

Geneva, May 5th 2015

Excellencies,

As you well know, the member States of the Lisbon Union will meet in Geneva between 11 and 21 May 2015 for the adoption of a New Act of the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration.

The review process started in September 2008 when the Assembly of the Lisbon Union established a Working Group on the Development of the Lisbon System. During six years of negotiations, the ten meetings of the Working Group have been systematically open to all members of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Rest assured that we will continue to work in the same spirit of dialogue and transparency throughout the Diplomatic Conference. We will remain open to discuss any proposals from observers, with the aim of improving the system, while “preserving the principles and objectives of the Lisbon Agreement”, as set in the revision process decision.

With respect to the procedures of the Diplomatic Conference itself, and in response to the request of some countries to be granted the status of Member, we would like to emphasize that we are all bound by existing international law. In accordance with the principles recognised by the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (particularly Articles 39 and 40), it is the States parties to an international treaty that negotiate and decide on the conditions of its amendment. We are also bound by the Lisbon Agreement (Article 13), which provides that the agreement "may be revised by conferences held between the delegates of the countries of the Special Union". We do hope that you will understand that the Observer status for the Non-members of the Lisbon system is in conformity with our international rights and obligations and is not, in any way, questioning our attachment to the values of inclusiveness and transparency in WIPO negotiation processes.

Excellencies, be assured that our approach is both positive and sincere, in perfect accordance with practices followed at WIPO since the organization was founded. We are committed to treating all the WIPO members, as well as the organization itself, with the greatest respect.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of our highest consideration.

List of signatories:

H.E. Mr Boudjemâa DELMI, Permanent Representative of Algeria

H.E. Mr Miloš PRICA, Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina

H.E. Mr Ivan PIPERKOV, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria

H.E. Ms Evelyne Marie Augustine ILBOUDO, Deputy Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso

H.E. Ms Kateřina SEQUENSOVÁ, Permanent Representative of Czech Republic

H.E. Ms Elayne WHYTE GÓMEZ, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

H.E. Ms Anayansi RODRÍGUEZ CAMEJO, Permanent Representative of Cuba

H.E. Mr Nicolas NIEMTCHINOW, Permanent Representative of France

H.E. Mr Baudelaire NDONG ELLA, Permanent Representative of Gabon

H.E. Mr Shalva TSISKARASHVILI, Permanent Representative of Georgia

H.E. Mr Pierre André DUNBAR, Permanent Representative of Haiti

H.E. Ms Zsuzsanna HORVÁTH, Permanent Representative of Hungary

H.E. Mr Mohsen NAZIRI ASL, Permanent Representative of Islamic Republic of Iran

H.E. Mr Maurizio Enrico Luigi SERRA, Permanent Representative of Italy

H.E. Mr Jorge LOMÓNACO, Permanent Representative of Mexico

H.E. Mr Nebojša KALUDJEROVIĆ, Permanent Representative of Montenegro

H.E. Mr Carlos ROBELO RAFFONE, Permanent Representative of Nicaragua

H.E. Mr Luis Enrique CHÁVEZ BASAGOITIA, Permanent Representative of Peru

H.E. Mr Pedro Nuno BÁRTOLO, Permanent Representative of Portugal

H.E. Mr Luc-Joseph OKIO, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo

H.E. Mr Dusko UZUNOVSKI, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Macedonia

H.E. Mr Victor MORARU, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova

H.E. Mr Vladislav MLADENOVIĆ, Permanent Representative of Serbia

H.E. Mr Fedor ROSOCHA, Permanent Representative of Slovakia

H.E. Ms Nakpa POLO, Permanent Representative of Togo

H.E. Mr Walid DOUDECH, Permanent Representative of Tunisia