

**World Intellectual Property Organization
Assemblies of the Member States
September 20-29, 1999**

General Declaration

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the United States, I would like to congratulate you and the Vice Chairmen on your election. I am confident that you will lead this important meeting in fruitful discussions.

Mr. Chairman, the United States is pleased to participate in this year's meeting of the Assemblies of Member States. My delegation would like to make three points.

First, we would like to congratulate the Director General in his efforts to lead this Organization in an increasingly modern and transparent manner. We see these as good first steps in moving forward towards developing an Organization which is accountable and responsive to its primary constituency: that is, its Member States. We anticipate further progress in this direction.

Second, we are encouraged by many of the major developments we have seen since the last meeting of the Assemblies. For example, we applaud the recent conclusion of the New Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs. As Head of the U.S Delegation to the Diplomatic Conference and Vice Chair of the Conference, I was encouraged by the outcome reached as a result of the new Act, and I will recommend to President Clinton that he submit the Treaty to the Senate for its Advice and Consent on ratification in the near future. We believe that this new Act represents an improvement in international intellectual property protection and will benefit industrial designers throughout the world. We also look forward to similar progress in the areas of patent law harmonization and PCT simplification during the coming biennium.

Moreover, in the area of copyrights and neighboring rights, we are optimistic that the international community will soon enjoy the benefits of the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty as the number of ratified States grows. As you know, Mr. Chairman, last week

during the very successful International Conference on Electronic Commerce and Intellectual Property, I accompanied the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Mr. William Daley, to WIPO to deposit our Instruments of Ratification to these Treaties with the Director General. The United States is excited to join the States that have already ratified these Treaties and strongly encourages the remaining States to join us so that we may all gain from the progress made in this area.

Third, the United States, as a country which credits strong intellectual property laws and enforcement for much of its economic development during its 223 year history, strongly applauds WIPO's programs in the area of legislative drafting and enforcement training. With the forthcoming expiration of the transition period provided developing country Members of the World Trade Organization, WIPO fulfills an increasingly important role in assisting Member States in meeting their international obligations, and thereby offer nationals and non-nationals alike sufficient incentives to encourage investment and promote economic development.

Mr. Chairman, as with most Member States, the United States has long considered WIPO a valuable and integral part of the United Nations system. We look forward to working with the Director General and the International Bureau to ensure that increasingly modern and transparent management of the Organization, in conjunction with a focused approach to the Organization's role in the promotion of international intellectual property, is maintained.

Thank you.