

## The WIPO Development Agenda: Progress and Challenges in 2025

By Nirmalya Syam \*

### ABSTRACT

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Development Agenda (DA), adopted in 2007, seeks to align intellectual property (IP) policies with the development priorities of member States. Enduring challenges persist despite some progress including the adoption of treaties to facilitate access to copyright protected works for visually impaired and print disabled persons, and the recent treaty on IP, genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, and the adoption of several projects for implementing different DA recommendations. DA projects, however, have had limited impact on mainstreaming a development orientation in WIPO, there is limited promotion of use of IP flexibilities for development, and WIPO technical assistance continues to lack a development orientation. There is also a sustained absence of consideration and reporting of development related issues across WIPO bodies. Divergent interpretations of “development”, weak coordination and monitoring systems, and governance inequities have hindered the DA’s transformative potential. This brief examines these issues and advances recommendations to address the challenges to establish an effective DA.

**KEYWORDS:** World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Development Agenda (DA), Intellectual Property (IP), IP & Development, Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), IP Flexibilities, Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement)

*Le Plan d’action de l’Organisation mondiale de la propriété intellectuelle (OMPI) pour le développement, adopté en 2007, vise à aligner les politiques de propriété intellectuelle sur les priorités de développement des États membres. Des défis persistent malgré certains progrès, notamment l’adoption de traités visant à faciliter l’accès aux œuvres protégées par le droit d’auteur pour les malvoyants et les personnes incapables de lire les imprimés, et le récent traité sur la propriété intellectuelle, les ressources génétiques et les savoirs traditionnels associés, ainsi que l’adoption de plusieurs projets visant à mettre en œuvre différentes recommandations du plan d’action pour le développement. Toutefois, les projets du plan d’ac-*

### KEY MESSAGES

- “Implementation of the Development Agenda recommendations through the project-based approach has had limited impact in terms of mainstreaming development orientation in WIPO activities and deliberations.”
- “Divergent interpretations of ‘development’ between developed and developing countries hinder the membership’s ability to reach consensus on what is meant by ‘development orientation’ in the DA, leaving development-related discussions largely siloed within the CDIP.”
- “The DA emphasizes balancing IP protection with access to innovations and creations, yet there is no evidence of a sustainable work programme or tools to promote the effective use of flexibilities critical for health, education, and food security.”
- “Development-oriented debates must move beyond CDIP to permeate all WIPO committees, ensuring that the DA’s transformative vision is mainstreamed across WIPO normative work and strategic priorities.”

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tion pour le développement n'ont eu qu'un impact limité sur l'intégration d'une orientation vers le développement au sein de l'OMPI, la promotion de l'utilisation des flexibilités en matière de propriété intellectuelle pour le développement est limitée et l'assistance technique de l'OMPI continue à ne pas être axée sur le développement. On constate également une absence persistante de prise en compte des questions liées au développement dans les organes de l'OMPI et d'établissement de rapports à ce sujet. Des interprétations divergentes du terme « développement », des systèmes de coordination et de suivi insuffisants et des inégalités en matière de gouvernance ont entravé le potentiel de transformation du plan d'action pour le développement. La présente note examine ces questions et formule des recommandations visant à relever les défis que pose la mise en place efficace du plan d'action pour le développement.

**MOTS-CLÉS:** Le Plan d'action de l'Organisation mondiale de la propriété intellectuelle (OMPI) pour le développement, Propriété intellectuelle (PI), PI et développement, La Comité du développement et de la propriété intellectuelle (CDIP), Les flexibilités en matière de PI, Accord sur les aspects des droits de propriété intellectuelle qui touchent au commerce (ADPIC)

