10/01/2020 Events

Singaporean Daren Tang officially assumed his six-year mandate as Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), starting on October 1, 2020.

Prior to his appointment as WIPO Director General, Daren Tang served as Chief Executive of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore, an office ranked as the world's most innovative intellectual property (IP) office by the World Trademark Review in 2019. Between 1997 and 2012, before joining the IP Office in Singapore, Daren Tang held different legal positions within the Attorney-General's Chambers and the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore. Mr. Tang also presided as Chair of WIPO's Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights from May 2017 until he took over the leadership of the Organization.

WIPO General Assembly, the Organization's highest governing body on May 8, 2020, approved the candidacy of Singaporean Daren Tang for the post of Director General of WIPO.

The process for electing a Director General of WIPO is governed by the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization and the Procedures for the Nomination and Appointment of Directors General of WIPO, adopted by the Member States of WIPO at the General Assembly of October 2019. It should be noted that Mr. Tang's confirmation as Director General-elect took place through an unprecedented written procedure agreed by WIPO member states after WIPO canceled or postponed in-person meetings due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Following his appointment, Daren Tang laid out his priorities and vision for the Organization going forward, saying that work will be channeled on three themes: inclusiveness, balance and future-orientation.

"We must prioritize work towards build an inclusive global IP ecosystem that serves the interests of all countries and their stakeholders," said Mr. Tang, while underlining that special attention must be given to developing countries and the least developed.

"Second, we must work towards a balanced global IP ecosystem, ensuring that the institutions, companies, policy makers, users and all stakeholders in our global innovation community can participate in, and benefit from, this global IP ecosystem," he noted.

"Third, WIPO must work towards a vibrant and forward-looking global IP ecosystem. It must help the world broaden its perspective of IP beyond its legal and technical aspects to its powerful role as a supporter of entrepreneurs and enterprises, catalyst for investments, driver of economic growth and a promoter of social vibrancy," Daren Tang added.

Director General Tang also committed to build a strong organizational foundation to ensure that WIPO remains a "dynamic, open and transparent Organization with a diverse staff membership that better reflects a fair gender and geographical balance." This will be coupled with implementing high standards of governance and meticulous financial management," said Daren Tang.

Daren Tang is the fifth Director General of WIPO, following Francis Gurry of Australia (2008-2020), Kamil Idris of Sudan (1997-2008), Arpad Bogsch of the USA (1973-1997) and Georg Bodenhausen of the Netherlands (1970-1973).

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