

Statement by Ambassador Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Permanent Representative of Nepal, at the High Level Segment of World Intellectual Property Organization {WIPO} General Assembly, on September 21, 2010.

Mr. Chairman,

Hon'ble Ministers

Director General of the WIPO

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the least developed countries (LDCs).

Let me congratulate you, Ambassador Alberto Dumont, on your election to the chair of the World Intellectual Property Organization {WIPO} General Assembly. I express confidence and trust in your leadership to take our deliberations to fruitful conclusion. I assure you the fullest cooperation of the LDCs group.

I would like to place on record our appreciations to Director General Dr. Francis Gurry for his vision and leadership of the WIPO. We express our sincere thanks to Deputy and Assistant Directors General, and officials at WIPO for their dedication and hard work. Their collaborative efforts to nurture the development of intellectual property in developing countries are praiseworthy.

We welcome the theme of the General Assembly ***'Innovation, growth and development: The role of IP and member states' experiences'***.

This meeting comes at a crucial time from the perspectives of development discourses including the review meeting on MDGs in New York.

Mr. Chairman,

We thank Director General {DG} for his report outlining activities over the past one year. We take note of several programs and activities launched for the protection of Intellectual Property and the development of the IP system, and also improvement in the functioning of the secretariat.

This is an age of information and knowledge. It is necessary that we have a fair, equitable and efficient intellectual property regime in which there is increased participation of least developed countries. It is also necessary to build human, institutional and physical infrastructures including in technological field to harness the innovative and creative potentials of the people of LDCs. We need to create a favourable

IP environment for economic development and bridge the gap in knowledge and digital divide.

The 49 LDCs constitute one fourth of the UN membership. With 12% of the global population, they account for less than 2% of world gross domestic product {GDP}. Their share of global trade in goods is just 1% , and 0.5% of the global trade in services.

Technical assistance and capacity building for LDCs are vitals for their development. We urge WIPO to help least developed countries overcome their economic, financial and administrative constraints for harnessing their potentials for economic development.

The needs assessments of LDCs should be coordinated effectively and fully aligned with their pressing needs and priorities. We call for the transfer of appropriate technology and dissemination of information for creating a sound and viable technological foundation to promote creativity and innovation.

We are happy to note WIPONET programme. Promotion activities about IP information, digital exchange of IP information including training and seminars at national, regional and international levels need to be expanded. Automation and modernization of the IP system should be expedited for institutionalizing the protection of national wealth.

Information high way of the international IP community and its knowledge base should be widened. SMEs are effective instruments for poverty reduction and employment generation on a sustainable basis. SMEs can benefit to a large extent from the greater use of the IP system for development.

LDCs are rich in Traditional Knowledge, Genetic Resources, Traditional Cultural Expression and Folklore. These resources need to be seen from the overall perspectives of socio-economic development. While formulation of national legislation to protect them from misappropriation is necessary, protection measures at the national level alone are not enough. This rich heritage faces the risk of fading away in the absence of technical knowhow and financial resources. Serious efforts are needed to promote economic development, protect rich cultural heritage and generate livelihood. Initiatives to protect them through copyrights and related rights systems and other appropriate mechanisms are necessary. We call upon WIPO to assess LDCs' needs, help them develop comprehensive strategies and use these precious indigenous resources for wealth creation and employment generation.

In the capacity of the chair of the LDCs group, I had the pleasure of witnessing the launching of the Access to Specialized Patent Information (ASPI) by the WIPO on September 17, in partnership with the leading patent information providers, as an

important medium of disseminating technological knowledge. This programme is **free of cost to LDCs** and at low cost access to patent data for developing countries. This arrangement is expected to be effective in promoting the transfer of technology to the people who need it the most.

We expect ongoing discussions to create suitable normative framework for IP rights. We appreciate that WIPO's technical assistance initiatives, which have generated IP awareness, modernization and capacity building of national IP offices and enforcement of IP through e-commerce, SMEs and IP, consolidation of IP system and arbitration and mediation issues.

Mr. Chairman,

It is encouraging to see IP emerging as an integral part of development process. Access to technological knowledge is a vital for innovation and knowledge creation. The society has made a remarkable shift from traditional commodity based economy to knowledge based one. Technology has made far reaching breakthroughs, transformed the world, and brought prosperity in the lives of human beings. LDCs need concrete support to translate their rich resources into results, and make development relevant to the life of poor people.

I would like to recall here the Ministerial Declaration on Intellectual Property for the Least Developed Countries of July 2009 and urge our development partners to actively support and participate in the efforts of the Director General to establish Funds in Trusts for the benefit of LDCs. I also appeal them for high level representation in the forthcoming UN LDCs IV in Istanbul which is a major undertaking of the United Nations dedicated to the cause of LDCs.

Before concluding, I would like to note with satisfaction the ongoing Nepal-WIPO cooperation. Cooperation has helped to build human and institutional capacity in IP sector. WIPO assistance remains vital for the modernization and automation of the IP system. We look forward to the deepening and widening of cooperation in the days to come.

Thank you for your kind attention.