

Statement by the South Centre to the 2021 Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

The South Centre welcomes the opportunity to deliver this statement.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental think tank of developing countries based in Geneva. We are of the view that a central goal of WIPO as part of the UN system is to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. A balanced and flexible international intellectual property system, with adequate safeguards, can be supportive of the SDGs, as set by SDG 3b. Supply and access to Covid-19 countermeasures can be accelerated with increased cooperation and removal of IP barriers. WIPO should support its Members to reach agreement on a temporary waiver of the TRIPS Agreement.

The South Centre looks forward to accelerated work in WIPO on the protection of genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, aligned with the targets of SDG 15.

The South Centre congratulates WIPO member States for mandating increased work in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, through the agreed biennium Program and Budget 2022-23. WIPO should organize a global conference on IP and public health together with WHO and WTO, open to the participation of all interested stakeholders. WIPO should produce patent landscapes for potential treatments, vaccines, diagnostics and other medical technologies for Covid-19 and disseminate relevant technologies that are in the public domain. In the context of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, Members should discuss how to promote the early publication of Covid-19 patent applications. The Standing Committee on Patents (SCP) should discuss trends in patent applications and patent grants on biologicals, including monoclonal antibodies and share experiences on how patentability criteria is being applied and recent jurisprudence.

The South Centre offers technical assistance, at no cost to developing countries, on the intersect of IP and public health. More information is available on our technical assistance portal <https://ipaccessmeds.southcentre.int>.

We are also at your disposal to meet bilaterally during this week or thereafter.

Thank you.