

## **OPENING STATEMENT BY THE AFRICAN GROUP DURING IGC 49**

**Thank you Chair,**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Kenya has the pleasure of delivering this statement on behalf of the African Group.

First, we renew our hearty congratulations to the Co-Chairs and Vice Chairs on their election to steer our discussions during these historical sessions of the IGC that are taking place following the adoption of the WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge achieved in May this year.

We are confident in their stewardship during this 49<sup>th</sup> Session of this committee where the important topics of Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions will take centre-stage.

The African Group also appreciates the hard work and dedication put in by the previous Chairs and Vice-Chairs, including Madam Lilyclaire Bellamy of Jamaica. Their wisdom and guidance played a major role in the discussions seen amongst the Member States and the positive outcomes that we are celebrating today.

Our gratitude also goes out to the Director General, Mr. Darren Tang, Assistant Director General Edward Kwakwa and Mr Wend Wendland and the TK Division, who have ably facilitated our negotiations over the years.

**Chair,**

This is indeed a historic session as we look back at the milestones achieved over the past 25 years of negotiations. The African Group greatly appreciates the conclusion and adoption of the latest WIPO Treaties: The May 2024 WIPO Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge and the November 2024 Riyadh Design Law Treaty.

We thank the entire WIPO membership for their diligence and hardwork which led to these commendable outcomes.

We are confident that Member States find the same zeal as we continue our negotiations on Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Cultural Expressions. This would greatly help in narrowing down the gaps toward achieving a legally binding instruments on these important topics. Our dedication and support to Indigenous

Peoples and Local Communities remains undiminished . It is our intention to continue constructively engaging the IPLCs to arrive at mutually beneficial outcomes.

The African Group is of the view that the Chairs text should form the basis of our negotiations with the understanding that TK and TCEs will be discussed together

In closing, Chair, let me once again reiterate the African Group's openness to dialogue that is transparent ,accommodative and embraces the gains made over the years.

The African Group remains committed and dedicated to the agenda of the 49<sup>th</sup> Session of the IGC and looks forward to fruitful outcomes.

**I thank you Madam Chair**