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Panel session : session 11 Emerging subjects affecting Africas Resilience.

Intellectual Property and Media, sports and Entertainment.

(Protecting IP in creative industries to drive economic stability and cultural resilience. Legal perspectives on media and sports in promoting security Awareness and sustainable development).

(Emerging subjects affecting Africa's Resilience).

The global economy is increasingly driven by digital technology, creativity, innovation and knowledge. Many young people have creative ideas but lack knowledge about intellectual property (IP) and how to protect their work.

Africa is already resilient. Across the continent, Africans have repeatedly demonstrated the ability to adapt, innovate, survive crises, and create solutions in challenging environments. The question we should therefore ask ourselves as Africans is not simply how to build resilience, but how we can harness the resilience we already possess and translate it into sustainable economic growth, with the use of intellectual property rights (IPRs).

This is where intellectual property becomes particularly important. Africa produces enormous amounts of knowledge, creativity, innovation, traditional knowledge, technology, brands, artistic works, and entrepreneurial solutions. Yet resilience does not automatically create wealth. The challenge is to transform African ingenuity into assets that can be protected, commercialised, scaled, and reinvested in our economies.

Intellectual property can provide part of that bridge. Patents can help innovators protect technological solutions; trademarks can build valuable African brands; copyright can create economic opportunities for the creative industries; and appropriate protection of traditional knowledge can help ensure that communities benefit from the knowledge they have developed and preserved.

The real opportunity, therefore, is to move from a continent that is known for its ability to cope with adversity to one that systematically creates economic value from its capacity to create and innovate.

Another question is, Can Africa organise, finance, protect, and commercialise that resilience in ways that generate jobs, enterprises, intellectual property assets, investment, and long-term prosperity.

I believe intellectual property rights can serve as a strategic instrument for budding Africa's resilience not merely by protecting innovation and creativity but by transfixing it into economic

assets that can drive diversification, entrepreneurship, Industrial development and sustainable growth .

Benefits of intellectual

I will first dive into the benefits of intellectual property to show you how intellectual property protection is essential in Africa's resilience against the vices that tend to pull us down . These points have been explained in my original paper but due to time constraints , I have reduced it to bullet points .

1. IP enables Africa to monetize creativity

- Africa has substantial creative talent in music, film, fashion, art, publishing, digital content and entrepreneurship.
- Copyright, trademarks, designs and related rights provide mechanisms through which creators can control and commercialize their work.
- Licensing, royalties, merchandising and distribution can transform creative works into income-generating assets.
- This is particularly important in the digital economy, where African creators can reach markets beyond their immediate geographical locations.

Resilience connection: IP allows creativity to become an economic resource rather than remaining an informal or under-monetized activity.

2. IP supports the growth of Africa's creative economy

The media and entertainment industries demonstrate how IP can generate economic activity.

Strong IP protection can:

- Encourage investment in film, music, publishing and digital content.
- Enable creators and media companies to monetize content.
- Protect brands and creative identities.
- Encourage legitimate digital distribution platforms.
- Reduce losses associated with piracy.
- Create employment throughout creative value chains.
- Encourage domestic and international investment in creative industries.

Key idea: A functioning copyright and trademark system can make creative industries more commercially sustainable.

3. IP encourages digital innovation

The growth of social media, streaming, online publishing, software and other digital platforms has increased the economic importance of IP.

IP protection can encourage:

- Legal content-distribution platforms.
- Digital entrepreneurship.
- Software and technology development.
- Online creative businesses.
- Streaming and subscription models.
- Digital licensing.
- Investment in technology-intensive industries.

At the same time, piracy and unauthorized digital distribution can reduce the revenue available to creators and businesses.

Resilience connection: A strong digital-IP environment can help African economies participate in the global digital economy rather than simply consuming digital products created elsewhere.

4. IP protects African brands

Trademarks allow businesses, sports organizations, media companies and other enterprises to distinguish their products and services.

Protection of:

- Names
- Logos
- Slogans
- Symbols
- Designs
- Other distinctive brand elements

can help businesses establish reputation and consumer recognition.

For African businesses expanding internationally, brand protection is particularly important because the commercial value of a business may increasingly lie in its intangible assets.

Resilience connection: Strong African brands can compete in regional and international markets and retain commercial value as businesses expand.

