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AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW ASSOCIATION
241 18th Street, South, Suite 700, Arlington, VA 22202 Phone: 703.415.0780 – Fax: 703.415.0786 – www.aipla.org

PRESS RELEASE

October 22, 2007

AIPLA Supports Negotiation of New Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement

The American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA) welcomes the announcement by the United States and its trading partners to craft an Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement to enhance the enforcement of intellectual property rights to address the scourge of international counterfeiting and piracy. “We wholeheartedly endorse this initiative. The protection of American intellectual property and the safety of American consumers could be significantly enhanced by the successful conclusion of this agreement” said Mike Kirk, AIPLA Executive Director.

A recent study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development estimates that the international trade in counterfeit and pirated goods in 2005 approached 200 billion dollars. The impact on the U.S. economy is significant, and counterfeiting jeopardizes the health and safety of Americans. AIPLA has long been an advocate of increased government involvement in the fight against counterfeiting and piracy, and welcomes the announcement of this coordinated approach with a number of countries including Japan, EU, and South Korea.

The proposed initiative will build upon the ground-breaking enforcement provisions of TRIPS to develop “best practices” for the enforcement of intellectual property rights. This effort should lead to greater international cooperation among enforcement agencies and permit more effective investigation and prosecution of those engaged in these illegal activities. The initiative should also help those governments engaged in combating counterfeiting and piracy by providing common standards for allowing concerted efforts.

Developing specialized intellectual property expertise within law enforcement structures to enhance criminal enforcement of intellectual property rights cases through capacity building and technical assistance will assist American companies in stemming the proliferation of counterfeiting and piracy. More effective border measures by customs authorities would also greatly deter such illicit activity.

AIPLA looks forward to working with the U.S. government to share its expertise on issues of intellectual property rights.

The American Intellectual Property Law Association is a national bar association constituted primarily of lawyers in private and corporate practice, in government service, and in the academic community, with more than 17,000 members. The AIPLA represents a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, companies and institutions involved directly or indirectly in the practice of patent, trademark, copyright, and unfair competition law, as well as other fields of law affecting intellectual property. Its members represent both owners and users of intellectual property.

For further information, contact James Crowne at jcrowne@aipla.org