

Opening Speech

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Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you today in Skopje on this important anniversary on behalf of the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization, Francis Gurry.

Unfortunately, the Director General was unable to be with us this morning and so I would like to convey his words of welcome.

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great privilege and an honor to address these words to you on the occasion of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the State Office of Industrial Property. This is a very great occasion and all of my colleagues at the World Intellectual Property Organization and, indeed, everyone in the international intellectual property community extend their warmest congratulations on this achievement. Let me greet, in particular, State Secretary, Mr Anche Trifunov, the Director of the State Office, Mr Safet Emruli, and congratulate them on this great achievement.

We are very fortunate to have had excellent cooperation since 1993. In 1993, Macedonia, coming out of the former Yugoslav Republic, joined the World Intellectual Property Organization and joined at the same time most of the multilateral intellectual property treaties administered by W.I.P.O. Since that time, for the last 20 years, we have enjoyed a very close relationship and we are particularly grateful for the close attention and constructive engagement of your country in W.I.P.O. and in the international intellectual property agenda. Our activities of cooperation have covered, amongst other things, the development of a national intellectual property strategy. We have an ongoing cooperation with respect to our system called IPAS which is for office modernization and automation and we have cooperation with respect to the development of curricula for universities.

As I said, we appreciate greatly the involvement of your country in our Organization. I wish all of those who are present in Skopje for this very important occasion great

success for the celebration and a very enjoyable celebration and thank you once again for your support for the World Intellectual Property Organization.”

Reiterating the words of the Director General, I would like to pay tribute to the achievements of the past 20 years and to the very constructive cooperation which has been developed between W.I.P.O. and the State Office. This cooperation has encompassed a broad range of capacity building – from policy making, the development of human resources, awareness raising and creating and managing intellectual property assets to strengthening partnership at the international and regional levels.

In such a short time, so much has been achieved and this is a credit to you all. Indeed, seen through the lens of *The Global Innovation Index 2013* – published by W.I.P.O., the business school INSEAD and Cornell University among others - the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ranks an impressive 51st in the world, up from 62nd in last year’s survey.

Based upon these achievements, W.I.P.O. is looking forward to continuing to work closely with and to assist the State Office to bring to fruition many of our joint projects – from the upgrade of the IPAS system to further progress in the area of the National Intellectual Property Strategy and the important phase of its implementation.

Indeed, it is our conviction that bolstering the intellectual property system is of great importance in rewarding creativity, stimulating innovation and contributing to the economic, social and cultural development of your country. We stand ready to continue to support the State Office in this grand endeavor.

In closing, I would like to thank State Secretary Trifunov and Director Emruli for their hospitality and, again, extend the very best wishes of the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization to you all.

We wish you every success for the next 20 years and beyond.

Thank you.