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Statement from USTR Spokesman Scott Elmore On the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA)

“Discussion on the proposed Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) continued in Paris from December 15 to 18, hosted by the European Union. Participants in the discussion included Australia, Canada, the European Union, represented by the European Commission and the EU Presidency (France), Japan, Korea, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland, and the United States. EU Member States also attended the meeting.

“The meeting was opened by French Trade Minister, Mrs. Anne-Marie IDRAC, who reaffirmed the strong commitment of the EU in favor of intellectual property rights (IPR), against counterfeiting and piracy, and called for constructive and ambitious negotiations.

“Participants reaffirmed their commitments to negotiate an agreement to combat global infringements of IPR, particularly in the context of counterfeiting and piracy, by increasing international cooperation, strengthening the framework of practices that contribute to effective enforcement, and strengthening relevant IPR enforcement measures themselves. This meeting was the fourth in a series of negotiations to discuss proposals concerning different aspects of the proposed agreement.

“The discussion focused on international cooperation, enforcement practices and institutional issues. Participants also continued previous discussions on criminal enforcement of IPR. They also shared information on approaches to fighting IPR infringements on the Internet. Participants made steady progress in these discussions.

“Participants shared the results of consultations that had been held with their respective stakeholders and noted the interests expressed by stakeholders in receiving more information. Participants agreed on the importance of transparency and on holding further discussions on sharing additional information with the public.

“Starting in June 2008, Participants have intensively discussed various text proposals for ACTA and built a strong foundation for further work on all aspects of the proposed agreement. Participants discussed the schedule of future negotiations and meeting again in Morocco in March 2009. They confirmed their intention to conclude the agreement as soon as possible.”

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