

PRESS RELEASE

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AMBASSADOR MANALO CHAIRS 42nd WIPO ASSEMBLY

26 September 2006—Ambassador Enrique A. Manalo, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations in Geneva, opened today the 42nd Session of the General Assembly of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Ambassador Manalo is chairing the General Assembly for the second time, having chaired last year's General Assembly.

The General Assembly, WIPO's highest decision-making body, meets in Geneva from September 25 to October 3, 2006, to review the organization's current activities and to set its agenda for the coming year. With 183 Member States, WIPO is a specialized U.N. agency responsible for the promotion of the protection of intellectual property throughout the world.

The issues for the General Assembly's discussions include the proposal to hold a Diplomatic Conference on a Broadcasting Treaty, the proposed renewal of the Mandate of the Provisional Committee on Development Agenda for WIPO (PCDA); and the creation of Work Program of the Standing Committee on Patents (SCP).

Last year, the General Assembly mandated the PCDA to find ways to enhance the development dimension in the Organization's work. However, member-states at the PCDA's last meeting in June decided to refer a decision on the future work of a development agenda for WIPO at this year's General Assembly.

Member-states were also unable to reach an agreement at the standing committee on patent's last meeting in April and referred the decision on its future work program to the WIPO General Assembly. This decision follows a series of consultations, including the holding of an Open Forum on the draft Substantive Patent Law Treaty (SPLT), held from March 1 to 3, 2006, which was also chaired by Ambassador Manalo.

On a more positive note, the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights, after almost a decade of intense negotiations, recommended the convening of a diplomatic conference for the protection of broadcasting organizations, including cable-casting organizations, from July 11 to August 1, 2007. This recommendation comes after almost a decade of negotiations on a basic proposal which would serve as a basis for the diplomatic conference.

The Philippine delegation to this meeting includes Director General Adrian Cristobal and Director Nevah Velasco of the Intellectual Property Commission of the Philippines. END