*El Programa para el Desarrollo (PD) de la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual (OMPI), adoptado en 2007, pretende alinear las políticas de propiedad intelectual (PI) con las prioridades de desarrollo de los Estados miembros. A pesar de algunos avances, como la adopción de tratados para facilitar el acceso de las personas con discapacidad visual o dificultades para acceder al texto impreso a obras protegidas por derechos de autor y el reciente tratado sobre propiedad intelectual, recursos genéticos y conocimientos tradicionales conexos, y la adopción de varios proyectos para aplicar distintas recomendaciones de la Agenda para el Desarrollo, siguen existiendo problemas. Sin embargo, los proyectos de la A.D. han tenido un impacto limitado en la integración de una orientación hacia el desarrollo en la OMPI, la promoción del uso de las flexibilidades de la PI para el desarrollo es limitada y la asistencia técnica de la OMPI sigue careciendo de una orientación hacia el desarrollo. También hay una ausencia sostenida de consideración e información sobre cuestiones relacionadas con el desarrollo en los órganos de la OMPI. Las interpretaciones divergentes del «desarrollo», la debilidad de los sistemas de coordinación y supervisión y las desigualdades en materia de gobernanza han obstaculizado el potencial transformador de la Agenda para el Desarrollo. En este informe se examinan estas cuestiones y se formulan recomendaciones para hacer frente a los problemas que dificultan el avance de la Agenda para el Desarrollo.*

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** El Programa para el Desarrollo (PD) de la Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual (OMPI), Propiedad Intelectual (PI), PI y Desarrollo, El Comité de Desarrollo y Propiedad Intelectual (CDIP), Las flexibilidades de la PI, Acuerdo sobre los Aspectos de los Derechos de Propiedad Intelectual relacionados con el Comercio (ADPIC)

## Introduction

In 2007, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) adopted the Development Agenda (DA),<sup>1</sup> a landmark effort to align intellectual property (IP) policies with the developmental priorities of its member States. Encompassing 45 recommendations, the agenda sought to reorient WIPO focus from merely facilitating the acquisition and enforcement of IP rights to ensuring that these rights serve as tools for innovation, economic growth, and social equity taking into account the priorities and the special needs of developing countries, especially least developed countries (LDCs). Nearly two transformative promises of the Development Agenda remains unfulfilled, as structural, governance and conceptual challenges impede its full realization.

The WIPO Development Agenda included 45 recommendations<sup>2</sup> which are grouped into six clusters, each addressing key aspects of a development-oriented intellectual property (IP) policy. Cluster A (Recommendations 1-14) emphasizes development-driven, tailored technical assistance, with the main focus on aligning support with the needs of developing countries and LDCs, with immediate implementation of recommendations on neutrality in assistance, support for SMEs, and anti-competitive measures (1, 6, 11, 13). Cluster B (Recommendations 15-23) aims at ensuring inclusive, member-driven norm-setting that promotes the use of flexibilities in international IP agreements and preserves the public domain, with immediate implementation of recommendations on norm-setting processes (Recommendations 15 and 21), public domain preservation (Recommendation 16), use of flexibilities available to developing countries and LDCs (Recommendation 17), protection of traditional knowledge (Recommendation 18), initiating discussions to facilitate access to knowledge and technology for developing countries and LDCs (Recommendation 19). Cluster C (Recommendations 24-32) highlights the promotion of technology transfer, research cooperation between developed and developing countries, and bridging the digital divide. Cluster D (Recommendations 33-38) calls for annual reviews and impact assessments to evaluate WIPO development-oriented activities, including recommendations for immediate implementation of studies to assess the economic, social and cultural impact of the use of intellectual property systems in requesting countries (Recommendation 35), and identification of possible links and impacts between IP and development (Recommendation 37). Cluster E (Recommendations 39-44) focuses on strengthening institutional cooperation with UN agencies and improving governance for inclusive participation. Lastly, Cluster F (Recommendation 45) advocates for a balanced approach to IP enforcement that supports innovation and technology transfer while addressing societal interests. Together, these recommendations aim to create a more equitable and development-focused global IP system.

The DA envisions an IP framework that balances IP protection with public interest goals, such as in the areas of health, educa-

<sup>1</sup> WIPO, Decision of the 2007 General Assembly. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/ip-development/en/agenda/wo\\_ga/wo\\_ga\\_34\\_summary.html](https://www.wipo.int/ip-development/en/agenda/wo_ga/wo_ga_34_summary.html).

