



Trade Facts

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APEC Ministers Focus on Improving Intellectual Property Protection in the Asia Pacific Region

United States Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick achieved APEC Ministers' support for an ambitious program in 2005 to reduce piracy and trade in counterfeit goods, address online piracy issues, and increase cooperation and capacity building to help countries in the Asia Pacific strengthen their IPR regimes. Ministers stressed the importance of effective intellectual property rights protection and enforcement regimes, and their contribution towards promoting investment, innovation, and growth.

APEC Intellectual Property (IP) Protection: With United States' leadership, the 21 APEC economies have agreed to prioritize intellectual property protection and enforcement in the region in 2005. Efforts will focus on strengthening economies' IP laws, implementing international treaties, and fostering better cooperation among the enforcement agencies of APEC members. Ministers also called for specific steps to implement the APEC Effective Practices for Regulation Related to Optical Disc Production endorsed last year, and encouraged economies to hold training seminars on intellectual property enforcement.

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APEC accounts for 47 percent of world trade and 60 percent of GDP, and includes major economies such as China, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and others. This is a key region for focusing collective intellectual property protection efforts and combating trade in pirated and counterfeit goods.

APEC Initiative Will Complement the U.S. STOP Initiative: Global trade in counterfeit and pirated goods hurts the U.S. economy, cheats American innovators and manufacturers, and endangers consumers worldwide. Such products are estimated to account for up to seven percent of global trade and cost legitimate rights holders around the world billions of dollars annually. APEC's work in 2005 will complement the Bush Administration's comprehensive Strategy Targeting Organized Piracy (STOP), a major new government-wide initiative that focuses on helping businesses enforce their rights, stopping fakes at borders, dismantling criminal enterprises and building an international coalition against piracy and counterfeiting.

United States Capacity-Building Efforts: This year the United States agreed to provide \$250,000 to combat optical disc piracy in the APEC region. The program will provide hands-on training to law enforcement officers in developing APEC economies, introduce the United States' approach to combating piracy, and review international efforts to enforce IP protection. Prioritizing optical disc media enforcement will accelerate progress under APEC's digital piracy initiative, endorsed in 2003.

The 21 APEC members are: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korean, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, United States and Vietnam.