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AUSTRALIAN SELECTED FOR UN POSITION

After careful deliberation, the Coordination Committee of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has today selected an Australian, Dr Francis Gurry, as the nominee for the position of Director General of WIPO.

Dr Gurry was selected from a competitive international field of 14 candidates. Dr Gurry's nomination will be submitted to the General Assemblies of WIPO for final confirmation in September/October this year.

WIPO is a United Nations agency, dedicated to developing a balanced and accessible international intellectual property system.

Australia values greatly the work WIPO undertakes globally to support creativity, stimulate innovation and drive development. Australia has a comprehensive IP system and makes a strong contribution to both the policy and technical aspects of WIPO's work. Intellectual property is critical to the continued growth of world trade, to growth in services and investment flows, and to the international economy more broadly.

The Australian Government welcomes the support from WIPO member states across all regions for the nomination of Dr Gurry, currently a Deputy Director General of WIPO and the most senior Australian in the United Nations system.

The nomination of Dr Gurry for WIPO Director General serves as a further demonstration of the new Australian Government's strong commitment to greater engagement with the United Nations system. It also reflects the importance the Government places on building a strong, balanced and accessible international intellectual property system.

Dr Gurry has outstanding qualifications for the position of WIPO Director-General. He has over 20 years experience in WIPO across all major sectors of its mandate, and a proven track record in leading and implementing major improvements to the international intellectual property system.

Dr Gurry's vision for WIPO underlines that the two key roles of the Organization, as service provider to the global economy, and as a UN agency with a development mandate, are compatible and complimentary.

Once confirmed, Dr Gurry will be the third Australian who has served as head of a United Nations agency, after James Ingram, Executive Director of the World Food Programme from 1982 to 1992, and Richard E. Butler, Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union from 1983 to 1989.

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