

**Speech by António Campinos**

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**EIPIN-IS Management Board Meeting**

Dear colleagues, it is a pleasure to welcome you to the Office for this management board meeting.

As you are aware, the EUIPO has been a strong supporter of the EIPIN-Innovation Society's efforts to strengthen the research base for Intellectual Property in the EU.

This seemed totally logical to us and also in line with EU policies and strategies since the three 2020 priorities are: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Innovation is the "smart" part of this agenda. It is what inspires the creation of new organisations and the revitalisation of mature ones.

For this reason as the EU's Intellectual Property Office, it seemed right that we should encourage the EIPIN proposal for a Joint Doctorate in Intellectual Property under an Horizon 2020 grant to allow research on the role of intellectual property in innovation.

The ultimate objective is to improve the support for inventors and entrepreneurs in managing the life-cycle of IPR-intensive assets and to strengthen the process of translating innovation into commercially viable products.

The economist Joseph Schumpeter linked the ideas of innovation and economic evolution, describing it as “the process of Creative Destruction”.

New ideas allow us to rebuild a stronger economy. Innovation is, therefore, part of the EU’s answer to the economic crisis and needs to be better understood,

The PhD programme’s objectives, therefore, seemed to us to be very much in line with what the Horizon 2020 Marie Curie Actions should be backing, but as you know, not everyone agreed immediately.

The reason why the EUIPO supported this initiative is that IP rights affect businesses, the economy and society, and provide challenges that are common to the EU generally and also globally.

This importance, and the good fit between the EU priorities and the EIPIN’s proposals meant that the Office was very happy to give its support to the proposal.

We have come a long way together and I would congratulate you on your persistence following the first, **not very warm**, reception to the proposal.

As the 14<sup>th</sup> century Scottish king, Robert the Bruce, is rumoured to have said after watching a spider repairing its web, “if at first you don’t succeed, try, and try again”.

Happily, we are now in a different place.

The second application got a 96% score against a threshold of 70%, and hopefully we are in the process of making history!

But it is important, as we celebrate the recruitment of the first researchers, to think about where this programme is going and what it needs to be in the future.

We have achieved a €4 million grant for the first edition but any possible extension will depend on the quality of the results obtained and what kind of sustainability plan is put in place.

One clear challenge will be that of focusing the research more strongly in the areas of society and the economy that are changing fastest due to technological advances.

This is the area in which there will be greatest added value.

In the developed world, creativity and technological advances mean that we enjoy better medicines, education, information, connectivity, and mobility than most of us could have imagined a quarter century ago.

If we look at the McKinsey Global Institute report on the 12 most disruptive technologies the list includes mobile internet, automation of knowledge work, the internet of things, cloud technology, advanced robotic, autonomous vehicles, gene sequencing, energy storage, 3-D printing, advanced materials, new means of oil and gas exploration and renewable energy.

This report is only four years old, and now hardly a day goes by without a news story about the influence of automation and robotics, self-driving vehicles, advances in genetic medicine and the impact of mobile internet and social media on politics or society. To this list we could add the more recent challenges arising from the growth in distributed blockchain ledgers.

In addition to the challenge of engaging in these areas of research, and more broadly encouraging a strong engagement with the needs of business, there will be the challenge of how the joint PhD programme can keep running in the long term.

For future success, the quality of the research, the capacity of the universities to work together, share resources and knowledge and innovate in what is being offered educationally will be critical.

At the minute we are working on the basis of two universities jointly offering the PhD, why not all five?

In the connected, digital world, why cannot a programme recognised by all the universities be created.

### **Would that be a disruptive innovation too far?**

This is where we should take the debate, and this is where we should direct our ambitions.

For now, let me say, we have made a good start.

We all deserve congratulations for not giving up at the first hurdle, and like Robert the Bruce's spider, for *"trying and trying again"*.

The race is not run, and many hurdles lie ahead so let us continue to be persistent, build upon this valuable partnership and deliver real value to innovation, creativity, and ultimately jobs and growth.

**Thank you.**