

Business Community Urges European Parliament to Pass ACTA

Brussels, Belgium – January, 26, 2012 – Today, European and national business associations (listed below) commend the European Union (EU) and Member States as they moved to join their global allies in the battle against counterfeiting and piracy.

Representatives from the EU and 22 Member States today signed the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), in Tokyo, Japan, sending a worldwide signal that the EU aims to increase protection of its intellectual capital and support innovation. The European Parliament must now approve the agreement. The business community urges the Parliament to quickly complete the process and give its consent to the treaty.

Trading partners Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Morocco, New Zealand, Singapore, and the United States all signed the agreement last October. Of the original negotiating countries, only Mexico and Switzerland have yet to sign the treaty.

European Parliament President Martin Schulz received a brief document endorsed by 28 European organizations representing Europe's business and IP community. The document, called "[ACTA – Why You Should Support It](#)," outlines the strengths of ACTA and its benefits for Europe. It clarifies the policy intent of ACTA and explains how ACTA will help to better protect European creators and innovators, and boost European competitiveness and growth. The document urges the European Parliament to rapidly give its consent to the agreement.

"These business organizations represent businesses of all sizes, from every corner of Europe and across virtually every product sector," said Marie Pattullo, speaking on behalf of AIM, one of the leading European business organizations. "Businesses are concerned about IP theft and their ability to innovate, compete and deliver economic growth in the face of counterfeiting and piracy."

"Counterfeiting and piracy—both physical and online—harm the world economy, endanger public health and safety and undermine legitimate businesses," said Alan C. Drewsen, Executive Director of the International Trademark Association (INTA). "Addressing these problems requires better international resolve and cooperation, which ACTA will supply."

“ACTA strengthens Europe’s ability to fight against fake and pirated goods and the organized criminals that profit from their sale,” Jeffrey Hardy, Director of ICC’s BASCAP initiative said. “The EU’s best negotiators have delivered a solid treaty that’s good for Europe, good for innovation and good for jobs.”

According to an Opinion of the Legal Service of the European Parliament in December 2011, ACTA:

- Is a balanced agreement that allows its Parties to implement ACTA provisions in a fair manner;
- Is compatible with existing EU law and is in line with relevant international law, in particular with the WTO’s Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS); and
- Provides for the respect of fundamental rights.

“The benefits of ACTA are enormous,” said Mr. Drewsen. “ACTA will protect European creators and innovators, generate and preserve jobs, stimulate economic competitiveness and growth, and foster international trade.”

About ACTA

ACTA is a plurilateral trade agreement aimed at improving intellectual property enforcement against counterfeiting and piracy internationally. ACTA has been negotiated by 37 countries and the EU (together representing over 50 percent of world trade) to improve the international framework for fighting counterfeiting and piracy. Innovation, creativity, quality and brand exclusivity are some of the EU’s main competitive advantages on the world market.

About counterfeiting and piracy in the EU

Counterfeiting and piracy continue to be major problems in Europe. The EU’s annual report on customs enforcement of intellectual property rights last year showed that border cases involving IPR infringements had almost doubled. In his report, Algirdas Šemeta, EU Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, said the battle is far from over.

On the digital piracy side, a recent study by ICC -- Building a Digital Economy: The Importance of Saving Jobs in the EU’s Creative Industries -- showed that EU losses from piracy could result in the loss of 1.2 million jobs and €240 billion in retail revenue by 2015 in the Europe’s film, TV, music and software industries.

“The EU has long led the opposition against trademark counterfeiting and digital

piracy,” said Mr. Hardy. “ACTA is a natural complement to the investment the EU is already making to implement legislation, upgrade enforcement, and control the global problem of counterfeiting and piracy.”

[Read “ACTA –Why You Should Support It.”](#)

Business organizations endorsing EU signature of ACTA

- Anti-Counterfeiting Group (ACG)
- AIM (European Brands Association)
- Alliance Against IP Theft
- ANDEMA
- International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP)
- Bureau International des Sociétés Gérant les Droits d'Enregistrement et de Reproduction Mécanique (BIEM)
- Bescherming Rechten Entertainment Industrie Nederland (BREIN)
- Coalition for Intellectual Property Rights (CIPR)
- European Communities Trademark Association (ECTA)
- European Apparel and Textile Organisation (EURATEX)
- EUROCHAMBRES
- Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- ICC Deutschland
- ICC United Kingdom
- International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI)
- Istituto di Centromarca per la lotta alla contraffazione (INDICAM)
- Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE)
- MARQUES The European Association of Trade Mark Owners
- TransAtlantic Business Dialogue (TABD)

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