



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SIERRA LEONE TO  
THE UNITED NATIONS AT GENEVA**

**Sixty-fourth series of meetings of the World Intellectual Property  
Organization (WIPO) Assemblies  
July 6 to 14, 2023**

***AGENDA ITEM 5***

**General Statement**

**Thank you, Madam Chair**

**Madam Chair**

**Director General**

**Distinguished colleagues**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

The Sierra Leone Delegation is pleased to participate in this 64th Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of WIPO Member States and we align ourselves with the statements delivered by the African Group. We congratulate WIPO Director General, Mr. Daren Tang and the WIPO Secretariat for the excellent year they have had, as outlined in the DG's report, as well as thank them for the excellent arrangements made for these meetings.

As we meet today, the world is confronted with complex economic, social and environmental challenges. WIPO offers Members States a valuable multilateral platform where we can work closely together, strengthen trust, and enhance partnerships to overcome these challenges.

A new and innovative dynamic is needed to overcome the negative shocks of the pandemic and contemporary global challenges that disproportionately affect developing countries like Sierra Leone. Today, innovation and technological advancements are changing the way we live and do business. Intellectual Property (IP) plays a critical role in helping businesses, particularly SMEs, as well as youth and women innovators to protect, manage and transact their IP and intangible assets for growth. The government of Sierra Leone recognizes that Intellectual

property is a transformative tool that would help rebuild our socio- economic infrastructures and achieve sustainable development goals. Now more than ever, we strongly believe inclusive, accessible, and balanced IP system is essential for promoting knowledge creation, transfer, and utilisation to address the unique challenges faced by developing countries like Sierra Leone.

We need to encourage our communities to become familiar with, and make effective use of the IP system, including as appropriate any tools for the protection of traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions, and genetic resources, for their own benefit and the benefit of their communities. In connection with this, this year in collaboration with stakeholders, including academic institutions and private sector, we celebrated international IP day with a particular focus on women's participation in innovation and creativity.

In all of our communities Women's entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity foster technological advancement, enriches culture, and contribute to economic growth. However, United Nations figures from a 2022 report indicate that women's exclusion from the digital world has contributed to a \$ 1 trillion loss in the gross domestic product of low-and middle-income countries in the last decade. Sierra Leone under the leadership of H.E. President Julius Madda Bio has been championing gender equality and women's empowerment as a crucial element of attaining sustainable peace and social and economic development in the country.

To this end, we have been working closely with WIPO to develop a well-functioning IP and innovation infrastructure in Sierra Leone to meet our Sustainable Development Goals and bridge the digital divide. We would like to sincerely thank WIPO and ARIPO for their continued support, guidance and assistance.

We need focused support mechanisms that facilitate technology transfer and capacity development from WIPO and its Member States to improve our national IP ecosystems, particularly in support of women and girls, and deliver concrete impact driven results in line with our development agenda, such as agriculture, health, and renewable energy.

Now more than ever we cannot afford to lose the innovative potential of any group or community!

**Finally, Madam Chair,**

We are fully committed to advancing the creation of a mutually beneficial IP ecosystem under your guidance and leadership.

In closing, please be assured of Sierra Leone's continuing constructive engagement with WIPO

Thank you Chair for your leadership of this session and we offer you our support to make these series of meetings a success.

**I thank you**