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April 26 is World Intellectual Property Day. This year our theme is *Creativity – The Next Generation* [1].

Creativity is common to the whole of humanity.

Whoever we are, wherever we live, whatever our circumstances, we all have the capacity to create. And it is this human creativity and inventiveness that is responsible for improving our quality of life in every sphere: our medical care, our transport, our communication, our entertainment. The aim of intellectual property is to promote conditions that help this creativity and innovative capacity flourish across the world.

The way in which humanity expresses itself creatively has changed profoundly in the last 30 years. People are creating in ever more exciting ways. We have seen an explosion of user-generated content, and vast numbers of people coming together - through crowd-sourcing and open innovation platforms for example - to take part in collective creation. This creative collaboration is opening up rich new possibilities for humanity.

What will the next generation bring?

While predicting the future is difficult, we do know that the speed of change has accelerated through recent generations. And now we see before us a whole range of new technologies with the potential to fundamentally change the way we live. That change is coming more and more quickly. The next generation will be here tomorrow.

The next developments in the life sciences, for instance, could transform our lives. Information technology, molecular biology, regenerative medicine, and even technologies such as 3D printing are coming together in and around the life sciences to generate extraordinary potential.

On World IP Day we encourage people to reflect about the role of intellectual property in our changing world. I believe there is a certain genius in intellectual property. What it does is create a unique incentive for investment in research and development, in innovation, and in cultural creation and production.

How does it do that? By creating a mechanism for buying, selling and sharing access to the benefits of innovation and cultural creation. Our challenge is to ensure that the conditions for access are fair and balanced, so that the benefits are widespread, and so that it fosters a truly dynamic, creative global society in which the next generation will thrive.

Young people have the capacity to dream in a way that far surpasses the capacity of older people. They are the future. So my message to the next generation on World IP Day is keep creating, keep innovating. And keep thinking about how IP should fulfill its role in the future social management of creativity and innovation.

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