



Celebrating 2018 World IP Day

Open Letter to
WIPO Director General Dr. Francis Gurry

Today, April 26, 2018, we celebrate World IP Day. This is an annual opportunity to celebrate intellectual property (IP) rights for their role in expanding economies, bolstering innovation, and saving lives. We, the undersigned organizations, join the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in recognizing the crucial role that IP rights play in incentivizing innovators to create new goods and services, encouraging creators to produce original content, and inspiring entrepreneurs to enter – and thrive-- in the market.

This year's theme, *Powering change: Women in innovation and creativity*, is particularly relevant to our organizations. Intellectual property has played an important role throughout history in advancing the rights and liberties of women worldwide. We remain committed to supporting women in innovation—as all of humanity benefits from the incredible discoveries that flow from strong IP rights.

The Impact of IP Rights on the Economy

Implementing strong IP protections is vital to spurring well-paid jobs and essential to economic development. IP-intensive industries fuel modern economies and they are particularly important in the developing world as well. A simple look at the data makes this point abundantly clear. IP-intensive industries employ about 40 percent of the workforces in the U.S. and nearly 28 percent in the EU. That accounts for more than 105 million jobs. These industries are responsible for generating nearly 40 percent of the combined U.S. & EU gross domestic product, and workers in these industries are paid 46 percent more than those employed in comparable jobs in non-IP-intensive industries. In fact, per capita income in countries with robust property rights tends to be roughly 21 times more than per-capita income in countries with weak protections, which underscores the impact of IP rights on the economy.

The Impact of IP Rights on Innovation

Society relies on continued innovation to advance humanity, but without incentives for innovation we would lack many of the technologies that we consider commonplace today. In 2016, a record 3.1 million new patents were filed worldwide. These patents protected groundbreaking technological processes, helped cure devastating diseases, and modernized everyday conveniences. This would not have been possible without protections for innovation. Copying is not the same as inventing, and enforcement of IP rights helps prevent counterfeits that not only undermine economic growth, but finance criminal organizations as well. This shadow economy that thrives on counterfeit goods is responsible for nearly 2.5 percent of global imports, amounting to nearly \$461 billion. This not only threatens the bottom line of iconic retail brands, but it puts next-generation medicines – and the patients who depend upon them – at risk.

The Impact of IP on Human Lives

Newly filed patents propose a solution to a problem. In many cases, these solutions are not just convenient, but critical. Around the world, 780 million people have no access to clean water, and 1.8 million people die each year from diseases associated with water contamination. Combating this problem are innovations in purification and conservation that provide clean water—and more of it. Each invention reflects the patience and persistence of thousands of scientists and engineers from across the world.

Despite this, the intellectual property rights that impart these benefits are under constant threat. Even within the United Nations system, the very protections that are so necessary to solve today's complex global challenges are undermined by initiatives such as the 2016 UN High-Level Panel on Access to Medicines. This UN High-Level Panel report and other ill-informed UN initiatives have gone so far as to portray patents and intellectual property as harmful to global development and human rights. This is a backwards notion considering the well-documented role of intellectual property in making countries more prosperous and healthy. We therefore urge WIPO to play a more active role in informing international debates, particularly in the field of public health, and ensuring that the voices of innovation are heard at every level.

We call on WIPO to take action. We ask that WIPO, **1)** review the ways that IP enhances economic growth and development; **2)** work with countries to enhance their IP regimes and protections; and **3)** support IP as a property right that is necessary for enhancing human welfare and achieving the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

World IP Day celebrates the curiosity and innovation at the core of humanity. This year in particular, it recognizes the innumerable contributions of women inventors, creators, and scientists. IP rights expand the economy, bolster innovation, and save lives. We look forward to working with WIPO to advance awareness of the incalculable value of IP rights.

Cc:

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO)

LIBERTAD y Progreso

Aldo M. Abram
Executive Director
Libertad y Progreso
Argentina



Frederico N. Fernández
President
Fundación Internacional
Bases
Argentina



Garret Edwards
Director of Legal Research
Fundación Libertad
Argentina



Martín Simonetta
Executive Director
Fundacion Atlas para una
sociedad libre
Argentina

australian
taxpayers'
alliance
fighting tax, regulation & waste

Tim Andrews
Executive Director
Australian Taxpayers Alliance
Australia



Barbara Kolm
Director
Austrian Economic Center
Austria



Richard Zundritsch
Board of Directors
Hayek Institute
Austria



Javier Hurtado Mira
Chairman
Democratic Youth
Community of Europe
Belgium



Naweed Khan
Executive Director
New Direction
Belgium



Peter Holle
President
Frontier Centre for Public
Policy
Canada



Troy Lanigan
President
Canadian Taxpayers
Federation
Canada



Adriana Mejía Hernández
Executive Director
Instituto de Ciencia Política
Hernán Echavarría Olózaga
columbia



Jan Levora
Director
Czech Association for
Branded Products
Czech Republic



لدراسات السياسات العامة
The Egyptian Center For Public Policy Studies

Ahmed Ragab Mohamed
Executive Director
The Egypt Center for Public
Policy Studies
Egypt



