



IP POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS Bulletin

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Report on the 2025 WIPO Assemblies

On July 8-17, 2025, representatives from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) were part of the official delegation representing the United States at the 66th Series of Meetings of the Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), held in Geneva, Switzerland. This Bulletin offers highlights of the meetings' outcomes. All decisions from the Assemblies can be found in the summary report published by WIPO (document [A/66/10](#)).

On July 8, 2025, WIPO Director General Daren Tang delivered opening remarks at the WIPO Assemblies. He highlighted the value of intellectual property (IP) to global economic markets and argued that, through IP, "we are not merely protecting ideas—we are advancing what is fundamental to the human race." He also emphasized that WIPO brought IP to the grassroots by making efforts to serve those underserved alongside the traditional users and holders of IP rights.

Coke Morgan Stewart, Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the USPTO, delivered the general statement of the United States. She called on WIPO to focus its work on promoting the protection of IP worldwide and emphasized the importance of WIPO's international filing and registration services to stakeholders. Stewart specifically reaffirmed that "for the PCT system to remain an effective tool for patent applicants, the system

cannot add requirements such as the disclosure of traditional knowledge and genetic resources that do not relate to patentability of inventions." Stewart also noted that IP is a critical element of economic prosperity for all countries—developed and developing—and cited President Trump's 2025 World IP Day Proclamation, stating "[t]hrough the promotion and protection of IP, we are empowering musicians, writers, authors, scientist[s], and inventors."

Program of Work and Budget for 2026-2027

During their July meetings, the WIPO Assemblies adopted the Program of Work and Budget for 2026-2027, which sets forth the efforts that WIPO will undertake during the 2026/2027 biennium and establishes the organization's budget during that time. (See the "Proposed Program of Work and Budget for 2026/27" WIPO document [A/66/9](#), as well as the changes set forth on page 7 of the summary report.)

WIPO estimates that in 2026-2027, its income will be 945 million Swiss francs (approximately US\$1.17 billion) and expenditures will be 937.4 million Swiss francs (approximately US\$1.16 billion), leaving a net operating surplus of 7.6 million Swiss francs (approximately US\$9.4 million). Fee income from the global IP systems (Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), Madrid, and Hague) represents 96% of the total WIPO income, with PCT fee income alone accounting for 76% of total income.

After intense negotiations, the United States ultimately disassociated from consensus regarding the adoption of the WIPO Program of Work and Budget. The basis for that r disassociation was the pervasive inclusion of references in the Program of Work and Budget to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, which give a false impression that the drivers of WIPO’s work are primarily focused on development rather than promoting the protection of IP worldwide.

In its disassociation statement, the United States also noted its continued concerns with the increases to the budget for the Lisbon system, which is the international system of appellation of origins and geographical indications to which the United States is not a party due to concerns with the system. Of particular concern for the United States is how the 2026–2027 WIPO budget encourages unsustainable financial practices and improperly redirects funds in an increased amount from PCT and Madrid into the Lisbon system.

Admission of new observers

The WIPO Assemblies accredited a number of new observers at the July meeting, including those with U.S. ties, namely, the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), the National Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce, the News/Media Alliance, and the United States Council for International Business. Notably, the IIPA is a co-lead of the new WIPO Industry Coalition.

Director General Election in 2026

An important topic for member states was a discussion of the upcoming appointment of the WIPO Director General in 2026, as the current Director General’s term expires on September 30, 2026 . The WIPO General Assembly, the WIPO Coordination Committee, and the Paris and Berne Union Assemblies together approved a timetable detailing the steps in this process (see paragraph seven of a document they issued on this topic, WIPO document [A/66/4](#)). A July 24, 2025 Circular solicited proposals for candidates to the position of Director General. The deadline for submission is October 24, 2025.

Afterwards, on February 12–13, 2026, the WIPO Coordination Committee will meet to nominate a

candidate for appointment to the post of Director General. Then, on April 21, 2026, the WIPO General Assembly, the Paris Union Assembly, and the Berne Union Assembly will meet to appoint the next Director General. The tenure for the next Director General will commence on October 1, 2026, for a six-year term.

