduct of online mediation and hearings to facilitate the adjudication of IP cases.

On IP enforcement, we were able to seize more than 22B Pesos or around 442.684M US\$ worth of counterfeit and pirated products and we are pleased to inform the Assembly that the 2020 Proposed Supreme Court Rules of Procedure for Intellectual Property Rights Cases a revision of the 2011 Rules is in the final stage of approval as we continue to enhance administrative and judicial processes to facilitate resolution of IPR cases.

Inspired by our modest gains, we are committed to push the envelope as work towards inclusive development. At the international level, impelled by the spirit of cooperation, IPOPHL looks forward to working with WIPO and bilateral partners as we all collectively work in promoting the IP system to serve the greater good.

Mr. President, under your able leadership and with spirit of constructive engagement of member-states in WIPO, the Philippines:

1. Values the importance of the Intergovernmental Committee and its important work in discussing protection of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and genetic resources;
2. Looks forward to progress on the draft Design Law Treaty and remains positive on the prospect of a Diplomatic Conference once the appropriate level of readiness is reached; and,
3. Thanks the WIPO for the continued support to the Global Innovation Index recognizing its importance for policy makers. We greatly appreciate the continued support and partnership with WIPO over the years.

Before we close, we thank and congratulate Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry for his impressive leadership for 12 years in WIPO marked with great achievements. We wish him all the best and great success in all his future endeavours.

As we open a new chapter in WIPO, we are very pleased to welcome and support the new Director General, Mr. Daren Tang. We have full faith in his ability to continue the excellent work his predecessors have done and express our confidence that he will take the WIPO to greater heights.

Mr. President we express our hope for a productive and successful General Assemblies. Maraming Salamat!