

**Comments from World Intellectual Property Organization on the
Zero Draft of the Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries**

Increasing Intellectual Property Knowledge and Skills in the LDCs

The effective utilization of the IP system for economic, social, cultural and technological development in LDCs is hampered by the lack of awareness, knowledge, tools and skills in this field among the key IP users and stakeholders, including companies, chambers of commerce and industry, inventors' associations, performers and creators, as well as scientific and technological institutions.

The importance of IP has not been effectively established in the day-to-day lives of many people, and a culture of IP awareness is largely absent in many parts of society. These conditions still limit the contribution of the IP system to the economic growth and competitiveness of LDCs. LDCs will require the development of IP expertise amongst a smaller group, who can form the core of their local IP profession, whilst the development of IP and innovation related skills and capabilities, focusing less on expertise and more on practical skills, will be needed for innovators, creators, start-ups, SMEs, and other stakeholders in the broader innovation ecosystem.

Specific comments on the zero draft (underlined in the text)

93 We acknowledge the critical importance of science, technology, and innovation, including the effective, balanced, inclusive and enabling innovation eco-system, environmentally sound technologies and information and communications technologies, in the pursuit of achieving the SDGs. They can also play a key role in accelerating the pace of economic diversification and transformation, improving productivity and competitiveness, as well as enabling the full participation of LDCs in the global economy. We also acknowledge the potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution to raise global income levels and improve the quality of life for populations around the world.

94 We express concern that despite advances in science, technology, and innovation, significant gaps remain in STI between LDCs and the rest of the world. We are also concerned that the current international technology transfer landscape has serious gaps, especially in reaching out to LDCs, where institutional and technology capabilities are limited. LDCs still face substantial structural challenges in building institutions and capacity in the field of innovation and creativity.

95 During the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action over the period 2011-2020, LDCs faced significant and persistent lags in major indicators related to science, technology, and innovation. According to the Global Innovation Index (GII) rankings of 2020, nine of the 21 LDC economies improved their rankings, while eleven of the LDCs covered in the GI went down the ranks. The ratio of research and development expenditure in LDCs as a share of gross domestic product was 0.6 per cent or less between 2011-2017, compared Citizens of LDCs filed only 1,536 patents in 2018. According to the data compiled by WIPO, from 2010 to 2018, the number of patent applications filed by LDCs residents has doubled, from 835 to 1,634. But, as a share of patents globally, the figure is almost zero. The LDCs published only 11 journal articles for every 1 million people in 2018.

97 Targets: Substantially increase investment in research and development, as well as human, and institutional capacity building
 Building adequate digital infrastructure including for e-learning, e-governance, and e-commerce

