

**U.S. Statement for the Record Following Adoption of Agenda Item 19
WIPO General Assembly July 14-22, 2022**

Thank you, Madame Chair.

We welcome this decision that will provide the technical and capacity building assistance Ukraine urgently needs to rebuild its innovation and creativity sector, and intellectual property system destroyed by Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war.

No sector has gone unharmed during Russia's continued aggression. Russia's attacks have destroyed health facilities, schools, universities, businesses, and critical infrastructure. Transportation has been severely limited as roads are bombed and seaports are shelled. Russia has destroyed Ukraine's telecommunication towers, cutting off vital communications.

As we have seen throughout this spring, international organizations and specialized agencies have responded to these barbaric acts and adopted resolutions or decision points consistent with their mandates, and which will help Ukraine rebuild. We have seen such decisions at the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the International Telecommunications Union, the International Labor Organization, and the World Health Organization.

Russia unsuccessfully tried to avoid having this conversation at WIPO, even when the proposed decision point was within WIPO's mandate. On the first day of these meetings, Russia called a vote to remove this item from the Assemblies' agenda, even though Russia's brutal attacks have severely damaged Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector, and intellectual property system.

At the personnel level, staff of the Ukrainian Institute of Intellectual Property, Ukrpatent, have been forced to operate from underground shelters, often risking their lives and health.

At the physical infrastructure level, Ukraine's national plant gene bank in Kharkiv was destroyed by shelling earlier this year. This plant bank housed over 160,000 seed varieties and served as a research and educational center to assist with food, economic, and environmental security.

Moreover, Russia's strikes have damaged and destroyed important institutions symbolizing creativity or promoting innovation including museums, libraries, theaters, schools, and universities, as well as small and medium sized enterprises and startups. All of them rely on intellectual property, including copyrights, trademarks, or patents, to protect their works while promoting innovation and creativity.

This critical discussion and decision on assisting Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector, and intellectual property system were, therefore, absolutely necessary. This was even more apparent after the result of the vote at the beginning of these Assemblies on July 14, where only 12 member states voted to exclude this item from the agenda.

Madame Chair, we look forward to the implementation of this decision, and the next General Assembly when the International Bureau will report on its assessment, consultations, implementation of items 1-5 of document A/63/8, and other activities. At that time, we will also be prepared to consider and, as appropriate, propose any additional necessary steps to address the impacts of Russia's aggression on Ukraine's innovation and creativity sector and intellectual property system, to include the relocation of WIPO's external office in Moscow.

Thank you, Madame Chair.