

Statement by Mr. Chi Dung Duong, Director, Division for Least Developed Countries, Regional and National Development Sector, WIPO at 1st session of the Inter-Governmental Preparatory Committee for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), May 24-28, 2021 (Virtual participation)

May 25, 2021, 10.00-12.00 New York time

Thematic panel discussion 2: Leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the SDGs

Distinguished Co-Chairs,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Panelists and Delegates,

At the outset, WIPO would like to express our sincere thanks for the organization of this important panel discussion. Indeed, in these times, the world needs more than ever science, technology and innovation. The world needs innovative solutions not just to the devastating pandemic, but also to other pressing developmental issues, such as food security, access to adequate healthcare, access to knowledge and information, acquisition of appropriate technologies, especially for the sustainable growth and development of as well as for the achieving the SDGs for all countries including LDCs.

IP is an essential and powerful tool that incentivizes innovation and creativity. This is why development challenges and pressing needs all require innovation, creativity and technology, all of which are underpinned and facilitated by IP.

WIPO's vision is for a world where innovation and creativity from anywhere is supported by intellectual property, for the good of everyone. In this spirit our Organization will prioritize working towards building an inclusive, balanced, vibrant and forward-looking global IP ecosystem, ensuring that all users and stakeholders in our global innovation community can participate in, and benefit from, this global IP ecosystem.

To make this vision a reality, in addition to providing value-added services to innovators and creators throughout the world, WIPO will enhance our work in helping our member countries, including LDCs in using IP and innovation as a tool for growth development, and harness its power as a catalyst for jobs, enterprise growth and ultimately economic and social development.

To leverage the power of science, technology and innovation, it is essential that the well-functioning IP and innovation eco-system is available. That is why, the key focus of WIPO's assistance to the LDCs under the WIPO Deliverables for LDCs for 2011-2020 has been to contribute to LDCs' efforts to build capacity in science, technology and innovation, and to strengthen their integration into the global knowledge system.

In the past decade, WIPO has undertaken a number of key initiatives, aimed at facilitating access by LDCs to the global patent information system and free access by LDCs to high-end technical and scientific information resources. WIPO also has been assisting LDCs in the transfer of appropriate technology to contribute to their development efforts.

Despite some signs of progress, LDCs still have a long way to go towards the effective use of IP and innovation as a tool for development and economic growth. To be competitive in today's knowledge-based global economy and to address effectively development

challenges, LDCs need to strengthen their national technological capacity, develop their national systems of innovation and promote creativity.

Capacity and institution-building for science, technology, innovation and using of IP for development in LDCs should therefore, in our views, be among the key substantive areas of focus at the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs and of the new Programme of Action for the LDCs. In today's world, STI have become a central driver of economic growth and sustainable development. Innovation is being increasingly recognized as the way to build a sustainable and inclusive future for all, irrespective of the levels of development. Most of the SDGs rely on innovation for their effective achievement. In this spirit, we need to work hard to assist LDCs to reach innovation "catch-up" and eliminate gaps that exist with respect to national innovation performance. For instance, we have to think how to help LDCs in developing their respective national innovation ecosystems that help SMEs grow their businesses, raise their productivity and bring their products to international markets using IP and innovative technological solutions.

WIPO, as the UN agency for IP and innovation, is ready to step up and continue to play its role in promotion of science, technology and innovation for the greater economic development, productive capacity and competitiveness of the LDCs in the coming decade. To do so, we aim to provide more needs-based and impact-oriented activities and projects to facilitate the LDCs using IP as a tool for growth and development.

The Organization looks forward to contribute effectively to the preparatory process for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and participate actively in the Conference, which will define the priorities for the international cooperation in support of LDCs for the new decade.

Thank you.

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