Eudes Baufreton
Director
Contribuables Associés
France



Paata Sheshelidze
President
New Economic School
Georgia



Alexander Skouras
President
Center for Liberty
Studies Markos Dragoumis
(KEFiM)
Greece



Elena Panaritis
Founder
Thought 4 Action
Greece



Guillermo Peña Panting
Executive Director
Fundación Eléutera
Honduras



Raymond Ho Man Kit
Convenor
Momentum 107
Hong Kong (SAR)



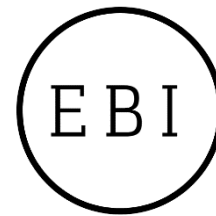
Amit Kapoor
Honorary Chairman
Institute for Competitiveness
India



Rainer Heufers
Executive Director
Center for Indonesian Policy
Studies
Indonesia



Eamon Delaney
Executive Director
Hibernia Forum
Ireland



Gary L. Kavanagh
Director
Edmund Burke Institute
Ireland



Daniele Capezone
General Director
New Direction- Italia
Italy



Enrico Morbelli
Coordinator
Scuola di Liberalismo
Italy



Masaru Uchiyama
President
Japanese for Tax Reform
Japan



Slobodon Franeta
Chairman
The Lucha Institute
Montenegro



Giacomo Bandini
Coordinator
Campagne Liberali/ For Free
Choice
Italy/ Belgium



Yuya Watase
President
Pacific Alliance Institute
Japan



Nouh El Harmouzi
Director
Arab Center for Scientific
Research and Humane
Studies
Morocco



Giuseppe Sabella
Executive Director
Think-in
Italy



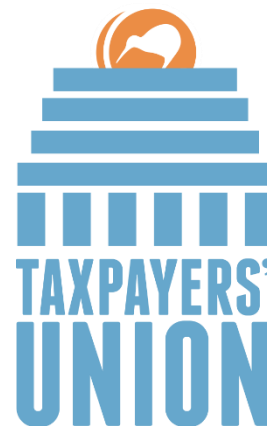
Biljana Janeva
Executive Director
OHRID Institute for Economic
Strategies and International
Affairs
Macedonia



Pietro Paganini
President
Competere
Italy



Ali Salman
Director of Research
Institute for Democracy and
Economic Affairs (IDEAS)
Malaysia



Jordan Williams
Executive Director
New Zealand Taxpayers
Union
New Zealand



Alternate Solutions
Institute

Raza Ullah
President
Alternate Solutions Institute
Pakistan



Omar Shaban
Director
Palthink for Strategic Studies
Palestine

**CONTRIBUYENTES
Por RESPETO**

Jose Ignacio Beteta Bazán
President
Contribuyentes por Respeto
Peru



Bienvenido Oplas, Jr.
President
Minimal Government
Thinkers
Philippines



Tomasz Wróblewski
President
Warsaw Enterprise Institute
Poland



Miloš Nikolić
President and Co-Founder
Libertarian Club Libek
Serbia



Jasson Urbach
Director
Free Market Foundation
South Africa



Diego de la Cruz
Director
Foro Regulación Inteligente
Spain



Ignacio Arsuaga
President
Citizen Go
Spain

Think Tank
civismo

Javier Santacruz Cano
Head of Research
Think Tank Civismo
Spain



Anders Ydstedt
Chairman
Svensk Tidskrift
Sweden



Bican Şahin
Chairman of Board of
Directors
Freedom Research
Association
Turkey



Maryan Zablotsky
President
Ukrainian Economic
Freedoms Foundation
Ukraine



Benjamin Harris-Quinney
Chairman
The Bow Group
United Kingdom



Christopher Snowdon
Head of Lifestyle Economics
Institute for Economic Affairs
United Kingdom



John O'Connell
Chief Executive
TaxPayers' Alliance
United Kingdom



Philip Stevens
President
Geneva Network
United Kingdom



Andrew Spiegel
Executive Director
Global Colon Cancer
Association
USA



David Williams
President
Taxpayers Protection
Alliance
USA



George Landrith
President
Frontiers of Freedom
USA



Grover Norquist
President
Americans for Tax Reform
USA



Karen Kerrigan
President and Chief
Executive Officer
Small Business &
Entrepreneurship Council
USA



Katie McAuliffe
Executive Director
Digital Liberty
USA



Lorenzo Montanari
Executive Director
Property Rights Alliance
USA



CENTER FOR THE PROTECTION
OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Mathew Barblan
Executive Director
Center for the Protection of
Intellectual Property
USA



Mathew Kandarch
President
Consumer Action for a Strong
Economy
USA



Pete Sepp
President
National Taxpayers Union
USA



Phil Kerpen
President
American Commitment
USA



Stephen Ezell
Vice President
Information Technology &
Innovation Foundation
USA



Association of University Technology Managers®
Advancing Discoveries for a Better World®

Chief Executive Officer
Association of University
Technology Managers
USA



CONSERVATIVE INCLUSION COALITION

Suhail Khan
Chairman
Conservative Inclusion
Coalition
USA



The Institute for Policy Innovation

Tom Giovanetti
President
Institute for Policy
Innovation
USA



Rocio Guijarro
Executive Director
Centro de Divulgación del
Conocimiento Económico
para la Libertad (CEDICE)
Venezuela



Cristina Berechet
Secretary General
World Taxpayers
Associations