



Innovation Council – Statement at the WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (SEPs)

16 October 2024

I'd like to step back and consider the bigger picture around standard essential patents.

SEPs – and, specifically, the licensing of SEPs as part of commitments to standard development organizations – represent a major global success story from a tech transfer perspective.

This dynamic has led to the broad global dissemination of cellular technology in recent decades. Talk about technology transfer! There are accessible, affordable connected devices and services virtually everywhere today. Connectivity is being applied in all corners of the world to solve pressing societal challenges and achieve the SDGs.

Recently in policy discussions, substantial attention has been focused on helping SMEs to navigate and learn more about SEPs, standardization, licensing, and related issues. Most often SMEs are not approached for licenses when they use standardized technology; this is really more about negotiations between the bigger players. Also, given the mix of technology integrated into standards, companies are generally licensors *and* licensees.

In any event, providing information and evidence for SMEs and other stakeholders is welcome, so they can be empowered to make informed decisions for their R&D, commercialization and other activities. Having options for dispute resolution, alongside litigation, is also important.

On these points, the WIPO Secretariat deserves credit for its excellent work on SEPs. This includes WIPO's valuable arbitration and mediation offerings, as well the various initiatives being executed by the team onstage.