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**Statement by Mr. Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General,
Regional and National Development Sector,
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

**Africa Regional Review Meeting in preparation for the Fifth United Nations
Conference on LDCs (UN-LDC-V)
February 22-26, 2021 (Virtual Platform)**

**SESSION 1 - MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE:
LESSONS LEARNED AND BUILDING BACK BETTER**

February 22, 15:00 - 17:45 (Geneva time)

Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi,

Madame Under-Secretary-General Ms. Katoa 'Utoikamanu,

Madame Executive Secretary Ms. Songwe,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour and pleasure to participate in this Regional review meeting on behalf of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

During the last decade, WIPO has been actively contributing to the implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action through a set of support activities defined in "WIPO Deliverables for LDCs for 2011-2020", adopted in 2011 during the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs.

Under this broad framework of cooperation, WIPO's support and technical assistance to LDCs have focused on building technological capacity; providing access to scientific and technical information; formulation and implementation of innovation and IP policies and strategies; establishment of technology and innovation support centers; transfer of appropriate technology, branding and others.

More specifically, WIPO has assisted LDCs in integrating intellectual property (IP) into their national development policies and strategies. Since 2010, 25 African LDCs have adopted and are implementing their national IP policies and strategies.

In LDCs, the effective use of IP system for growth and economic development is severely hindered by a lack of awareness, knowledge and expertise in this field. Since 2015, WIPO has been organizing *the Regional Partnership Initiative for Innovation and Technological Capacity Building for the LDCs in Africa* in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in which 137 senior officials and experts have taken part.

During the period of 2010-2020, 511 participants from African LDCs have benefitted from training program on Intellectual Property Rights for Economic Growth and Development for LDCs, organized by WIPO with development assistance of the Swedish Government. Moreover, during this period 194 students from LDCs of Africa have participated in the Joint Master's degree programs on IP for LDCs with financial support from WIPO.

An important part of WIPO's technical assistance to LDCs has been on facilitating access to technological and scientific knowledge available globally in specialized databases of the IP system and in scientific literature. Around 1055 institutions from 32 African LDCs have joined the Access to Research for Development and Innovation (ARDI) program, launched by WIPO in 2009 together with publishing industry partners to increase the availability and use of scientific and technical information in developing countries and LDCs. All African LDCs have been participating in Access to Specialized Patent Information (ASPI) a public-private partnership established in 2010 and administered by WIPO. As of today, eight LDCs from Africa are members of *WIPO Re: Search*, an initiative established in 2011 to

provide access to technological know-how and data to stimulate research and development for better treatment against neglected tropical diseases.

Between 2010 and 2020, WIPO has helped establish Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISCs) in 22 LDCs in Africa to assist the local research and business community in the search and retrieval of technological information.

It has organized a range of capacity building activities for 26 LDCs in Africa in the area of branding and trademark. Also, legislative assistance and policy advice has been provided upon request to a number of African LDCs on traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.

WIPO Appropriate Technology Program for LDCs serves as a good example of a need-based development cooperation project. During its initial phases between 2010 and 2017, four African LDCs have benefitted from this program and eight appropriate technologies have been identified to address specific development-related issues. Since 2018, the projects on appropriate technology are being carried out in Mozambique, Senegal and Uganda.

Despite some signs of progress, LDCs have a long way to go towards the effective use of IP as a tool for development and wealth creation.

In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic poses multiple challenges to LDCs, to which science, innovation and technology can offer effective and sustainable solutions.

Therefore, capacity- and institution-building for science, technology, innovation and intellectual property in LDCs, as well as facilitating the use of technologies for development of LDCs should be among the key substantive areas of focus of the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs.

Under the leadership of our Director General Mr. Daren Tang, the Organization remains strongly committed to strengthen its support for its LDC Member States, while focusing on sustainable impact.

WIPO will continue to be responsive and proactive to assist the LDCs in their efforts to attain national economic growth and development goals. We will intensify our support to promote innovation and creativity to enhance the productive capacity and competitiveness of the LDCs in a rapidly evolving global knowledge-based economy. We aim to provide more needs-based and impact-oriented activities and projects to facilitate the LDCs using IP as a tool for economic growth and development.

In the run-up to the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs, we will review together with our beneficiary countries the progress made and lessons learnt during the implementation of the WIPO Deliverables for the LDCs over the last decade, and look forward to developing a new set of WIPO deliverables to bring more benefits and impacts for the beneficiary LDCs.

It is my pleasure to inform that WIPO has already started its preparatory work to contribute to the Fifth UN Conference. Among others, in the second quarter of 2021, we plan to organize a Regional Forum for LDCs of Africa and Haiti to review the implementation of WIPO Deliverables for the LDCs in 2011-2020 and to discuss the potential areas for new deliverables for the next decade.

We look forward to a productive discussion and very successful outcome of the Meeting. I thank you.

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