<sup>2</sup> WIPO, The 45 Adopted Recommendations under the WIPO Development Agenda. Available from <https://www.wipo.int/ip-development/en/agenda/recommendations.html>.

tion, food security, industrial development, and protection of the environment. It underscores the importance of preserving policy space through IP flexibilities, protecting traditional knowledge and ensuring equitable access to knowledge and technology.<sup>3</sup>

## Implementation of the Development Agenda<sup>4</sup>

The adoption of the Development Agenda marked a watershed moment in the history of international IP governance, underscoring the efforts of developing countries to incorporate their views and concerns into global policy debates held at WIPO. The agenda spurred initiatives such as the creation of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), which oversees the implementation of DA recommendations. It has also spurred some positive outcomes in the area of norm-setting, such as the adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled,<sup>5</sup> and the recent adoption of the Treaty on IP, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, progress towards these normative outcomes has been limited and slow and many related areas of norm-setting of interest to developing countries – such as exceptions and limitations to copyright for educational and research institutions, for persons with other disabilities, for libraries and archives, protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions – have not made the desirable progress. The WIPO Secretariat's activities seem to continue to be largely based on the questionable hypothesis that more IP leads to more innovation and economic growth, a hypothesis that has no theoretical or empirical support.<sup>7</sup> IP is a policy tool whose impact is dependent on the context in which it applies. While in some contexts, such as developed economies, its benefits may exceed costs, in other contexts, such as in developing countries and LDCs, the reverse may be true, as it is the case for instance in respect of access to medicines which can be significantly restricted by IP rights.<sup>8</sup>

3 See generally, Neil Weinstock Netanel (ed.), *The Development Agenda: Global Intellectual Property and Developing Countries* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2009); Carolyn Deere Birkbeck, *The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): A Reference Guide* (Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2016); Nirmalya Syam, *Mainstreaming or Dilution? Intellectual Property and Development in WIPO* (Research Paper No.95, South Centre, Geneva, July 2019). Available from [https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/RP95\\_Mainstreaming-or-Dilution-Intellectual-Property-and-Development-in-WIPO\\_EN.pdf](https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/RP95_Mainstreaming-or-Dilution-Intellectual-Property-and-Development-in-WIPO_EN.pdf).

4 The analysis in this section is based on Syam, *supra* note 3. It also includes updates on developments since the publication of this paper.

5 Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (2013). Available from <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/treaties/textdetails/13169>.

6 WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (2024). Available from <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/treaties/textdetails/19849>.

7 See, e.g., Carlos M. Correa (ed.), *Intellectual Property and Economic Development* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020); James Bessen and Michael J. Meurer, *Patent Failure: How Judges, Bureaucrats and Lawyers Put Innovators and Risk* (Princeton University Press, 2009); Michele Boldrin and David K. Levine, "Growth and Intellectual Property", National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series, Working Paper 12769. Available from [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w12769/w12769.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w12769/w12769.pdf).

8 See, e.g., Carlos M. Correa (ed.), *Pharmaceutical Innovation, Incremental Patenting and Compulsory Licensing* (South Centre, 2013). Available from [https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Bk\\_2013\\_Pharmaceutical-innovation\\_EN.pdf](https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Bk_2013_Pharmaceutical-innovation_EN.pdf).

## CDIP and the Project-Based Approach

The primary mode of implementing the DA recommendations has been through a project-based approach, wherein specific projects for implementing DA recommendations which address subject matter relating to a number of DA recommendations that are implemented jointly through thematic projects that are approved and overseen by the CDIP. Since its establishment the CDIP has approved 62 projects, 18 of which are currently under implementation. Until now 44 projects implementing the DA as approved by the CDIP have been completed. 34 of the completed projects have been mainstreamed (i.e. integrated into the regular programmatic activities of WIPO).<sup>9</sup> Most of these projects focus on acquisition and management of IP rights by innovators and creators in developing countries. It is rather striking that no project has been approved and developed to address issues like facilitating the use of IP flexibilities for access to IP protected technologies and works, or prevention of misappropriation of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