5. Sports as an IP-driven economic sector

Sports should be presented as more than competition and entertainment. It is also an industry involving:

- Broadcasting
- Sponsorship
- Advertising
- Merchandising
- Licensing
- Athlete endorsements
- Sports technology
- Events
- Digital content
- Team and event brands

IP provides the legal infrastructure that allows these assets to be commercialized.

Trademarks

Team names, logos, slogans and event brands can have substantial commercial value.

Trademark protection can help sports organizations:

- Control commercial use of their brands.
- Combat unauthorized merchandise.
- License their marks to commercial partners.
- Build recognizable brands.

Copyright

Copyright can apply to:

- Sports broadcasts
- Promotional videos
- Photographs
- Websites
- Graphic material
- Audiovisual productions
- Other original creative content associated with sports.

Athlete name and likeness

Athletes can have commercially valuable identities.

Their names, photographs, likenesses and personal brands can be connected to:

- Endorsements
- Advertising
- Merchandise
- Sponsorship
- Social-media campaigns

The precise legal protection for these interests varies between jurisdictions, so this section should avoid suggesting that every African country has a single uniform “image-rights” regime.

Licensing

Licensing allows rights holders to authorize businesses to commercially use protected IP in return for agreed compensation.

Examples include:

- Team merchandise
- Sportswear
- Player-related products
- Event branding
- Broadcasting
- Sponsorship arrangements

Resilience connection: African sports organizations can use IP to turn sporting talent, events, brands and content into sustainable commercial assets.

6. IP can help Africa diversify its economies

African economies can generate value from much more than traditional commodities.

IP can support economic activity in:

- Technology
- Agriculture
- Pharmaceuticals
- Renewable energy
- Fashion
- Music
- Film
- Sports
- Software

- Biotechnology
- Telecommunications
- Digital services
- Manufacturing
- Publishing
- Creative design

This diversification can provide additional sources of economic activity and reduce dependence on a narrow range of industries.

7. IP can support innovation and entrepreneurship

Patent protection can provide inventors with exclusive rights subject to applicable legal requirements.

This can encourage investment in:

- Research and development
- New technologies
- Industrial processes
- Agricultural technologies
- Medical innovations
- Renewable energy
- Digital technologies

At the same time, trademarks and copyright can help entrepreneurs protect the commercial and creative components of their businesses.

Resilience connection: Innovation creates new products, businesses, employment opportunities and sources of economic value.

8. IP can attract investment

Investors need clarity about ownership and commercial rights.

A company with clearly identifiable intellectual assets may have greater opportunities to:

- License technology.
- Enter commercial partnerships.
- Attract investment.
- Expand into new markets.
- Commercialize its products.
- Build business valuation around intangible assets.

effective IP protection can contribute to an investment environment in which ownership and commercialization rights are clearer.

9. IPR can promote technology transfer

IPR can provide a legal framework for transferring technology between:

- Universities
- Research institutions
- Governments
- Businesses
- International companies
- African entrepreneurs

Licensing and technology-transfer agreements can allow innovations to move from research environments into commercial use.

This is particularly relevant to:

- Biotechnology
- Renewable energy
- Agriculture
- Artificial intelligence
- Medical technology
- Manufacturing

Resilience connection: Technology transfer can strengthen local productive capacity and support the development of African technological capabilities.

10. IP can support employment and enterprise development

When IP is successfully commercialized, it can generate employment throughout an economic value chain.

For example, a successful African music brand can create opportunities for:

- Musicians
- Producers
- Songwriters
- Engineers
- Videographers
- Designers
- Lawyers
- Digital marketers

- Event organizers
- Distributors

Similarly, a patented technology can generate employment through manufacturing, licensing, distribution and related services.

Key point: The economic value of IPR extends beyond the original creator.

11. Counterfeiting and piracy undermine economic resilience

Therefore failure to create more effective IP laws can:

- Reduce legitimate business revenues.
- Discourage investment.
- Undermine creators' income.
- Damage brand reputation.
- Reduce incentives to innovate.
- Increase uncertainty for businesses.
- Affect government tax revenues where legitimate economic activity is displaced.

12. Effective enforcement is as important as legislation

Having IP legislation on paper is not enough.

An effective IP ecosystem requires:

- Accessible registration systems.
- Qualified personnel.
- Adequate funding.
- Modern technology.
- Effective courts and enforcement agencies.
- Border enforcement.
- Public awareness.
- Efficient dispute-resolution mechanisms.
- Cooperation across jurisdictions.

Resilience connection: Rights that cannot practically be enforced provide weaker economic incentives for investment and commercialization.

