

EU and Southeast Asia judges share intellectual property enforcement expertise

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A three-day roundtable on intellectual property (IP) enforcement measures for key members of the judiciary from Southeast Asia started today at the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). Counting on the presence of expert judges in charge of IP cases before national courts, the roundtable brings together an impressive roster of jurists who are envisioned to work towards significantly improving the effectiveness of IP enforcement in their respective countries.

Andrea Di Carlo, Deputy Director of the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights, opened proceedings. Prof. Dr. Alexander von Mühlendahl and European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights Expert Erling Vestergaard will share their expertise over the duration of the roundtable. The topics and practices to be discussed include the international IP framework, special rules of procedure for IP cases, legal remedies, provisional and precautionary measures, and jurisdictional issues. Current challenges such as online trademark and copyright infringement, e-commerce, domain names, and IP adjudication in the digital environment will also be tackled, among others. A visit to the European Union Trademark Court in Alicante will conclude the forum.

The implementation of international IP standards tends to vary across Southeast Asia, leading to uncertainties for many local and foreign businesses operating in the region. Criminal prosecutions and civil actions can also be long and costly. Conversely, regulatory certainty over the protection of IP assets is an important consideration for businesses wishing to invest. The IP Key SEA roundtable for the judiciary ultimately aims to instil business confidence in judicial processes in relation to IP cases in Southeast Asia, largely through greater understanding and adoption of international best practices.

In his opening remarks Mr. Di Carlo noted, “Today’s roundtable discussion presents a unique opportunity for the EU to support our partners in Southeast Asia in building a stronger IP judicial enforcement knowledge community in the region. A strong and effective judicial enforcement system is a critical component to attract the substantial foreign investment required for national economic development.”

The roundtable is one of a range of activities being delivered by IP Key Southeast Asia (IP Key SEA), a four-year, EUR 7 million programme funded by the European Union and implemented by the EUIPO. The EU has been actively engaging with Southeast Asian countries, including through bilateral trade agreements (with comprehensive chapters on intellectual property) already concluded or under negotiation, as well as IP dialogues. The IP Key SEA programme will be available to contribute to these exchanges. The main objective of IP Key is to support Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection and enforcement across Southeast Asia with a view to creating the appropriate legal and economic environment conducive to trade and investment in the region. Through enhancing IPR frameworks and good practice, IP Key SEA aims at ensuring a level playing field for both local enterprises and EU stakeholders. IP Key SEA is one of three EU-funded



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programmes dedicated to intellectual property that are being implemented by the EUIPO, together with IP Key China and IP Key Latin America.

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 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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