



URSB REGISTRAR GENERAL MERCY K. KAINOBWISHO ELECTED VICE-CHAIR OF THE WIPO CONFERENCE

Geneva, Switzerland – 06th October, 2021; The meetings of the Assemblies of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which bring together WIPO's 184 member states, has elected Uganda Registration Services Bureau Registrar General, Mercy K. Kainobwiso as Vice-Chair of the Conference. Saudi Arabia's Shayea A. Alshayea was elected as Chair. The meeting of WIPO Assemblies, which runs from October 04th to October 8th, 2021, will take stock of progress in the Organization's work and discuss future policy directions.

Mercy K. Kainobwiso's election was overwhelmingly approved by the hundreds of government delegates, including ministers, and observers attending the inaugural session of the Oct. 4-8, 2021, WIPO Assemblies, with many attending in person under strict COVID-19 pandemic protocols and others connecting remotely. The Assembly converged to discuss a wide range of issues including intellectual property-related indicators which have shown great resilience despite the economic shock from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Assembly will also work towards finding practical ways of increasing human innovation and creativity as principal drivers of economic growth, amidst the pandemic.

This election is a major milestone for Uganda because it comes at such time when Cabinet had recently passed the National Intellectual Property Policy, and the signing of the *Kampala Protocol* which aims at supporting voluntary registration of copyright and related rights, all of which form the agenda for promotion and commercialization of intellectual property rights. The policy is being implemented by multi-sectoral stakeholders involved in protection of Intellectual property although supervision of its implementation is with Uganda Registration Services Bureau.

The Registrar General in her acceptance speech thanked member states for their "confidence and trust" in electing her as Vice-Chair of the WIPO Conference and called on their continuing cooperation and support in the common quest to ensure the progress of WIPO and the achievement lined programmes.

"I thank you all for the confidence in my abilities. It is incumbent upon us to sustain, expand and deepen the role of WIPO to improve the lives of all people, through creation of solutions to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities and lives. I am confident that human ingenuity will make our world better through innovations and creativity. I am proud to be part of the team of leaders to see this happen". Kainobwiso said. She added that the WIPO General Assembly traditionally provided the opportunity to assess challenges encountered and progress made in achieving stated goals and objectives.

Delegates at the WIPO Assembly will consider a wide range of items during the week-long meeting. They include a proposed Program of Work and Budget for the 2022/23 biennium for the Organization, based on a five-year strategic plan established by the current Director General, Darren Tang's administration. Mr. Tang said that priority for his administration is

reaching groups traditionally under-represented in use of IP, such as youths, women and SMEs

At the assembly, Caroline Matovu, a Ugandan entrepreneur and alumni of a capacity building WIPO project, was recognized for creating a new detergent brand in her back yard to help in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mercy K. Kainobwisho becomes the second Ugandan to be elected to a leading role at the WIPO Assemblies. In September 2019, Bemanya Twebaze, the former Registrar General and now Director General of the African Regional Intellectual Property Organisation (ARIPO) was elected President of the WIPO Advisory Committee on Enforcement, during the 14th session of the WIPO Advisory committee on enforcement in Geneva, Switzerland.

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ABOUT MERCY KAINOBWISHO

Mercy Kyomugasho Kainobwisho, is a Ugandan lawyer, business administrator and corporate executive, who serves as the Registrar General of the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), effective December 2020. Prior to her current position, she served as the Director of Intellectual Property at URSB.

About WIPO

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the global forum for intellectual property policy, services, information and cooperation. A specialized agency of the United Nations, WIPO assists its 193 member states in developing a balanced international IP legal framework to meet society's evolving needs. It provides business services for obtaining IP rights in multiple countries and resolving disputes. It delivers capacity-building programs to help developing countries benefit from using IP. And it provides free access to unique knowledge banks of IP information.

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