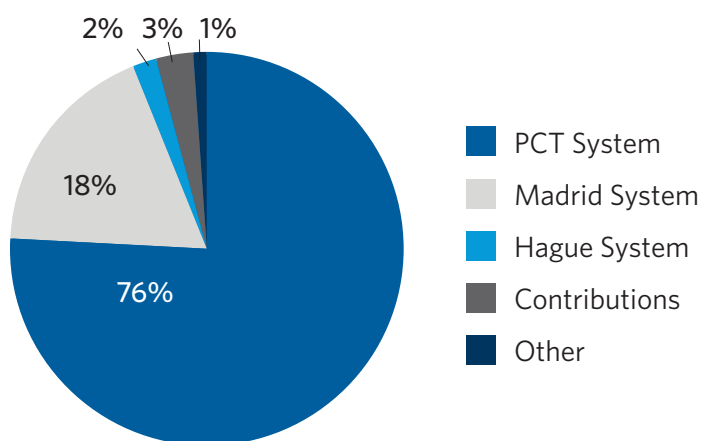
Committee appointments of the United States

The United States retained its seat on the WIPO Coordination Committee, owing to its appointment to the Berne Executive Committee. An additional 82 Coordination Committee members were also appointed, and seven seats remain vacant. The United States also maintained its membership in the Program and Budget Committee, along with 52 other WIPO member states.

Renewal of IGC mandate for 2026–2027

The Assemblies renewed the mandate of the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (IGC) for the 2026/2027 biennium to continue its efforts to protect genetic resources (GRs), traditional knowledge (TK), and traditional cultural expressions (TCEs). Three sessions during the 2026/2027 biennium will address the IGC’s work on working methods involving an evidenced-based approach, with actual examples of national and regional experiences.

WIPO income share by source for 2026/2027 biennium



SOURCE: Source: WIPO, Proposed Program of Work and Budget the 2026/27 Biennium, Document [A/66/9](#), www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/govbody/en/a_66/a_66_9.pdf

Amendments to the Madrid Protocol

The Madrid Union Assembly approved amendments to several rules of the “Regulations Under the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks.”

Rules 3, 20bis, 24, and 25 were amended to require holders, licensees, and representatives to provide email addresses if not already provided. In addition, Rule 35 was amended to require the International Bureau to recalculate individual fees into Swiss francs when the exchange rate decreases more than 5% over three consecutive months, rather than the current 10%. This change will ensure that individual fees in Swiss francs reflect more closely the amounts users would have paid if filing directly in the relevant jurisdictions. Details about these amendments are in WIPO document [MM/A/59/1](#).

PCT and Hague systems

The Assemblies did not discuss proposed changes to the Hague system or the PCT system this year. Earlier in 2025, the PCT Working Group was suspended indefinitely after an unresolved discussion on whether the PCT Working Group should consider amendments to accommodate the WIPO Treaty on IP, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (GRATK Treaty). The PCT system was therefore not an agenda item for the 2025 WIPO Assemblies.

The Hague Union Assembly separately approved a recommendation that encourages offices of contracting parties to participate in the WIPO Digital Access Service (WIPO DAS) with respect to priority documents for design applications. This system enables applicants and offices to comply with the requirements of the Paris Convention for certification in a WIPO-hosted electronic environment in a more cost-efficient and effective way.

Riyadh Design Law Treaty

The General Assembly recognized the successful outcome of the diplomatic conference that led to the adoption of the Riyadh Design Law Treaty (RDLT) on November 22, 2024. The treaty will make the international design system more straightforward and easier, faster, and less expensive for designers to pursue protection for their industrial designs in jurisdictions worldwide, by simplifying and streamlining formality requirements. The RDLT also reflects WIPO’s long-standing commitment to consensus-based outcomes, which ensures suitable outcomes agreeable to all member states. In total, 135 member states signed the final act of the diplomatic conference, which summarizes historical information—such as the dates and venue of the diplomatic conference, the name of the adopted treaty, and its adoption date—and lists the names of the signatories of the final act.

The RDLT remains open for signature until November 22, 2025. However, a member state may still join the treaty via accession after the period for signature closes. The RDLT will enter into force three months once there are 15 ratifications or accessions. Currently, there are 25 signatories, but no ratifications or accessions.

Further information

Further details on the 2025 WIPO Assemblies are available on the [WIPO website](#) (www.wipo.org) or in the [summary report](#) prepared by the WIPO Secretariat (WIPO document A/66/10).

New WIPO treaties and accessions in 2024–2025

- **Riyadh Design Law Treaty:** adopted November 22, 2024; 25 signatories
- **Treaty on Intellectual Property, Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge:** adopted May 24, 2024; 44 signatories; two ratifications
- **Hague Agreement:** new accessions by Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, and Uzbekistan
- **Madrid Protocol:** new accession by Qatar
- **Patent Cooperation Treaty:** new accession by Uruguay

Source: World Intellectual Property Organization