



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **AfrIPI and ARIPO Host Information Technology Officials from 22 African Countries at the Workshop on Intellectual Property Tools**

*The quest to equip Africa with the latest technological advancements.*

**Harare, 21 June 2022:** The African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) and the Intellectual Property Rights and Innovation Project in Africa (AfrIPI) are hosting a Workshop on Integration and Implementation of Intellectual Property (IP) Tools for the ARIPO Member States on 21 and 22 June 2022. The workshop will take place at the ARIPO Secretariat in Harare, Zimbabwe.

At the workshop there will be at least two representatives from each of the following 23 countries: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

In the last decade, the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) has worked very closely with the European Union's Member State IP offices to develop IP tools that help make their work more efficient and which make IP information freely available to the public – openly and transparently. This workshop will share these tools with ARIPO Member States as well as its Observer and Potential Member States to demonstrate the positive impact of these tools in IP offices.

IP tools offer immediate tangible benefits to the users of the IP system in Africa, such as, among others, quality and reliability and access to information. At the same time, these tools generate efficiency gains for IP administrations and free up resources to expand the IP rights services offered.

The workshop intends to establish a clear roadmap for implementing the IP tools that each office in the participating states would want to use. The tools set to be presented are TMview, DesignView, TMclass, DesignClass, the Common Examiner Support Tool (CESTO) and the e-filing system (linked with the Harmonised Database of Goods and Services). In addition, this workshop aims to initiate the integration of trade mark and design data from those African IP offices that are currently the most technically advanced, with those that are progressing towards that same end goal.

“The workshop comes at a critical time when Member States are increasingly adopting various IP tools in their offices. This workshop will bring closer to home all the cumulative skillsets and IT tools that have been developed and perfected over time, used in European IP offices, and proven to bring positive results,” said Mr. Bemanya Twebaze, Director General of ARIPO.

“We are convened here for the next two days to learn and discuss the various intellectual property tools that will empower our offices and our countries. We will be introduced to a suite of virtual services and programs that can help us to better serve our stakeholders and clients



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while ensuring that our diverse communities overcome barriers to true participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> wave of innovation that we are currently in,” added Mr. Willie Mushayi, Chairperson, ARIPO Administrative Council.

## Background

### 1. About IP Tools

**TMview** is an online consultation tool allowing any internet user to search for trade marks of all the trade mark offices involved in the initiative, free of charge. It is a multilingual and easy-to-use tool that gives access to trade marks provided by the participating offices through a single and unique platform. Each office owns the content it makes available and is responsible for updating it daily. Find out more about the TMview on this website: <https://www.tmdn.org/#/tools/1820385>

**DesignView** is an online consultation tool allowing any internet user to search, free of charge, the designs of all the participating offices. It is multilingual, user-friendly and gives access to design applications and registrations provided by the participating offices through a single and unique platform. Each office owns the content it makes available and is responsible for its daily update. Find more about the DesignView on this website: <https://www.tmdn.org/#/tools/1819847>

**TMclass** – When applying to register a trade mark, you need to describe the goods and/or services for which you wish to protect your trade mark. TMclass is a free online tool that allows users to search, translate or classify goods and services when applying for a trade mark. TMclass is a tool in which all the terms that appear in the classification databases of each of the offices participating in the initiative can be accessed. Find more about the TMclass on this website: <https://www.tmdn.org/#/tools/1819832>

**CESTO** – The Common Examiners Support Tool (CESTO) provides a harmonised search of several databases to support examiners. CESTO is an automated and harmonised search tool which will perform searches for any given trade mark application. The tool provides information in relation to similar trade marks from an array of participating offices (whose trade marks are in TMview), similar trade marks from the same or similar owners from the same array of offices, and emblems and other heraldic devices held by WIPO. Find more about the CESTO on this website: <https://www.tmdn.org/#/tools/1819838>

### 2. About ARIPO

ARIPO is an intergovernmental organisation that facilitates cooperation among its Member States in intellectual property matters. The purpose of ARIPO is to pool resources for the promotion, development and harmonisation of the IP laws and policies of ARIPO Member States. The objective of ARIPO, amongst others, is to establish common services and organs



for IP coordination, development and harmonisation. The member states of ARIPO comprise of Botswana, The Kingdom of Eswatini, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, The Kingdom of Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. You can read more about ARIPO on [www.aripo.org](http://www.aripo.org)

### 3. About AfrIPI

AfrIPI is a pan-African project that aims to support the European Union in creating, administering, utilising, protecting and enforcing intellectual property rights across Africa. It aligns with international and European best practices and supports the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The overall objective of the AfrIPI project is to facilitate intra-African trade and African and European investment. You can read more about AfrIPI on [www.afripi.org](http://www.afripi.org)

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