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J O I N T M E D I A R E L E A S E

23 September 2008

AUSTRALIAN APPOINTED AS DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION

The Australian Government welcomes the appointment of a distinguished Australian, Dr Francis Gurry, as Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Dr Gurry is now the most senior Australian in the United Nations system; the first Australian to head a United Nations specialised agency since 1992, and only the third Australian to do so.

The Australian Government extends its congratulations to Dr Gurry and looks forward to working with him and WIPO during his tenure as Director General.

The Australian Government's support for his candidature reflects Dr Gurry's outstanding professional qualifications for the position and his extensive experience. It is also consistent with Australia's strong commitment to the multilateral system, and in particular, the United Nations and its specialised agencies.

WIPO is dedicated to developing a balanced and accessible international intellectual property system which governs rights under patents, trade marks, designs and copyright. Australia has a world class intellectual property system and makes a strong contribution to both the policy and technical aspects of WIPO's work.

Dr Gurry was nominated as Australia's candidate for Director General of WIPO in February 2008. In May he was elected as the WIPO Coordination Committee's nominee for Director General from a highly competitive field of 15 candidates. The WIPO General Assemblies confirmed Dr Gurry's appointment as Director General on 22 September.

Dr Gurry joined WIPO in 1985. He has been a Deputy Director General of WIPO since 2005. Prior to joining WIPO, Dr Gurry practiced law and held a number of academic positions. He holds law degrees from the University of Melbourne and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. He has published widely on intellectual property issues.

Dr Gurry has demonstrated exemplary leadership at senior levels in WIPO for many years and has a proven track record in driving and implementing major improvements to the international IP system. The Australian Government is confident that Dr Gurry will effectively lead and manage WIPO in the interests of all its membership over the coming years.