Implementation of the Development Agenda recommendations through the project-based approach has had limited impact in terms of mainstreaming development orientation in WIPO activities and deliberations. The total budget for CDIP projects represents less than 10 per cent of the total WIPO budget for all development cooperation activities. CDIP approved projects comprise a small fragment of other development cooperation activities of WIPO and, hence, they do not represent a mainstreaming of the Development Agenda in the organization, a key objective of the DA proponents.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, though CDIP discusses the alignment of WIPO development cooperation activities and approves specific projects, it is not involved in the planning or assessment of WIPO overall development cooperation activities.<sup>11</sup>

An independent review of implementation of the WIPO Development Agenda found that after the approval of a project, "Member States rarely conduct follow up to the discussions undertaken in CDIP."<sup>12</sup> It also pointed to a lack of a systematic and coordinated approach due to the absence of a good understanding of the links between IP and development. The review also pointed to the need to avoid mechanically linking any activity or project to a Development Agenda recommendation without assessing whether the same could have been initiated as a regular WIPO activity. There is also no mechanism of following up on how activities undertaken under the projects could programme activities.

9 WIPO, Catalogue of DA Projects and Outputs. Available from <https://dacatalogue.wipo.int/projects>.

10 See Proposal by Argentina and Brazil for the Establishment of a Development Agenda for WIPO, WIPO document WO/GA/31/11, 27 August 2004. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo\\_ga\\_31/wo\\_ga\\_31\\_11.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo_ga_31/wo_ga_31_11.pdf).

11 See Syam, *supra* note 3, pp. 44-6.

12 WIPO, document CDIP/18/7, pp. 25-26. Available from [http://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/cdip\\_18/cdip\\_18\\_7-main1.pdf](http://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/cdip_18/cdip_18_7-main1.pdf).

### Limited Promotion of IP Flexibilities

One of the key aspects of the WIPO Development Agenda is balancing IP protection with access to protected innovations/creations, emphasizing the importance of flexibilities in achieving public interest objectives such as health, education, and food security. However, the DA does not define flexibilities. The independent review found no evidence of a sustainable work programme or tools to promote their effective use. The WIPO secretariat's efforts on flexibilities remain reactive to member States' requests and lack proactive promotion or detailed guidance. Furthermore, opposition from developed countries in CDIP has limited progress on an ambitious flexibilities work programme, resulting in studies that fail to address their practical application.<sup>13</sup> Flexibilities, such as exceptions to patent rights and limitations and exceptions in copyright, are critical to mitigate the restrictive effects of IP by limiting the scope and duration of legal monopolies. These mechanisms enable governments to adapt IP laws to meet public policy objectives, such as ensuring access to essential medicines, promoting education and advancing food security.

### WIPO Technical Assistance

Another major objective of the Development Agenda was to ensure that technical assistance provided by the WIPO secretariat was development-oriented and demand-driven, reflecting the priorities and needs of developing countries and LDCs while recognizing varying levels of development. It emphasized the need of mainstreaming development considerations into WIPO substantive and technical activities, increasing human and financial resources for development-oriented IP programmes, and building national institutional capacity to balance IP protection with public interest. Additionally, the recommendations called for mechanisms to annually review and evaluate WIPO development activities, assess their impact objectively, and strengthen cooperation with UN agencies, WTO, and other organizations on IP-related development initiatives.

Recommendation 41 of the DA, in particular, called upon WIPO to conduct a review of WIPO technical assistance activities in the area of cooperation for development. So far, two external reviews of WIPO technical assistance activities have been conducted. The first external review published in 2011 reviewed WIPO technical assistance activities in the period from 2008-2010,<sup>14</sup> and the second review published in 2024 covered WIPO technical assistance activities for the period from 2017-2022.<sup>15</sup>

The 2011 external review identified significant shortcomings in WIPO technical assistance activities, including a lack of clear definition of development-oriented technical assistance, weak methodologies for needs assessment, and fragmented internal

<sup>13</sup> See Syam, *supra* note 3, pp. 46-8.

