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**NOTE**

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Delegations will find in Annex, for information, the EU/Member States' opening statement as delivered at the above mentioned WIPO meeting.

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**WIPO Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE)**

**Twelfth Session**

**(Geneva, 4-6 September 2017)**

**Opening Statement**

Chair,

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States we congratulate you and your Vice-Chairs for your election. We look forward to working with you on the current work programme for the Advisory Committee on Enforcement.

The EU is a strong supporter of the work and mission of this Committee, and we hope that this more structured and predictable work programme will allow the Advisory Committee on Enforcement to play a much greater role within the WIPO framework. We would also like to thank the Secretariat and the former Chair and Vice Chairs on achieving this.

We continue to believe that the state-centric agenda point complements the existing issue-centric agenda points in a balanced manner. We note with satisfaction that a high number of contributions have been received from Member States, and believe that this is indicative of the relevance of the state-centric agenda point for the WIPO Members.

Basing our discussions on practical experiences of WIPO Member States enables us to learn from other countries and build on each other's best practices. We therefore support the Committee in continuing to place this item on future agendas.

Regarding national experiences relating to institutional arrangements concerning IP enforcement policies and regimes, we look forward to the exchange of information both on the items relating to national and regional IP enforcement coordination and the items relating to the disposal of IP infringing goods, court procedures, cross-border enforcement and institutional arrangements. We especially look forward to the discussion on cross-industry voluntary measures to reduce online IP infringements. The EU itself has adopted a so-called Follow-the-Money approach to combat commercial scale IP infringements. An important tool in this approach is the facilitation of industry-specific voluntary cooperation and self-regulatory agreements.

We look forward to the exchange of information on national experiences on awareness building activities and strategic campaigns as a means for building respect for IP among general public, especially the youth. We are glad to have the work of the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights concerning citizens' perceptions of IP and the relevant drivers of consumer behaviours in the EU presented in this session.

We also look forward to hearing from the Shanghai Intellectual Property Administration (SIPA) on the 2016 International Conference on Building Respect for Intellectual Property and Other Activities held in Shanghai, where the EU was represented.

We thank the WIPO Secretariat for preparing the documents on legislative assistance provided by WIPO on enforcement on IP rights (WIPO/ACE/12/14), and on the recent activities of WIPO in the area of building respect for intellectual property (WIPO/ACE/12/2). The EU and its Member States hope that this session will mark the start of a meaningful exchange of information on national experiences in respect of WIPO's legislative assistance. We would like to emphasize that any assistance by WIPO should continue to be flexible and take into account the level of development, the difference in legal tradition and the possible abuse of enforcement procedures, bearing in mind the broader societal interest and Member States' priorities.

While the EU and its Member States highly value the work carried out by WIPO in providing assistance to Member States with training and awareness-raising, we would like to see more national and regional workshops, seminars, conferences and colloquiums taking place in Europe. We appreciate the participation of the Secretariat in various international events, contributing with its expertise to discussions on the topic of IP enforcement. In particular, we are glad to see the intensive cooperation between WIPO and the EU Observatory.

Considering the practical difficulties for all stakeholders at the intersection of IP and private international law, the EU and its Member States welcome the development of a Resource Tool on the Intersection Between Intellectual Property and Private International Law. We look forward to the presentation and hope that the tool will be of significant benefit to different legal actors such as judges, legislators, arbitrators and legal counsel world-wide.

With regard to future work in the ACE, we note that within the framework of recommendation 45 of the WIPO Development Agenda, the ACE focuses, inter alia, on coordinating with public and private organizations to combat counterfeiting and piracy. The EU and its Member States would like to see more discussion on the possibilities and effect of cooperation between the public and private sector in IPR enforcement, in particular in the fight against commercial scale infringements. The EU could also contribute to these discussions, as we have adopted several novel solutions in the context of a general Follow-the-Money approach to IPR enforcement. Our bodies and initiatives such as the EU Observatory are a valuable platform for encouraging greater collaboration in the enforcement of IP rights.

The EU and its Member States believe that WIPO as the multilateral hub for all IP related issues has an important role to play in coordinating enforcement activities across the Member States to ensure the long-term integrity of global IP systems.

Thank you