

## Statement by the South Centre to the 2022 Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

We welcome the opportunity to deliver this statement.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental organization of developing countries based in Geneva that supports developing countries' efforts to build up a fair and inclusive multilateral system conducive to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We are of the view that a central objective of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as part of the United Nations (UN) UN system should be to support the achievement of such goals through the promotion of a balanced international intellectual property (IP) system that reflects the interests of countries at different levels of economic and technological development, and in line with the WIPO Development Agenda.

The South Centre looks forward to accelerated work in WIPO on the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions, aligned with the targets of SDG 15. We also welcome the resumption of discussions in the Standing Committee on the Law of Trademarks, Industrial Designs and Geographical Indications (SCT) to resolve the outstanding issues on the draft Design Law Treaty and urge member States to reach agreement on the issues of technical assistance and disclosure requirement therein. We also urge that the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR) discussions on copyright exceptions and limitations progress towards concrete normative outcomes and fully support the proposal by the African Group seeking to expand the SCCR's work on exceptions and limitations. Access to knowledge, including but not restricted to education, research and creative exploration is crucial for the continuous progress of all societies.

In the discussion on the role of artificial intelligence, developing countries' concerns, including the need for stronger technology transfer and for action to diminish the digital gap, need to be at the core of discussions. At this stage, such topic should not lead to any normative work.

The global South is still struggling to recover fully from the COVID-19 pandemic. Increasing global supply and access to Covid-19 countermeasures, particularly vaccines, medicines and diagnostics can be accelerated with increased cooperation and removal of IP barriers. WIPO should, in particular, actively support its Members to fully implement the flexibilities under the TRIPS Agreement including through WIPO's technical assistance and advisory programs.

WIPO should produce patent landscapes for potential treatments, vaccines, diagnostics and other medical technologies for Covid-19 and disseminate relevant technologies that are in the public domain. In the context of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), Members should discuss how to promote the early publication of Covid-19 patent applications. The Standing Committee on Patents (SCP) should discuss trends in patent applications and patent grants on biologicals, including monoclonal antibodies, and share experiences on how patentability criteria are being applied including recent relevant jurisprudence on the matter.

The South Centre offers technical assistance, at no cost to developing countries, on the intersect of IP and public health. More information is available on our technical assistance portal <https://ipaccessmeds.southcentre.int>. We take this opportunity to welcome all delegates to our breakfast Side Event on Tuesday 19 July which will showcase the South Centre's activities to support developing countries in the use of some of the important TRIPS flexibilities for public health.

Thank you.