<sup>14</sup> Carolyn Deere-Birkbeck and Santiago Roca, An External Review of WIPO Technical Assistance in the Area of Cooperation for Development, 2011, WIPO Document WIPO/IP/DEV/GE/11/REF/2/DEERE. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/wipo\\_ip\\_dev\\_ge\\_11/wipo\\_ip\\_dev\\_ge\\_11\\_ref\\_2\\_deere.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/wipo_ip_dev_ge_11/wipo_ip_dev_ge_11_ref_2_deere.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Document CDIP/33/4 CORR. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/cdip\\_33/cdip\\_33\\_4\\_corr.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/mdocs/en/cdip_33/cdip_33_4_corr.pdf).

coordination. The review criticized WIPO pro-IP institutional culture and limited focus on leveraging TRIPS flexibilities, addressing the knowledge gap, and aligning activities with national development priorities. Its recommendations emphasized improving the development orientation of technical assistance, establishing systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, increasing transparency in budget allocation and fostering greater engagement with stakeholders to design tailored, impactful programmes. It also called for stronger mainstreaming of the Development Agenda across WIPO activities.

Some of the findings of the 2011 external review have been reaffirmed in the 2024 external review, albeit in a less critical tone. However, it noted the need for stronger alignment of WIPO technical assistance with member States' development priorities. The 2024 external review identified gaps in tailoring technical assistance to specific contexts, measuring long-term impact, and ensuring sustainability. It recommended enhancing monitoring and evaluation, improving coordination within WIPO and with external partners, and aligning technical assistance more closely with the Sustainable Development Goals. The review emphasized the need for customized, country-specific approaches and sustainable capacity building to maximize the benefits of technical assistance.

Both reports ultimately highlighted weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, with calls for systematic frameworks to measure impact. They also identified challenges in internal coordination and resource utilization, emphasizing the need for greater transparency and efficiency. Additionally, both reports stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement to ensure the relevance and sustainability of technical assistance.

This suggests that the DA recommendations on technical assistance have had very limited impact in terms of transforming the orientation of technical assistance provided by WIPO. The focus of technical assistance at best is on harnessing the potential benefits of IP for development of specific innovative and creative sectors in recipient countries, while ignoring safeguarding against or mitigating adverse effects of IP protection.

### Lack of Effective Coordination across WIPO Bodies

Development-related discussions remain largely siloed within the WIPO, as they are essentially limited to CDIP. Other WIPO committees often prioritize IP acquisition and enforcement, with limited consideration of development impacts and of development-oriented flexibilities such as those that may facilitate access to medicines or educational materials, or preserve and broaden the public domain. This situation undermines the holistic vision proposed by the DA. A significant barrier to achieve this vision lies in the lack of integration of the DA into WIPO broader normative work. Norm-setting discussions often emphasize strengthening or expanding IP protections without adequately addressing their developmental impacts. For example, discussions on issues such as copyright in the digital context and AI-related patents have overlooked the technological and institutional constraints faced by developing countries.

An important function of the CDIP is to act as a body for coordination with, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the DA by other WIPO bodies. The 2010 WIPO General Assembly adopted a decision which established the CDIP coordination mechanism principles and instructed “relevant WIPO bodies to include in their annual report to the Assemblies, a description of their contribution to the implementation of the respective Development Agenda Recommendations.”<sup>16</sup> The 2017 WIPO General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to the full implementation of this decision.<sup>17</sup> However, these decisions have been overlooked by all WIPO Standing Committees in their reports to the General Assembly in recent years. This is one indicator of a major failure of the DA in streamlining development concerns in WIPO activities and of the coordination mechanism established by the General Assembly.

