

Opening Statement by Honorable Attorney General, Registrar of Trade Marks, Patent, Plant Varieties and Industrial Designs, Brunei Intellectual Property Office (BrulPO), Brunei Darussalam at the 62nd Session of the Assemblies of Member States of WIPO

Mr. Chairman

Your Excellencies, Honorable Ministers and Representatives

Mr. Daren Tang, Director General of the WIPO,

Distinguished Heads of Delegations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government of Brunei Darussalam in the presence of this Assembly.

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the Chairman, the Vice Chairs and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) under the competent leadership of Mr. Daren Tang, for their support, work and dedication, which has led to the significant developments in the field of Intellectual Property Rights, and for the excellent arrangements made for this 62nd Meeting of Assemblies despite the challenges brought on by the current pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

As Brunei Darussalam moves ever closer towards its Vision 2035 of social and economic sustainability as well as playing a more significant role in the global market, we recognise that success in this endeavour is inextricably linked to the strength of our intellectual property protections.

To contribute towards this effort, Brunei Darussalam, has over the years acceded to a number of international treaties such as the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Budapest Treaty on the International recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms, the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (Madrid Protocol), the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs, the Berne

Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the WIPO Copyright Treaty, and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.

With the necessary legal frameworks in place and increasing awareness of the importance of IP rights, Brunei Darussalam has since observed a significant growth of domestic and international IP registration applications in Brunei Darussalam from individuals, small and medium enterprises and companies from various industrial sectors.

Our challenge now, as the country's intellectual property office, is to ensure that we can meet the demand and growth in this sector, with regular review of our procedures and domestic laws based on the latest developments, trends, technological innovations and international best practices.

The Brunei Intellectual Property Office (BruIPO) has certainly had quite the journey, starting its formative years as a registry division under the Attorney General's Chambers before being transferred to the Brunei Economic Development Board in 2012 and transformed into a dedicated Intellectual Property Office, becoming the office as we know it today. In 2016, it was transferred to the then named Ministry of Energy, Manpower and Industry (MEMI) and finally returning to the auspices and administration of the Attorney General's Chambers in 2019 with the Attorney General re-appointed as the Registrar of Trademarks, Patent, Plant Varieties and Industrial Design. All these changes within the last 10 years have sadly had a destabilising effect on the office, resulting in a number of challenges. However, I am optimistic that with the manpower and support available within the Attorney General's Chambers, we have started to recalibrate and bring the BruIPO to the standard required to once again push the intellectual property agenda in the country.

In a bid to further enhance and improve services, the Attorney General's Chambers have made several initiatives towards stabilizing and increasing the BruIPO's human resources such as the reallocation of officers from its other Divisions as well as the hiring of new recruits. Going hand in hand with this initiative, we have also put in place capacity building plans that emphasize rigorous trainings in addition to continued and enhanced education

initiatives for these newly reallocated officers, support staff and new recruits. These initiatives are targeted to cater to the constantly expanding services expected from the BruIPO and the increasingly voluminous IP applications while assuring its processing quality. All these steps are taken as part of the bigger vision for the BruIPO to be eventually a fully-fledged independent corporate body which we hope to achieve in the not-so-distant future.

Besides acting as the administrative arm of IP in the country, the BruIPO also acts as the champion for IP rights. To this end, the BruIPO endeavors to increase intellectual property awareness by continuing to collaborate with Government Ministries and agencies such as the Brunei Darussalam Royal Customs and Excise Department, the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Transport and Info-Communications, the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, as well as other stakeholders such as higher educational institutions, the creative industry and other relevant parties in the private sector, to share the benefits of intellectual property protection, best-practices and strategies for the better development, implementation and enforcement of intellectual property rights and obligations.

I conclude my statement by assuring the Assembly that Brunei Darussalam will continue to support the efforts and the work done by WIPO on the local and international stage and we look forward to continuing to participate in WIPO's programs and activities as well as collaborating with our international and ASEAN partners to improve the IP regime in Brunei Darussalam.

I wish these Assemblies a great success.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman