

Remarks by Ambassador Dr. Dinesh Bhattarai, Permanent Representative of Nepal in the capacity of chair of the LDCs group at the launching of the Access to Specialized Patent Information {ASPI} at the WIPO, on September 17, 2010.

Director General of the WIPO
Mr. David Brown, President, IP Solutions,
Deputy/Assistant Directors General
Distinguished Representatives

I thank you for inviting me to this function.

The WIPO has convened this second global symposium of intellectual property authorities at a crucial time from the perspective of development discourses around the world. Two very important events are before us—the review summit on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) next week in New York and the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in Istanbul early next year. We have spent a decade working with the objective of accelerating the development process, at national and international levels and in global partnership, for advancing the MDGs including other internationally agreed development goals. Just five years are left at our disposal to realize these goals and materialize the dream of freedom from want and fear ensuring life with dignity to almost seven billion people in the world, particularly the poorest and the most vulnerable. There is thus a sense of urgency of action on part of all of us. Given the severity and depth of crisis we are undergoing through, this sense of urgency to the realization of development goals is indeed laudable.

Despite the encouraging figures from the UN Secretary General's latest report that the number of the world's poor has been reduced by 100 million over the past 1 year, our shared journey with the MDGs and the Brussels Programmes of Action for the LDCs for the decade from 2001-2010 has not been a smooth and enthusiastic sailing. During the forthcoming UN LDCs IV to be held in Istanbul early next year, we will, therefore, be deliberating on finding some innovative mechanisms to have result oriented, deliverable and implementable programmes included in the new Programme of Action.

Access to technological knowledge is a vital issue in ensuring the development of all sectors. The world is noticeably shifting from the traditional commodity based economy to knowledge based one. Those who are first in knowledge and innovation are sure to be the victors of the new millennium. It is the technological innovation that has achieved

far reaching breakthroughs, transformed the world, and brought prosperity in the lives of humans beings and the affluence of the twenty first century. Studies have shown that the world has been richer than ever before and ironically, the number of those living in the horror of absolute poverty has reached the highest point ever in the last couple of years, touching the mark of a billion. If we look at ILO Report, unemployment figure has reached 210 million- historic high. The fact testifies that the technology and innovation have not been able to transform lives around the world equitably. For developing and the least developed countries, the question of access to technological knowledge is as important as its invention. This is why we stress on the realization of the Goal no 8, namely, developing global partnership for development, as pivotal as other 7 goals. We find them closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. We believe the sharing of technology and technological benefits is one of the major aspects of this global partnership. Likewise, transfer of technology has been a focused matter of the Brussels Programmes of Action for the LDCs, Doha Development Agenda and the ongoing climate change discourse and will feature predominantly even in the UN LDCs IV.

Technology remains outside the frontiers of LDCs. Only 1% of LDCs' population has access to internet as compared to 11% in developing countries and over 60% in developed countries.

It is in this context and given these reasons, we welcome the launching of the Access to Specialized Patent Information (ASPI) by the WIPO, in partnership with the leading patent information providers, as an important medium of disseminating technological knowledge. This programme is believed to be **free of cost for LDCs** or low cost access to patent data for developing countries. This will benefit the patent related offices, academic and research institutions, and of course, the public policy makers. A rich database, ASPI, offers over 70 million patent documents, covering all areas of technology, which can be retrieved online.

We believe ASPI to be an effective initiative in promoting the transfer of technology and thus, reaping the fruit of technology for the people who need it the most. It is significant that WIPO has placed the countries in various groups, on the basis of the level of income, and determined the eligibility for access to information database either free of cost or with nominal cost. We welcome this arrangement to encourage and enable the least developed countries to take the optimum advantage of this innovative facility. Through this easy and comprehensive access to patent knowledge, the developing and least developed countries can identify the technical and commercial know how from around the globe and adapt it to local needs, and conditions.

While concluding, I would like to congratulate WIPO on launching this promising initiative and sincerely thank all the patent database providers for generously supporting WIPO's call and volunteering to provide the valuable patent information for the database. We recognize the benefits of this commendable undertaking for the developing and least developed countries. We look forward to the commencement of website. It is so encouraging to see the initiative concretized at this stage.

Thank you so much.