

ASSEMBLIES OF THE MEMBER STATES OF WIPO
Sixty-Fourth Series of Meetings
Geneva, July 6 – July 14, 2023
Agenda item 5: GENERAL STATEMENTS

GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

The delegation of Croatia would like to thank you, Madam Chair, for your engagement in preparation for the 64th series of WIPO Assemblies. We wish to express our gratitude to Director General Daren Tang for his excellent work and able leadership during this year. Finally, we also wish to thank WIPO Secretariat for all its preparatory work.

The Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine is still persisting, against all the rules of international legal order, and it is causing incredible harm and economic decline of Ukraine as a WIPO and UN Member. Croatia expresses its solidarity with Ukraine and its people and calls on Russian Federation to stop this inexcusable aggression against Ukraine. We thank WIPO for compiling the report on the *Assistance and Support for Ukraine's Innovation and Creativity Sector and Intellectual Property System* in accordance with the decision taken at the WIPO General Assembly last year. The report undoubtedly shows that innovation and creativity in Ukraine are terribly harmed by Russian Federation's war of aggression. Rebuilding and recovery shall require significant resources and therefore we call on WIPO and other international organisations to continue supporting Ukraine.

In this note, while we have general reservations towards the purpose of the WIPO External Offices in light of the technological development in electronic communication, we find the continuing operation of the WIPO External Office in Moscow to be particularly improper.

Croatia wishes to express particular appreciation for good financial results of WIPO in the closing budgetary cycle. Despite many challenges, we have confidence that prudent and cautious management will continue to deliver excellent performance in future years as well. We believe that Medium-Term Strategic Plan 2022-2026 will deliver a balanced, effective and forward-looking system of IP protection that incentivises twin green and digital transition.

We note with satisfaction that support to the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and to their effective use of intellectual property system continues to be among highest priorities for the WIPO, since the micro, small and medium sized enterprises make 99.7% of all enterprises in Croatia. At national level, the State Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Croatia (SIPO) also continuously provides different types of assistance to SMEs, including operative support to the funding schemes for protection and managing IPRs provided by national and EU programs. As Republic of Croatia joined the Eurozone and Schengen Area as of January 1st this year, this will provide even more opportunities for internationalization of innovation activities of Croatian entrepreneurs and industry.

Croatia makes continuous efforts to increase efficiency of its innovation ecosystem and promotes awareness of the importance of intellectual property system, providing support to all IP stakeholders. These efforts are supported by effective cooperation with the WIPO. We are proud that this year, in cooperation with WIPO Academy, we have organised our 9th *WIPO Summer School on Intellectual Property in Croatia* in the world known city of Dubrovnik. With its worldwide participation and Croatian and international lectures, the Summer School provides enriching exchange of knowledge and ideas.

In conclusion, Croatia commits to contribute in a positive and constructive manner to a successful 64th series of meetings of the Assemblies of the WIPO Member States and invites all the members to contribute constructively to the goals and objectives of WIPO and respect the principles of the UN Charter.