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Statement of IIPA Hailing United Nations New Campaign “Counterfeits: Don’t Buy Into Organized Crime”

WASHINGTON – The International Intellectual Property Alliance® (IIPA®) today issued the following statement:

“IIPA hails the new United Nations campaign ‘Counterfeits: Don’t Buy Into Organized Crime’ which was launched today to raise awareness about counterfeit goods and transnational organized crime. Counterfeiting and piracy causes considerable economic harm in and of themselves, robbing creators and innovators of their livelihoods, but the social harms often go unnoticed. This new United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) initiative lifts the veil and urges consumers to ‘look behind’ counterfeit goods to reveal the ugly underbelly and ‘multi-faceted repercussions’ of illicit trade.”

“Recent studies estimate that counterfeit goods, digital piracy and domestic counterfeiting is valued at several hundred billion dollars. Piracy and counterfeiting are increasingly transnational criminal enterprises, and the trans-border nature of these enterprises is exacerbated due to the ease of movement in the online/digital space. No longer needing physical storefronts, criminal enterprises cause innumerable harm to creators and right owners in software, motion pictures, recorded music, videogames, and publications. This new United Nations initiative will shed light on the harm being caused and will complement enforcement efforts undertaken by Interpol and others by raising awareness of the problem among consumers.”

“For example, criminal release groups operating for profit illegally camcord a movie and exploit it around the world, destroying the theatrical market for the movie almost instantaneously. Because they operate in an underground economy, they also employ evasive techniques to hide the money trail of illegal proceeds. In one case of software counterfeiting, a criminal enterprise actually developed a scheme whereby largely unsuspecting computer users offered payments for use of their computers were sending out massive amounts of spam emails thousands of computers for the sale of counterfeit software. The UN campaign sheds light on such practices as well as the obvious health and safety concerns which occur when the supply chain is tarnished or invaded with physical counterfeits or counterfeit parts.”

“Finally, the campaign reemphasizes the importance of all players in the IP ecosystem – ISPs, major online merchants, corporations who advertise and advertising companies, and payment processors – playing their part to respond to this huge global problem.”

For more information on the campaign, please see the UNODC website at <http://www.unodc.org/>. In addition, the PSA “Look Behind” can be viewed online at <http://youtu.be/tu8zArWI75k>.

About the IIPA: The IIPA is a private sector coalition, formed in 1984, of trade associations representing U.S. copyright-based industries working to improve international protection and enforcement of copyrighted materials and open foreign markets closed by piracy and other market access barriers. IIPA’s seven member associations represent over 3,200 U.S. companies producing and distributing materials protected by copyright laws throughout the world—all types of computer software, including operating systems, systems software such as databases and security packages, business applications, and consumer applications such as games, personal finance, and reference software, free software, open source software, and software as a service, entertainment software including interactive games for videogame consoles, handheld devices, personal computers and the Internet, and educational software; motion pictures, television programming, DVDs and home video and digital representations of audiovisual works; music, records, CDs, and audiocassettes; and fiction and non-fiction books, education instructional and assessment materials, and professional and scholarly journals, databases and software in all formats. Members of the IIPA include Association of American Publishers, BSA | The Software Alliance, Entertainment Software Association, Independent Film & Television Alliance, Motion Picture Association of America, National Music Publishers’ Association, and Recording Industry Association of America.