

ICC calls for successful end to anti-counterfeiting negotiations

Brussels, 6 April 2010

ICC today called for a successful conclusion to the negotiations on the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) that have lasted almost two years even as risks to economic development, jobs, consumer safety and world trade remain at a high point due to the worldwide proliferation of counterfeiting and piracy.

When it was introduced in June 2008, ACTA was widely welcomed as a mechanism to fight counterfeiting and piracy and tackle issues that have undermined effective enforcement in the past.

“It is unfortunate that the very important ACTA initiative has become subject to unfounded speculation and extreme statements about both its goals and its substance,” said Jeffrey Hardy, coordinator for ICC’s initiative Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP).

“Counterfeiting and piracy – both physical and online – are, by every measure, rampant global problems that in order to be addressed require better international resolve and cooperation,” Mr Hardy added.

A recent study commissioned by BASCAP showed that counterfeiting and piracy combine to cost G20 governments and consumers some US\$150 billion and place 2.5 million legitimate jobs at risk every year. Worldwide, counterfeiting and piracy costs legitimate businesses more than US\$700 billion a year.

Counterfeiting has moved far beyond luxury goods to include virtually every consumer product, such as fake foods and beverages, pharmaceuticals, electronics, auto parts and everyday household products. Millions of consumers are now at risk from unsafe and ineffective products, and governments, businesses and society are being robbed of hundreds of billions in tax revenues, business income and jobs.

The European Union and 37 national governments are negotiating the agreement. “We support ACTA and we encourage continued strong engagement necessary to bring ACTA to completion,” said Mr Hardy. “This is an initiative that deserves widespread support.”

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