



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*Geneva: 13th June 2024*

### **MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HON. ODONGO JEJE ABUBAKHAR HOLDS BILATERAL MEETING WITH MR. DAREN TANG DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION IN GENEVA**

Minister of Foreign Affairs Odongo Jeje Abubakhar had a bilateral meeting with Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Mr. Daren Tang on the sidelines of the UNCTAD 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration at the United Nations in Geneva. The meeting took place at the WIPO headquarters in Geneva on 12 June 2024.

Hon. Odongo thanked DG Tang for the meeting and commend his efforts to make WIPO deliver a balanced global IP system. He congratulated Mr. Tang on a successful Diplomatic Conference on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge saying that Uganda is glad to have participated in the negotiations that led to that important outcome.

Hon. Odongo expressed gratitude for the Director-General for WIPO's support to Uganda over the years, " we thank you for your support over the years, including project support to the establishment of 34 Technology and Innovation Centres; building capacity for Patent Examiners and Drafters, development of a National Action Plan to protect and benefit from Uganda's traditional knowledge, genetic resources and traditional cultural expressions and the development of the National Intellectual Property Policy in 2019," said Odongo.

Minister Odongo stressed that Uganda is keen to work with WIPO to empower local communities and producers in rural areas with best practices in geographical indications that enhance a competitive advantage for Uganda's agricultural producers by establishing a targeted knowledge transfer program that leverages on immersive learning experiences such as study tours, in order to strengthen outcomes of the program.

Director-General Tang thanked the Minister for Uganda's active role in the negotiations on the Traditional Knowledge Convention, noting that it was 25 years in the making and it was recently concluded with consensus. He was glad to report that since MFA's request for support in the area of Traditional knowledge when the two first met in January 2022, WIPO had added

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Uganda to countries receiving project support in the area of Traditional Knowledge and said it was possible to expand this support to the area of Geographical Indications.

Expressing concern that Uganda's Global Innovation Index rank is declining primarily due to the limited number of patents coming out of the country. Hon. Odongo said that this is partly due to the fact that over 90% of patents filed cannot to be registered due to poor drafting of the applications. "We think a comprehensive patent drafting training program should address this problem," he said, adding that an enhanced technology transfer program would be appreciated.

In this vein, Hon. Odongo revealed that Uganda intends to participate at the 2025 WIPO General Assemblies to showcase use of Intellectual Property for development, particularly among SMEs, Women and Youth producers in Uganda through an exhibition at the sidelines of the Assemblies.

Hon. Odongo was accompanied to the meeting by the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the UN in Geneva, Amb. Marcel Tibaleka and officials of the Mission. **END**

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