13. Weak IP infrastructure can limit economic growth

- Under-resourced IP offices.

- Outdated administrative systems.
- Paper-based registration.
- Limited staffing.
- Lack of technical expertise.
- Delays in registration.
- High administrative costs.
- Limited access to IP information.
- Difficulties with cross-border enforcement.

These problems can discourage businesses from investing in IP protection and commercialization.

Registration establishes or strengthens certain rights depending on the type of IP and jurisdiction, but effective economic protection also requires functioning enforcement institutions.

14. Trademark squatting is a regional challenge

In first-to-file systems, disputes can arise when someone registers a mark before the legitimate business owner does.

This can create problems for:

- African entrepreneurs expanding into new markets.
- Businesses that have developed reputation without registering their marks.
- International businesses entering African markets.
- Regional expansion.

This demonstrates why entrepreneurs need **early IP awareness and strategic registration**, particularly when entering new markets.

15. Harmonization of African IP systems

Africa has multiple national and regional IP systems.

Your discussion identifies:

- **ARIPO**
- **OAPI**
- **WIPO systems**
- **TRIPS**
- **Madrid System**

Regional and international frameworks can help facilitate protection across multiple jurisdictions.

However, harmonization does not mean that all African countries currently operate under one uniform IP system. National laws, institutions and enforcement mechanisms continue to differ.

Resilience connection: Greater regional coordination can reduce some of the barriers faced by African businesses seeking to commercialize IP across borders.

16. AfCFTA and the importance of IP

A larger African market creates opportunities for businesses to commercialize:

- Brands
- Technologies
- Creative works
- Designs
- Agricultural products
- Digital services
- Sports-related products

But cross-border commercialization requires appropriate IP protection.

Therefore, IP can complement broader African economic integration by helping businesses protect the intangible assets they take into regional markets.

17. IP education is critical

Africa does not only need stronger IP laws; it also needs greater IP literacy.

Young people should understand:

- What intellectual property is.
- How copyright works.
- When trademarks should be registered.
- What patents protect.
- How licensing works.
- How royalties work.
- How to commercialize IP.
- How to document ownership.
- How to identify infringement.
- How to protect digital content.

This could be incorporated into tertiary education, entrepreneurship programmes and business-development initiatives.

Resilience connection: An informed population is more capable of converting ideas into legally protected economic assets.

18. IP can help African creators retain economic value.

Africa produces:

- Talent
- Ideas
- Music
- Art
- Technology
- Agricultural knowledge
- Traditional knowledge
- Fashion
- Sports talent
- Digital content

The challenge is not simply producing these things. The challenge is **capturing and retaining the economic value generated from them.**

IP provides one mechanism through which ownership and commercial rights can be established.

Therefore:

Creation → Protection → Ownership → Commercialization → Investment → Employment → Economic growth

This can become the central framework for your paper.

19. Traditional knowledge and genetic resources

Your discussion raises an important African issue concerning genetic resources and traditional knowledge.

Many African communities possess extensive knowledge concerning:

- Medicinal plants
- Agricultural practices
- Biological resources
- Traditional products
- Cultural expressions

Questions arise where external researchers or companies develop commercially valuable products using such resources or knowledge.

This creates broader questions concerning:

- Ownership
- Benefit-sharing
- Indigenous communities
- Biodiversity
- Patenting
- Commercialization
- Protection against misappropriation

This is particularly relevant to an African IP-development agenda because economic resilience should include mechanisms through which communities can participate fairly in the value generated from resources and knowledge associated with them.

20. IP must balance protection with access and development

Your material makes an important qualification: **stronger IP protection is not automatically synonymous with stronger economic development.**

An IP system that is excessively restrictive, expensive or inaccessible can create difficulties for:

- Small businesses
- Researchers
- Students
- New innovators
- Consumers
- Technology diffusion

Therefore, African IP policy should seek a balance between:

Protection + Innovation + Access + Competition + Technology diffusion + Public interest.

This makes your argument more academically balanced.

21. Public awareness and respect for IP

IP protection also depends on public understanding.

Governments, educational institutions and businesses can increase awareness about:

- Copyright infringement.
- Counterfeit goods.

- Trademark misuse.
- Piracy.
- Digital-content rights.
- Licensing.
- Consumer risks associated with counterfeit products.

Greater awareness can support a culture in which creativity and innovation are recognized as economic assets.

22. IP and poverty reduction

when intellectual property is effectively protected, commercialized and supported by appropriate institutions, IP can contribute to income generation, entrepreneurship, employment and business development.

