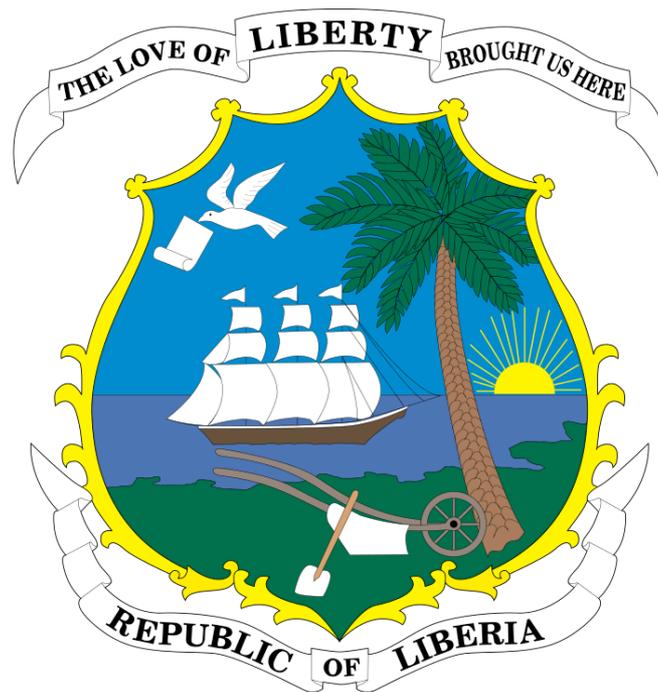

**WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
54th SERIES OF ASSEMBLIES OF MEMBER STATE**



REMARKS

**H.E. AXEL M. ADDY
*MINISTER***

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, R.L.

**COUNTRY REPORT ON THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY SYSTEM
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA**

Geneva, Switzerland

September 22-30, 2014.

**Country Report on the Intellectual Property System of the Republic of Liberia
presented to the 54th series of Assemblies of member states of WIPO**

Mr. Director General,
Madam Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you madam president.

On behalf of the Liberia delegation, let me congratulate you Madam Chair and the members of the secretariat for a well-organized Assemblies. We are delighted to participate in this year's assemblies of WIPO and are grateful for the enormous support extended to Liberia, under the leadership of the Director General, Dr. Francis Gurry. Liberia would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Francis Gurry on his re-election as Director General to head this institution for another term. We wish him and the new management team a success in this new undertaking.

Madam Chair, the Liberian Delegation also notes with satisfaction and aligns itself with the statements of Kenya for the African Group and Benin for the LDCs.

Madam Chair, we also note with satisfaction WIPO continued technical and financial support to the development of Intellectual Property System (IPS), particularly in LDCs.

With WIPO support under the framework of the Intellectual Property Development Plan (IPDP), we are pleased to note that much progress is being made in Liberia.

First, the new IP Laws of Liberia for which WIPO fielded experts to review, are presently being finalized for submission to the the Liberian National Legislature.

Second, we are also pleased that the Liberian National Legislature is reviewing all IP Conventions, Protocols and Treaties to which Liberia has acceded, for ratification;

Third, the Collective Management Organization (CMO) has been established by the Copyright Office of Liberia and has commenced education and sensitization work with its stakeholders and the general public.

Fourth, we are also grateful for the level of training, which is helping to upgrade the capacity of our employees at the offices of the intellectual property system to include three Liberian Lawyers who were trained at the University of Turin, Italy and the Africa University in Muntari, Zimbabwe. Against this backdrop, we would be pleased if additional lawyers could be trained especially in the area of IP enforcement so as to help us combat the present wave of escalating piracy and other infringements on our market.

Finally, in April of this year, for the first time, thanks to the support of WIPO, we were able to expose our SMEs to the benefit of IP during our annual SME conference.

Madam Chair, we should however note at this juncture that the Judicial workshop has not been held as anticipated and in like manner, the branding of Geographical Indications (GIs) in Liberia is still pending.

Against this backdrop, we humbly appeal to WIPO through its Director General to consider the holding of the Judicial Workshop and the branding of Liberia's selected Geographical Indications, GIs such as the Liberian Red Rice (Lot -23) , the Liberian Coffee (Coffee Liberica), and the Lofa Country Cloth.

With the present emphasis placed on Intellectual Property Right protection by the Liberian Government, we are hopeful that the use of IP to create wealth for the Liberian Society will be utilized.

Madam Chair, Excellencies, Colleagues, Friends, A few months ago, I joined our President H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on a tour of Lofa County, the northern part of Liberia where I was privileged to get a first hand experience of the production of the Lofa Cloth made from the Lofa Cotton.

A few months ago, I met a dynamic lady the City Mayor of Kolahun District, Ms. Mary S. Ngaima and we began discussions on the construction of the Lofa Women Weaving Center. I expressed that I had engaged WIPO on the branding of the Lofa cloth and wanted to move quickly in this direction.

Colleagues and friends, I visited the cotton fields of Kolahun, Mrs. Ngaima, the dynamic city mayor arranged for me to meet with the various women cooperatives and we began plans for the acquisition of land for the construction of the Lofa Women Weaving Center to benefit hundreds of women in that region of our country.

A few months ago, ladies and gentlemen, friends and colleagues, those women from Lofa came to Monrovia and participated in our annual SME conference where they sold all their Lofa cloth and return to Lofa inspired to produce more.

Madam Chair, a few months ago we first heard of EBOLA in Lofa near the border with Guinea where families going across the border to Guinea for a burial ceremony, returned to Foya and were ill. A few months ago, we were of the impression it was being contained.

Madam Chair, a few weeks ago, I was informed that the dynamic and lively City Mayor, Madam Mary S. Ngaima on September 1, 2014, contracted the virus while caring for a love one and died.

My fellow colleagues, friends, today when I googled Liberia, most of what I found was related to EBOLA. Today, a few months later, we have lost over 2000 Liberians, including women and children to this deadly virus. Today, we have an epidemic on our hands, beyond our wildest imagination. Today, my very presence here makes many uncomfortable, despite being screen like a lab rat for the first time in my life, to leave my own country.

Friends and colleagues, a few months ago we celebrated 10 years of peace and stability. A few months ago, we experience our first invasion of a biological nature. An invasion that travels the super highway of our cultural norms and traditions, our care for our love ones, the sanctity of birth and death, our expressions of love and emotion. These traditions provide the greatest ammunition for this invasion.

Colleagues and friends, this is a global threat to human kindness that requires a global response. While we are grateful for the robust response from the international community, we are told much more is needed to contain this outbreak. We therefore humbly appeal to this august body, with its network of inventors and innovations, to join the rest of the world in combatting this global invasion on human kindness.

Madam Chair, Excellencies, colleagues, friends, I appeal to all of you to join this fight to end this epidemic. Today, I am proud to say we live in a civilized world where a life, is a life, is a life, no matter gender, race, religion or birthplace. Join us please; let us beat this global threat to human kindness.

Thank you.
