



International Chamber of Commerce

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INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Media release

Global congress says stopping counterfeiting and piracy will help economy

Cancun, Mexico, 3 December 2009 -- Top government officials, business leaders and senior law enforcement authorities today urged national and international political and business leaders to more fully engage in the battle against counterfeiting and piracy as one element of economic recovery efforts.

The call for increased action came at the close of the Fifth Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy at a time when the economic crisis has exacerbated a problem estimated to cost the global economy US\$250 billion annually.

The international event, held in Cancun, Mexico, from 1-3 December, brought together more than 800 delegates from 80 countries to share proposals for reducing the impact of fake goods, identify more innovative solutions and build upon successful strategies already in place.

David Benjamin, Co-Chair of the International Chamber of Commerce's (ICC) Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP) initiative and Senior Vice President Anti-Piracy – Universal Music Group, emphasized that protecting intellectual property is an essential part of attracting investment and job development.

"This Congress demonstrated that there is some momentum building in terms of growing recognition that counterfeiting and piracy are costing all of us tens of billions of dollars and millions of jobs lost or at risk," he said. "However, we must now build on this momentum and not let current economic pressures detract from the important work that needs to be done."

The Fifth Congress was hosted by INTERPOL and the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property with support from the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), ICC through its BASCAP initiative, the International Trademark Association (INTA), and the International Security Management Association.

"A recurring theme of this Congress and a constant characteristic of counterfeiting and piracy is the central role of transnational organized criminals," said John Newton, who is responsible for INTERPOL's Intellectual Property Rights programme.

"They commit these crimes without a care about the often deadly effect of products, including fake medical products and dangerous electrical products, on unknowing consumers," Mr Newton added. "Fortunately another feature of the Congress was the clear determination of law enforcement agencies and customs worldwide to consistently target these criminals wherever they are."

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development presented updated data indicating the international trade in counterfeit and pirated goods has increased to more than US\$250 billion, almost 2% of world trade, up from US\$200 billion in 2007.

Other data released at the Congress showed that economic losses from counterfeiting and piracy is costing the economies of the G20 countries more than €100 billion and is putting 2.5 million legitimate jobs at risk. A separate study commissioned by ICC showed that 80% of consumers admit they regularly buy fakes, with little remorse or concern about the impacts of those purchases.

Speakers presented new approaches for more effectively combating counterfeiting and piracy through enhanced cooperation and coordination and increased public and political awareness of the issue. In addition, new perspectives were presented on improving legislation and enforcement measures to deter and punish those involved in the domestic and international trade of counterfeit and pirated goods. Also discussed was the sale of these illicit products over the Internet and the case of third parties who knowingly assist counterfeiters in the sale or distribution of their fake goods.

“Consumers around the world, especially those from vulnerable communities, expect the Congress to deliver tangible strategies that will protect them from harm,” said WCO Secretary General, Kunio Mikuriya, commenting from Brussels. “The way forward reached by the Congress which I have been following closely will, I am quite certain, meet their expectations.”

Richard Heath, President INTA and Vice President of Unilever, said it is evident from the three days of discussions that much has already been done to fight counterfeiting and piracy. He emphasized, however, that more needs to be done at the global and local level.

“From an industry perspective, we need to not only continue, but increase collaboration with each other and with governments to improve enforcement, enhance legislation and educate and protect consumers from the dangers of counterfeiting,” he said. “INTA stands ready to work with our industry colleagues and government to effectively combat this growing problem.”

Louise Van Greunen, who is responsible WIPO’s enforcement activities, said that the Global Congress was an important forum for exchanging views and experiences on the challenges presented by the global trade in counterfeit and pirated goods. She underlined the critical importance of international cooperation in identifying effective actions to disrupt and curb this illegal trade.

Ms Greunen said WIPO will be the chair for the Sixth Global Congress, which her organization will be co-hosting in Paris in February 2011 with the French National Institute for Industrial Property.

Please click here for [IP Guidelines – Latin America Launch](http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/index.html?id=24276)
<http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/index.html?id=24276>

[Consumer Perceptions Research](http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/id33865/index.html) Report conducted by Edelman
<http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/id33865/index.html>

[Impact of Counterfeiting on Governments and Consumers](http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/index.html?id=30506) Report conducted by Frontier
<http://www.iccwbo.org/bascap/index.html?id=30506>

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About the Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy

The Global Congress on Combating Counterfeiting and Piracy represents a unique, international public-private sector partnership that is united in its efforts to identify solutions to the growing menace of the illegal trade in counterfeiting and piracy and facilitate their implementation. The Congress has become a leading international forum for shaping practical strategies to combat counterfeiting and piracy

The Global Congress to Combat Counterfeiting and Piracy was previously hosted by WCO in 2008 in Dubai; by WIPO in 2007 in Geneva; by INTERPOL in 2005 in Lyon, France; by WCO in 2004 in Brussels. These international gatherings have provided a valuable forum for representatives from both the public and private sectors to pool their experience, raise

awareness, enhance cooperation and identify strategies to deal more effectively with the global problem of counterfeiting and piracy.