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The Director General of the Finnish Patent Office, Mr. Enäjärvi, addressed the ceremonial meeting of the 15th anniversary of the resumption of the Estonian Patent Office in Estonian.

Dear Director General, Distinguished Guests.

I have admired with great interest and respect the achievements that the Estonian Patent Office has achieved in fifteen years. The task has not been easy, but with determined work and expertise, you have been able to create a well-functioning modern intellectual property rights institution or IPR company.

On this occasion, I warmly congratulate you all, both the management of the Agency and all the staff.

In the field of IPR, something is happening all the time in Europe and in the rest of the world, the importance and significance of this sphere is constantly growing, which in turn creates the basis for the all-round well-being of society. It is in the territory of the European Community that a fundamental, strategic debate on IPR is currently taking place. We have reason to remember that, while the number of IPR applications is growing rapidly, we need to maintain a high level of research quality. Low-cost tickets should not be issued in the IPR world, as this would also encourage abuse.

As we know, IPR rights, such as patents and trademarks, give a monopoly right to prevent unauthorized use. If the rights are granted too lightly and too cheaply, the number of so-called patent masters will certainly increase. Rights can only be applied for to restrict the activities of competitors. In other words, they are eliminated without the intention of introducing these IPR rights in production. This does not promote innovation but only stifles it.

Europe cannot compete with, for example, the United States, Russia or emerging Asia in terms of its natural resources, so skills and innovation are at the heart of the European model of action. There is a need to prioritize innovation across Europe and in all Member States, taking into account cultural and linguistic differences and economic specificities. In other words, we need to contribute to networking, for example, between the central administration, the administrations of the various countries and their regional administrations. Otherwise, if we do not do that, we will not be able to achieve our goal, even in the medium term.

Networking primarily concerns trademarks and patents. We need to work together on cooperation, with regard to patents, it should be clarified whether Europe needs a fourth patent system in addition to the three currently in force, which are the International European Patent System (EPC), national patent systems and the PCT administered by WIPO. They are all kept on top of the user's wallet.

In its recent opinion, the Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry acknowledges that possible changes to the patent system must meet the real needs of users, including individual inventors, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as large companies. A situation where changes to the patent system do not bring significant additional benefits compared to the current system must be avoided. It would be even more unfortunate if the new system resulted in unnecessary costs compared to the current system. The Finnish Parliament has taken the same view, having previously quite clearly supported the Community patent.

However, my goal is not to give a lecture, so I will finish.

I wish you all good luck and success in your important work. I believe and hope that the excellent co-operation between the Estonian and Finnish patent offices will continue and develop further. In fact, I feel like one of you. I am glad about the good co-operation between Estonia and Finland, as well as about the fact that this co-operation is deepening and developing all the time in practice, not only in words.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend your anniversary celebrations.