23. IP and Africa's economic resilience

This should be the **main section of your paper**.

Economic resilience can be linked to IP through several mechanisms:

Economic diversification

IP creates opportunities beyond traditional commodity-based sectors.

Innovation

Patents and related rights can support investment in research and technological development.

Entrepreneurship

Trademarks, copyright and designs can help businesses establish and commercialize their identities and products.

Creative industries

Copyright allows creative works to become commercially valuable assets.

Digital economy

IP supports digital content, software, platforms and technology businesses.

Investment

Clear ownership and commercialization rights can contribute to investor confidence.

Employment

Commercialization creates jobs across creative, technological and industrial value chains.

Regional trade

IP protection can facilitate the expansion of African brands and businesses into regional markets.

Global competitiveness

Protected African brands, technologies and creative works can compete internationally.

Local value retention

Ownership of IP can allow African creators and businesses to retain a greater share of the value generated from their innovations and creativity.

I believe these benefits listed above can be achieved through the following means and they include:

- a) **Awareness of intellectual property law:** By creating Awareness of intellectual property rights across the nation . This can be done by introducing intellectual property education into schools , so that prospective innovators and creators understand from an early stage that their creativity and innovations can be protected and commercially and maximised through intellectual property rights , by equipping people with this knowledge, we can encourage them not only to create, but also to recognise the economic value of what they create. This can foster a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship and commercialisation , enabling Africa creators and innovators to transform their ideas into sustainable economic assets, creating Awareness can also encourage registration and reduce vulnerability to exploitation and infringement .
- b) **Strengthening the regulatory framework for registration and renewal:** African countries should develop efficient regulatory systems for registration and renewal of intellectual property rights . This is because unnecessary administrative delays can discourage creators and businesses from seeking protection . There is a need for clear statutory timeline , digital registration systems and efficient administrative procedures can encourage greater participation in the IP system and facilitate the commercialisation of intellectual assets.

- c) **Strengthening laws enforcement against intellectual property infringement:** African countries should strengthen laws addressing intellectual property infringement, including counterfeiting , piracy and unauthorised use of protected works, while ensuring that those laws are effectively enforced. Effective enforcement gives creators and innovators greater confidence that their rights can be protected and that they can obtain appropriate remedies when infringement occurs, using Ghana and Nigeria is a case study under this heading : for example in the unreported Budweiser case here in Accra Ghana. A preliminary legal objection was raised on the right procedure to prosecute an infringement and it was revealed that there were no procedural laws that governed intellectual property civil matters in court on infringements, however this is different under the Nigerian legal system where the federal High Court has exclusive jurisdiction over intellectual property cases and this procedure are governed by the federal High court civil procedure rules .
- d) **Developing a more advanced IP registration and renewal system :** African countries should develop a modern, centralised and largely digital intellectual property registration and renewal system , this system should provide a reliable database for tracking app, I actions in registration , renewals , ownership and statistics of intellectual property rights.

The process should be transparent, efficient and subject to clearly defined timelines, with applicants able to monitor the progress of their applications electronically . Automated renewal reminders and accessible records can also reduce the risk of rights expiring because of administrative oversight.

A more efficient IP registration and renewal system would encourage creatives , innovators and businesses to formally protect their intellectual assets , it would provide better data for policy makers, improve administrative efficiency and potentially increase revenue generated through registration and renewal of fees, ultimately , modernising the IP administration system can strengthen the resilience of Africa's innovation ecosystem .

Therefore, Africa must move beyond merely recognising intellectual property rights and establish a system that actively protects, enforces and commercialises the intellectual assets of its people . A strong intellectual property regime will not only protect African ideas and creativity, it will empower their owners to retain greater economic value from their work, attract investment on more equitable terms and contribute to sustainable economic development . Ultimately . Protecting African intellectual property is essential to protecting Africa's innovation , enterprise and economic sovereignty .

The time has come for African states to treat intellectual property protection not as a peripheral legal issue, but as a strategic pillar of economic development. The government must invest in modern IP institutions , strengthen enforcement , streamline

registration and renewal and ensure that African creators and innovators can defend and commercialise what they create.

Africa cannot build a resilient , innovation driven economy while allowing its intellectual wealth to be stolen , copied or exploited without effective legal protection . Protecting African Intellectual property means protecting Africas idea, innovations and its economic value , as well as curtailing the high crime and insecurity that exist around some parts of the continent.