

National Conference on Counterfeiting & Role of Enforcement Agencies

13-14 March 2018

The Park Hotel, New Delhi

Inaugural session 11:30 AM

Honourable Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Suresh Prabhu,

Dear Secretary of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Mr. Ramesh Abhishek,

Distinguished members on the Dais, eminent speakers and participants.

- On behalf of the European Union, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you all to this "National Conference on Counterfeiting and Role of Enforcement Agencies". The Conference is organized by the Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) and the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), in association with European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).

- It gives me immense pleasure to be a part of such an important initiative.

- The protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights is crucial: Patents, trademarks, geographical indications, designs and copyrights are a key incentive to creativity and innovation and are one of the principal means through which companies, creators, researchers and inventors generate returns on their investment in knowledge and creation.
- In the EU, IPR-intensive sectors account for around 40% of the GDP. Several of the EU Member states are constantly ranked among the top most innovative countries under World Intellectual Property Organisation's Global Innovation Index ranking. One of the reasons that can be attributed to this success is a strong IPR enforcement system within the EU which helps provide a favourable atmosphere to innovators, entrepreneurs and start-

ups to express their full creative and innovative potential.

- The same is true in the global economy: As companies increasingly compete on innovation, creativity and quality, IPR protection and enforcement is becoming essential for companies operating on the world stage.
- And yet, according to a recent study, counterfeit and pirated goods still account for 2.5% of global trade with a tendency to increase.
- A few days ago the European Commission published its latest report on the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights in countries outside the EU. This report helps the EU to focus its efforts and resources on the specific areas of concern with the aim of protecting European companies from counterfeiting and piracy when doing business abroad.

- This demonstrates that IPR protection and enforcement are high on the Agenda of the European Union.

- India too is increasingly putting emphasis on the need to achieve enhanced IPR protection and enforcement. The National IPR Policy acknowledges that the 21st century will be driven by a knowledge economy and it recognizes the need for building an atmosphere for encouraging creativity and innovation.
- We are aware of the recent steps being taken by the Government of India for enhancing the efficiency of the IP administration system.
- We appreciate Government of India taking steps such as the current workshop to enhance awareness on IP enforcement and providing a platform for sharing expertise and best practices with international participants.

- Today, I am very pleased to acknowledge India-EU cooperation in the IPR field and the conclusion of the EU-India Intellectual Property Co-operation project (IPC-EUI), a project which, since 2015, has supported the collaboration between the EUIPO and the DIPP towards enhancing the efficiency of the IP administration system.
- Allow me to express my thanks to Mr. Secretary Ramesh Abhishek and colleagues of the DIPP and CIPAM for their whole support to the project.
- I am proud to acknowledge the positive results of this project: Activities were manifold from recognizing the added value on international markets for Geographical Indications to best practices on matters ranging from trademarks and Madrid classification system, Plant Variety Protection and ISO 9001 certification, as well as the development of IT tools for improving the efficiency of the administration. Over the last two years more than 2000 attorneys and SMEs have been trained on brand promotion, Madrid protocol and GI

protection... that is quite an achievement for which we can be proud of!

- Apart from our mutual commitment to strengthen IPR cooperation expressed in the EU-India Agenda for Action 2020, the recent EU-India Summit's Joint Statement states: *'Both sides agreed to enhanced cooperation and exchange of experience and best practice in the field of IPR'*.
- Today we finalize the very successful project, which I just mentioned, and the momentum is right to look at the possibility of a similar IPR project in the future which would address the interests as well as needs of the both sides' stakeholders.
- I also believe that time is ripe too to agree on the launch of an IPR Dialogue. Such Dialogue would be the ideal forum to discuss constructively emerging IPR issues of interests to both parties including concrete challenges faced by right holders. Since

IPR issues arise regularly between the EU and India, such IPR Dialogue would benefit both of us.

- I wish to thank you all for being so numerous today to participate to the closing seminar of the very successful EU-India IPR Project.
- All my best wishes to the participants and speakers of this programme.