



MEDIA RELEASE

Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade Calls for Online Platforms and Parcel Distributors to Help Stop IP Theft

Washington, DC, 6 June 2019 – Today, the Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT) participated in a Forum on Brand Protection and Anti-Counterfeiting Strategies hosted by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

“Intellectual property theft – or counterfeiting and piracy – is one category of a rapidly growing form of illegal and unfair competition called illicit trade,” asserted Cindy Braddon, TRACIT Head of Communications and Public Policy. “Illicit trade crosses every industry, deprives companies and governments of essential resources, funds organized crime and terrorist entities, and harms consumers.”

In her remarks, Ms. Braddon cited examples from recent news: In Latin America, 1 in 4 bottles of alcohol is illicit; 9 out of 10 Apple branded products on Amazon are fake; food fraud, commodity smuggling and illegal pesticides undermine sustainable farming, limit crop yield and jeopardize delivery of fair, safe and sustainable food supplies; and illicit trade in pharmaceuticals is a \$200 billion a year problem.

The USPTO-conducted forum focused on the increased vulnerabilities in regulatory governance and global supply chains driven by the growth in ecommerce.

“TRACIT is working to make business smarter by sharing information and best practices to mitigate all forms of illicit trade and to make government more effective in regulating and enforcing controls on illicit trade at their borders,” stated Ms. Braddon. “But we are playing a game of ‘whack a mole,’ when businesses and governments successfully stop goods at the border, the bad guys move to another border.”

All forum’s participants agreed that governments and businesses must work together to: 1) raise consumer awareness of the dangers of buying fake goods; 2) develop and implement the necessary legal and regulatory structure to close gaps in governance that are exploited by illicit traders; and 3) enforce laws and engage online platforms and package deliverers in the fight to stop illicit trade.

The Forum was co-hosted by the Golden Gate University and The McCarthy Institute. Participants included intellectual property experts, technology companies providing tools to spot and stop counterfeits, and a large array of government agencies that are working together to address illicit trade.

About TRACIT – The Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade ([TRACIT](http://www.tracit.org)) 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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