

## Draft of Group B General Statement

Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO

44<sup>th</sup> Series of Meetings

March 31, 2008

1. Thank you Mr. Chairman. First, on behalf of Group B, let me express our great admiration and warmly congratulate you, Mr Chairman, for your stewardship in creating the proper conditions and positive atmosphere for convening this extraordinary session of the General Assembly. I personally and on behalf of Group B would like to say publicly that you, Mr. Ambassador, have been a model and an exemplar of integrity, dignity and probity of sound judgement in bringing together all of the genuine, heartfelt positions of various groups so that a productive way forward can be achieved and which is at hand today, and we thank you for that, sir. We are confident that you will continue to ably and justly guide our discussions as we move towards adoption of WIPO's Program and Budget for 2008/2009 later today.
2. Let me also extend Group B's thanks to the WIPO International Bureau for its hard work in preparing for this meeting and in assembling the documents presented to us today.
3. We are gathered to approve WIPO's Program & Budget for 2008/09. We note that the budget we are being called on to approve is a *transitional* budget. First, the Program & Budget Committee's recommendations (contained in document A/43/12) note that revisions will be needed to implement the agreed proposals relating to a WIPO Development Agenda, and in light of decisions taken by the PCT Union Assembly in respect of PCT fees, and decisions relating to the report on the desk-to-desk assessment. Indeed, the decision we are taking commits us to revising the 2008/09 Program & Budget in less than six months. Second, WIPO today is in the midst of a transition of leadership, which, as with all such transitions, will likely entail further revisions to the program & budget.
4. We would like to record our appreciation for the manner in which Director General has paved the way for his successor to take office on October 1, 2008. We further laud his wisdom to leave significant restructuring or reorganization decisions, and promotions to and within the Special Category, to WIPO's Senior Management Team (SMT). We

