

EU launches project supporting Intellectual Property Rights in Southeast Asia

Bangkok, 02 April 2018 – Today, the European Union (EU) launched a project to support and strengthen intellectual property rights systems in Southeast Asia. The four-year project, entitled IP Key Southeast Asia (IP Key SEA), will be implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). The focus of IP Key SEA will be on increasing legal transparency, predictability and certainty for all users of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) systems in the region, making them conducive to further economic growth, job creation and innovation.

From its office in Bangkok, IP Key SEA will build on existing cooperation between the EU and the region's intellectual property offices, industry and academia, as well as enforcement and judicial authorities. The EU has been actively engaging with Southeast Asian countries, both through intellectual property dialogues and Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations, and IP Key SEA will be available to facilitate these exchanges and implement activities resulting from them. The overall aims of the project are to further convergence of the IPR environment, establish common IPR platforms and ensure a level playing field for both local enterprises and EU investors. IP Key SEA in particular aims at:

- Encouraging alignment of IPR protection and enforcement standards;
- Best practices sharing and implementation;
- Contributing to greater transparency and fair implementation of the IPR protection & enforcement system;
- Discouraging any protectionist market access barriers through the misuse of IPR legislation;
- Increasing political and public awareness of the importance of IPR protection and enforcement.

IP Key SEA is one of three EU-funded projects dedicated to intellectual property that are being implemented by EUIPO, next to IP Key China and IP Key Latin America.

The Executive Director of EUIPO, António Campinos, said:

“At a time when the number of Intellectual Property Rights being registered all over the world is rising fast, it is in everyone’s interest to ensure that they are quality rights with the potential to be protected in the global marketplace. Jobs and economic growth are on the line since these are critical assets for businesses of all sizes in all jurisdictions. That’s why building partnerships, and helping to bring consistency and transparency, is so important and deserves to be supported.”

Head of the IPR Unit in the Directorate General for Trade at the European Commission, Péter Kovács, said:

“The EU is a major trading partner and foreign investor in Southeast Asia. We have concluded free trade agreements with a number of countries in the Region and are



currently in negotiation with a number of others. All these trade agreements include meaningful chapters on intellectual property rights. We look forward to working with our Southeast Asian partners to establish solid and strong IPR frameworks to foster our trade and investment relations."

The Ambassador of the European Union to Thailand, H.E. Mr Pirkka Tapiola, said:

"The protection and enforcement of International Property Rights are key objectives for the EU in the context of international trade. Businesses need to remain competitive while fighting IPR infringements that threaten not only the health and safety of consumers, but also the environment. In the EU, we believe that increased attention to IPR is fundamental not only for European businesses trading with and investing in Southeast Asia, but also for local businesses active in the region."

ABOUT THE EUIPO:

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) is an agency of the EU, based in Alicante, Spain. It manages the registration of the European Union trade mark (EUTM) and the Registered Community Design (RCD), both of which provide intellectual property protection in all 28 EU Member States, as well as carrying out cooperation activities with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU. Under the goals of its Strategic Plan 2020, the EUIPO, in cooperation with national and regional EU IP offices, aims to promote global cooperation on IP between EU partners, third countries and multilateral organisations.

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