

ARIPO MEMBER STATES SIGN ADOPTION OF THE KAMPALA PROTOCOL ON COPYRIGHT REGISTRATION

The 40th Session of the Administrative Council held in Harare, Zimbabwe from 5th to 7th December 2016, identified the need to adopt a Protocol on voluntary registration of Copyright and Related Rights under the ARIPO framework and hence approved a roadmap for the establishment of a Voluntary Registration and Notification system at Africa Regional Intellectual Property Office (ARIPO). In pursuance of the objective, a feasibility study, policy, and legal framework were developed.

Following approval by the 17th Session of the Council of Ministers for the Legal Framework on establishing a regional voluntary copyright registration and notification system to be formulated into a Draft Protocol for adoption, a Diplomatic Conference was held in Kampala, Uganda from the 20th to 28th August 2021 at Speke Resort Munyonyo.

The Diplomatic Conference was preceded by an Experts' meeting that brought together Copyright experts from the ARIPO Member States on 20th and 21st August 2021 and the Eleventh Extraordinary Session of the Administrative Council of ARIPO from 22nd to 26th August 2021.

Delegates comprised of Intellectual Property Experts/Practitioners, Registrars General, Honorable Ministers of African Regional Intellectual Property Office (ARIPO) 20 member states, Partners from the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), Africa Intellectual Property Rights and Innovation (AfriPI) Project and OAPI met in Kampala from August 20 – 28, 2021. A series of meetings were held that included The Experts Meeting, the 11th Extraordinary Administrative Council Session of ARIPO and The diplomatic conference that was graced by H.E the President of the Republic of Uganda His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni who delivered a key note address on Friday 27th August, 2021.

The draft Protocol, upon its adoption, establishes a Regional Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights, creates and maintains a Regional Database for Copyright and Related Rights for the ARIPO Member States.

The benefits for the member states include: enhancing an effective and efficient network between the National offices in charge of Copyright and Related Rights and the Regional office, providing an effective means of presumption as to authorship and or ownership, facilitating commercialization, stimulating more creativity, expanding markets, attracting foreign direct investment and facilitating the enforcement of rights.

The voluntary registration of Copyright and Related Rights reassures business communities and opens doors for rights holders. The system will enable effective coordination between Copyright

The purpose of the meetings was to review and adopt the ARIPO protocol on voluntary registration of copyright and related rights. The protocol was finally adopted as **the Kampala Protocol on Voluntary Registration of Copyright and Related Rights.**

The conference was organized by Government of Uganda through Uganda Registration Services Bureau and the Africa Regional Intellectual Property Organization.

Benefits of adoption of the ARIPO protocol on voluntary registration of copyright and related rights

- ✓ Streamline networking – effective coordination between national offices & ARIPO;
- ✓ Providing rights owners with an effective means of presumption as to authorship and/or ownership of rights;
- ✓ Offering a document that will constitute a *prima facie* evidence of ownership;
- ✓ The authors and rights holders will be known, this can facilitate commercialization leading to them being incentivized to create more and explore new markets, thereby increasing their income;
- ✓ Can apply to financial institutions for collaterals using the document of ownership observing the T&C of financial institutions;
- ✓ Facilitating efficient distribution of royalties to the right holders;
- ✓ providing valuable important records and information on creativity, both from a legal and economic perspective;