

### TRACIT Endorses World Intellectual Property Organization Work to Build Respect for Intellectual Property

*Joins meeting of WIPO Advisory Committee on Enforcement under newly accredited observer status*

**Geneva, Switzerland, 4 September 2019** – Today, the Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) participated in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE) meeting, under newly accredited observer status. The ACE focuses on coordinating with public and private organizations to combat counterfeiting and piracy through the exchange of information, public education and national and regional training programs on intellectual property rights (IPR) enforcement.

**“Effective IPR enforcement is crucial in safeguarding the health of consumers, maximizing the value of human creativity and innovation, promoting economic development and deploying modern technologies,”** said TRACIT Deputy Director General Stefano Betti, representing TRACIT at the meeting. **“The WIPO ACE meeting is a valuable opportunity for TRACIT to engage with the wider UN community.”**

At this 14<sup>th</sup> intergovernmental (IGO) session of the ACE, delegates from 77 member states, eight IGOs and 12 NGOs shared awareness-building and strategic campaigns as a means for building respect for IP. The meeting also concentrated on institutional arrangements concerning IPR enforcement policies and national experiences regarding WIPO’s legislative assistance in the enforcement area.

Of particular interest was the proposal, conveyed by the WIPO Secretariat, to build an IP Database of websites which deliberately facilitate copyright infringement. Such a database could be a valuable tool for advertisers to ensure that their advertising does not inadvertently appear on copyright-infringing platforms.

The exploitation of Free Trade Zones (FTZs) for the commission of IP crime, an issue that is high on the TRACIT agenda, also emerged as a significant concern. Susan Wilson, IP attaché to the EU, highlighted recent work done by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the EU Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) in this regard. She encouraged delegates to change the conversation about FTZs and move beyond quantification efforts to advance policy options in partnership with the private sector.

**“Trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy account for the largest economic value of all forms of illicit trade,”** stated Mr. Betti. **“In today’s increasingly knowledge-based economy, it is critical to ensure that IP theft does not disincentivize innovation and generate a negative ripple effect on several other SDGs that depend on innovation.”**

A recent report by TRACIT on *Mapping the Impact on the Sustainable Development Goals of Illicit Tradeshows* that counterfeiting and piracy represent a direct threat to achieving nine of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, counterfeiting and piracy disincentivize innovation

(SDG 9), which negatively impinges on several other SDGs that depend on innovation, such as SDG1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere), SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education), and SDG 8 (Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all). The full text of the report can be found at: <https://www.tracit.org/event-dialogue-on-illicit-trade-and-the-sdgs.html>.

**About TRACIT** – The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade ([TRACIT](#)) is an independent, private sector initiative to drive change to mitigate the economic and social damages of illicit trade by strengthening government enforcement mechanisms and mobilizing businesses across industry sectors most impacted by illicit trade.

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