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Designing the Future

Message from Mr. Francis GURRY,
Director General of the World
Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Design touches every aspect of human creativity. It shapes the things we appreciate from traditional crafts to consumer electronics; from buildings and bicycles to fashion and furniture. Design has been called “intelligence made visible”.

Design is where form meets function. It determines the look and feel of the products we use each day – from everyday household items to the latest tablet computers. Design marries the practical with the pleasing. It brings style to innovation.

This year’s World Intellectual Property Day celebrates the role of design in the market-place, in society and in shaping the innovations of the future.

Originally referred to as “art in industry”, industrial design provides the means to differentiate between mass-produced objects, drawing us to one product rather than another, making one brand more successful than another. Behind every new design is a desire to break new ground, to improve and to enhance consumer experience. Good design makes products easier, more comfortable and safer to use.

With today’s increasing emphasis on ecologically sound living, “designing out waste” is now an aspiration shared by many creators. Sustainable design processes can help lower production costs and reduce environmental impact. The designs of the future will necessarily be green, and the intellectual property system will encourage designers to produce them, by helping to protect original designs against unauthorized copying and imitation.

In international markets, companies need to be able to protect their designs quickly and cost-effectively in several countries. WIPO’s Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs - which simplifies that process - saw a 30 percent increase in international applications last year.

On World Intellectual Property Day 2011 WIPO joins governments, organizations, schools and enterprises around the world in celebrating the designers today, who are designing the future.

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