



**Statement to the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual
Property Organization: Sixty-Eighth Series of Meetings
July 7 to 15, 2026**

Mr. Chair, Director General, Excellencies, delegates,

Development is integral to WIPO's mandate as a specialized agency of the United Nations.

WIPO's work must promote a fair balance between intellectual property protection and the public interest, align with the Sustainable Development Goals and address the barriers intellectual property can create such as to access educational materials, health and green technologies.

As we approach the 20th Anniversary of the WIPO Development Agenda, we urge that it be reaffirmed and strengthened by these Assemblies in 2027.

We are concerned that standing committees are not reporting to the General Assembly on Development Agenda implementation, despite the 2017 decision.

We urge real progress on copyright limitations and exceptions, and on the effective protection of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

We call on the Coordination Committee to pay due regard to the importance of recruiting staff members on as wide a geographical basis as possible, and ensure gender balance, in accordance with Staff Regulation 4.2. We note with concern that the Deputy Director General appointments proposed for the Committee's approval skew representation towards developed countries and reduce gender balance, leaving three groups, including the Asia and the Pacific Group, without representation.

The South Centre is open to work with WIPO and will continue to support developing countries and Least Developed Countries, including graduating members, to use policy space and all the tools in the IP system including the flexibilities to balance protection with the public interest and to safeguard their development needs.

Thank you.