## Enduring Challenges

As shown by the analysis above, the DA faces significant hurdles nearly two decades after its adoption. One of the reasons for this are divergent interpretations of “development” between developed and developing countries, which hinder the membership’s ability to reach consensus on what is meant by ‘development orientation’ in the DA. Development-related discussions, as noted, remain largely siloed in the CDIP, with minimal integration across WIPO committees, which often prioritize IP protection as an end in itself. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are weak, leaving the long-term development impacts of CDIP projects unclear. This scenario ultimately is a reflection of a governance structure dominated by fee-based contributions for services that primarily benefit right-holders from developed countries, which creates an institutional bias largely aligned with the interests of those countries and limits the ability of the Global South to influence resource allocation and policy priorities. This imbalance is evident in the composition of key committees, such as the Program and Budget Committee and the Coordination Committee, and the lack of systematic reporting on the DA’s progress by the various WIPO committees. This situation has continued over the years despite that developing countries have consistently raised concerns about the lack of equitable representation in WIPO decision-making bodies.

## Way Forward

To fully realize the potential of the DA, several steps are imperative to bridge the gap between the DA’s aspirations and its on-the-ground impact.

**1. Enhance Cross-Regional Coordination:** Developing countries must strengthen cross-regional coordination to present unified positions in WIPO discussions and negotiations. This approach could enhance their bargaining power and ensure greater emphasis on developmental concerns.

<sup>16</sup> WIPO, Coordination Mechanisms, and Monitoring, Assessing and Reporting Modalities. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/ip-development/en/agenda/coordination\\_mechanisms.html](https://www.wipo.int/ip-development/en/agenda/coordination_mechanisms.html).

<sup>17</sup> WIPO document WO/GA/49/21, paragraph 177. Available from [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo\\_ga\\_49/wo\\_ga\\_49\\_21.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/wo_ga_49/wo_ga_49_21.pdf).

**2. Mainstream Development Discussions Across WIPO:** Development-oriented debates should move beyond CDIP to permeate all WIPO committees. Each body must report on its contributions to the Development Agenda and the SDGs, ensuring a unified approach. The DA’s alignment with the SDGs must be strengthened. WIPO work on technology transfer, capacity building, and IP norm-setting should explicitly support SDG targets such as innovation, public health, and climate action.

**3. Integrate the Development Perspective into Technical Assistance:** Member States should ensure that the WIPO Secretariat systematically integrates the development perspective, including the use of IP flexibilities, into its technical assistance.

**4. Participate in WTO Discussions:** The WIPO Secretariat should actively engage in the TRIPS Council discussions in the WTO with a development perspective. Without coordinated efforts, the DA risks remaining disconnected from real-world IP challenges.

**5. Promote IP Flexibilities:** WIPO must expand projects that promote IP flexibilities in areas critical to development, such as education, health, food security, green technologies, and research. These efforts should focus on facilitating access to technology and knowledge resources by developing countries and LDCs.

**6. Strengthen Monitoring and Reporting Systems:** A robust system is needed to monitor the implementation of the DA across WIPO. Regular evaluations of CDIP projects should emphasize inclusivity and tangible developmental impacts. There is a pressing need for a robust evaluation framework to assess the impact of DA projects on the ground. While WIPO has undertaken independent reviews, the lack of measurable outcomes for many initiatives underscores the need for monitoring and transparent reporting.

**7. Governance Reforms:** WIPO must undergo governance reforms to ensure equitable representation of developing countries in its decision-making bodies. This includes revising the composition of committees to reflect the diversity of its membership and introducing mechanisms to hold the Secretariat accountable for aligning its strategic goals with the DA recommendations.

**8. Leverage External Expertise:** WIPO should invite UN agencies and other international organizations with expertise in areas such as access to medicines, food security, and technology transfer to provide inputs to the CDIP and other committees.

**9. Address Emerging Technologies:** The Development Agenda must evolve to address new challenges posed by artificial intelligence, biotechnology and other emerging technologies.



## Final Remarks

As we approach twenty years from its adoption, the DA stands at a crossroads. The progress made so far has been insufficient, notably in streamlining the development perspective into WIPO various committees and technical assistance. The Global South must continue to advocate for reforms that ensure that IP serves as an enabler of develop-

ment, not as a barrier thereto. Only through sustained commitment and collective action can the DA fulfill its promise of building up an international IP regime that truly works for all. In doing so, WIPO could contribute to realizing an IP framework that aligns with the development needs of the large majority of its member States.

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