BAHRAIN-COUNTRY REPORT

by

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Mr. Chairman,

Dear Colleagues,

I take this opportunity to thank WIPO and the organizers here in New Delhi for the invitation to participate in this conference.

Bahrain enjoys being a multi-cultural society, which exposed it to the world since ancient times. Hence, it linked itself to the world community, abiding and conforming to its laws and regulations.

From early times, Bahrain gave great importance to the protection of intellectual property rights in general, and the protection of authors' copyright in particular. Through the Ministry of Information, it has diligently sought to create the instruments that guarantee and bolster the protection of copyright. In 1993, the legislations regulate by passing Law No. 10 for the year 1993 the protection of copyright. This law is distinguished by the clarity of its phrasing and by the fact that its provisions were inspired by the international agreements on copyright, and other related rights.

Much before the enactment of the law of 1993, on the protection of copyright, the Bahraini legislations had exercised control over authors' products and publications in accordance with the law No. 14 for the year 1979 on press publications. An office for the protection of copyright was established; and assigned its administration to a competent legal and technical body, to safeguard a just and legal protection for authors and publishers.

In 1994, Bahrain ratified the agreement with the World Trade Organization as well as the ratification of the agreement on TRIPS.

In the following year, Bahrain joined the convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Furthermore, an Amiri Decree was issued in 1996 to join the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, along with the Paris Convention on the Protection of Industrial Property.

Against this background, the University of Bahrain took the initiative and the lead among universities in the area to educate on intellectual property rights. This was achieved on three levels:

1. A course designed for law students at the under-graduate level.
2. Post-graduate diploma.
3. Community Service workshops.

In 1998, the Department of Law in the College of Business Administration designed a course to be taken by its law students. Course code "Law 417"—three credit hours—teaches "Definition of intellectual property, nature of intellectual rights, the rights of an author, the protection of authors' rights regarding their writings, work published by a single or joint authors, the rights of an author and the methods of protection, the international legislation to protect intellectual property, Bahrain's legislation and the protection of intellectual property."

In cooperation with WIPO the Department of Law is designing a post-graduate diploma in intellectual property rights. The decision to start the post graduate diploma based not only on the University's belief in intellectual property rights, but also on the results of a survey in the local market, which showed a great need by jurors and lawyers. The post-graduate diploma is not directed towards Bahraini lawyers alone, but also, through official and unofficial channels, directed towards lawyers in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) Countries.

The university has plans to offer short courses, organize workshops and symposiums on intellectual property rights, as part of its community services.

The community service on the subject of intellectual property rights will be organized with the cooperation of WIPO. Within the university, the Department of Law is not the only body that is involved in designing and participating community service courses. The Deanship of Scientific Research, the College of Arts, the College of Science and the College of Engineering will also be involved in designing and participating in the short courses, workshops and symposiums.

The Department of Law has already started building up a data bank on all the cases and judgements that passed through Bahraini Courts to be used as case studies in teaching.

These are the main activities of the University of Bahrain in regard to education and training on the field of intellectual property rights.