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Remarks by John A. Squires before the 2026 WIPO Member State Assemblies

July 8, 2026

Remarks as delivered

John A. Squires

60th Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO

Assemblies of the Member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Geneva, Switzerland

July 8, 2026

Thank you, Chair.

The United States is pleased to see you presiding over the General Assembly.

We would like to congratulate Director General Tang on his reelection, and we look forward to his continued leadership at WIPO. A new WIPO term brings occasion for this Organization to refresh, refocus, and fixate on WIPO's goal – promoting intellectual property and advancing strong protection of IP throughout the world.

This promotion and protection of IP is best and most clearly advanced by WIPO's filing and registration systems. The time has come now to modernize these systems, including leveraging the most powerful technology tools the planet has ever seen, including AI, to bring them robustly to today's form and function. For example, we should not be looking to renegotiate aspects of the highly successful PCT system; rather, we must focus our time and resources on enhancing the experience of PCT applicants, particularly those managing increasingly complex global patent portfolios. With a greater refocus on the resources already generated by PCT filings back into the system – a single global dashboard and portal to manage an entity's global portfolio is something we should be working towards, especially for small to medium enterprises, or SMEs.

The time is now also to move past archaic requirements that discourage trademark owners' full use of the Madrid system in pursuing important branding rights across the globe. The United States is proud to be leading modernization efforts in these systems. We look forward to moving these improvements towards fruition with Member States – not in ten years – but now, this year. The world's inventors, creators, and entrepreneurs cannot wait. The onrush of technology has never even heard of the word "wait." Innovation only knows now.

Finally, as we start this new term, we must be mindful that time and energy – and WIPO's mandate – are limited. To be successful, WIPO must make important decisions on what to do, in part, by deciding what not to do, maintaining its focus.

We look forward to working with you to protect the PCT system from harmful encumbrances and to modernize the global IP system for applicants in 2026 with the urgency of now.

Thank you.

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