

Respect for IP – Growing from the Tip of Africa

International Conference

Sandton, South Africa
October 23-25, 2018



October 23, 2018

Press Release

High-Level Conference on Respect for Intellectual Property Opens in South Africa

SANDTON, South Africa – Hundreds of experts from across the globe are charting a course toward increased respect for intellectual property (IP) and a better understanding of how cooperation amplifies the role of IP in widespread development.

The [Respect for IP – Growing from the Tip of Africa](#) Conference, which opened October 23, fosters policy dialogue and serves as an incubator of ideas for some 400 participants from some 70 countries, including government ministers, policymakers, judges and senior enforcement officials, as well as representatives from international governmental and non-governmental organizations and businesses.

The objectives: What can be done to overcome an incomplete public understanding of intellectual property? How can cooperation – both at the national and international level – ensure that the benefits of IP as a tool for development are fully realized, while countering IP infringements in an effective and balanced way?

The conference is co-organized by South Africa's Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), together with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). It is taking place from October 23-25, 2018 in Sandton, South Africa.

In remarks for the Conference, Adv. Rory Voller, Commissioner, CIPC said: “The objectives of this conference are fully aligned with the current priorities of South Africa. In this context, CIPC plays a key role in stimulating innovation and creativity and in reducing regulatory burden, especially as it affects small businesses. Weaving respect for IP into the fibre of the South African society would greatly contribute to the desired economic development.”



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Mr. Francis Gurry, Director General, WIPO, said: “International cooperation is vital in promoting respect at the national and local levels. That’s why the World Intellectual Property Organization is proud to co-host this International Conference *Respect for IP – Growing from the Tip of Africa*. The international intellectual property system can only realize its fundamental rationale of stimulating creativity and innovation, and hence drive development, in an environment that nurtures respect for IP. Building such respect is a common objective of WIPO Member States and international cooperation in this area is one of the Organization’s strategic goals.”

Mr. Roberto Azevêdo, Director-General, WTO, said: “The international trading system and the IP system are vitally important for economic and social welfare, and form integral elements of national and regional development strategies. In times when the world is more interconnected than ever and global value chains have assumed such an important place in development strategies, joint and multidisciplinary efforts are essential to take advantage of the opportunities provided by international trade. We therefore see this conference as an ideal opportunity to foster collaboration among stakeholders in order to deal with current challenges of adequately and effectively protecting and enforcing IP rights.”

Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General, WCO, said: “This Conference provides an ideal platform for sharing views and ideas as well as improving understanding, at the political and policy-making level, of the serious consequences of counterfeiting and piracy and the challenges faced by rights holders and enforcement authorities when fighting IP infringements. In many countries, effective IP protection by Customs and other law enforcement agencies still requires more efficient procedures, greater awareness and political support.”

Mr. Jürgen Stock, Secretary General, INTERPOL, said: “Illicit markets continue to grow, generating millions in profits for the criminal groups which endanger the health and safety of citizens worldwide. It is only through a coordinated global effort, involving all stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, that we can hope to stop this potentially lethal tide. This conference is an excellent opportunity to forge such partnerships and jointly address and combat the problem of counterfeiting and piracy.”



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By bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, the Conference will create opportunities for collaborations and strengthen existing partnerships to build respect for IP.

Discussions will cover a broad spectrum of topics linked to the overarching theme— from the economic value of IP and its public interest rationale to specific challenges facing different actors involved in IP enforcement and options for their effective handling. Topics include:

- Session 1 – The Value of IP for Economic Growth, Small Businesses, Investment, Job Creation and Development
- Session 2 – Placing the Public Interest at the Heart of IP Enforcement
- Session 3 – IP as a Priority for a Safer World
- Session 4 – Respect for IP Through Collaborative Enforcement
- Session 5 – Trade in a Borderless World: The Contribution of IP Rights to Development
- Session 6 – Regional Alliances: Agents of Growth and Champions of Effective IP Systems
- Session 7 – Reconciling Territoriality in Cross border IP Disputes
- Session 8 – Harnessing the Potential of Multilateralism: Capacity Building Through Intergovernmental Actors

Press Contacts:

Sizwile Makhubu, CIPC
+27 722361047
SMakhubu@cipc.co.za

Edward Harris, WIPO
+41 79 777 28 99
Edward.harris@wipo.int

Laure Tempier, WCO
+32 474 3333 58
Laure.tempier@wcoomd.org



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About CIPC

CIPC is the Companies and IP regulator in South Africa with a mandate, among others, to register companies, business rescue practitioners, corporate names, trademarks, copyright in films, patents and designs. As a regulator CIPC further maintains IP data, and publishes an electronic monthly Patent Journal covering all 4 IP domains. CIPC further regulates governance of and disclosure by companies, accredits dispute resolution agents, and educates and informs the public about Company and IP laws. It also accredits collecting societies in respect of music royalties, and regulates the governance, conduct and disclosure of such collecting societies; as well as conducting and co-ordinating search and seizure operations in relation to IP enforcement.

About WIPO

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the global forum for IP policy, services, information and cooperation. A specialized agency of the United Nations, WIPO assists its 191 member states in developing a balanced international IP legal framework to meet society's evolving needs. It provides business services for obtaining IP rights in multiple countries and resolving disputes. It delivers capacity-building programs to help developing countries benefit from using IP. It also offers free access to unique knowledge banks of IP information.

About INTERPOL

INTERPOL's role is to enable police in our 192 member countries to work together to fight transnational crime and make the world a safer place. We maintain global databases containing police information on criminals and crime, and we provide operational and forensic support, analysis services and training. These policing capabilities are delivered worldwide and support three global programmes: counter-terrorism, cybercrime, and organized and emerging crime.

About WCO

The World Customs Organization (WCO), with its 182 Members around the globe responsible for processing approximately 98% of world trade, is the only intergovernmental organization uniquely focused on Customs matters. The WCO contributes to efforts to combat the illegal trade in counterfeit and pirated goods by raising awareness of this issue among Customs officers and providing them with the requisite technical assistance. The WCO also leads discussions to identify applicable



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solutions, while adopting a holistic approach that concentrates on examining the phenomenon and the enforcement chain as a whole in order to enhance cooperation and enforcement capabilities, including through the use of IT tools and new technologies.

About WTO

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The goal is to ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible.

