

**DEVELOPING COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION'S AGREEMENT
ON TRADE-RELATED ASPECTS OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
("TRIPS")**

JOINT STATEMENT OF UNICE AND THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY COMMITTEE

On 1 January 2000, the transition period for implementation of the TRIPS Agreement by developing countries will expire. UNICE and the IPC are concerned that a large number of developing countries will not by that date have adopted the laws and regulations that will bring them into compliance with this Agreement.

While continuing to monitor TRIPs implementation in developed countries, UNICE and IPC have also started to scrutinise the intellectual property situation in developing countries for the purpose of advising US and European governments whether these countries will be in full compliance with their TRIPs obligations by 1 January 2000. UNICE and the IPC firmly hope that developing countries will implement the Agreement on time.

UNICE and the IPC are concerned that a failure by a substantial number of developing countries to implement TRIPs in a proper and timely fashion will seriously call into question the viability of the WTO as a body that can develop and enforce international rules. This is particularly true with regard to newly industrialised countries, which are of critical importance to US and European economies. Equally important, such a failure will delay the introduction of effective protection for intellectual property in many developing countries for years to come.

UNICE and the IPC believe that industry and governments should cooperate to facilitate proper TRIPs implementation and enforcement by developing countries by 1 January 2000. In this regard, UNICE and the IPC call on the European Commission, and the US and European governments to intensify their current efforts to ensure proper and timely TRIPs implementation by developing countries.

UNICE and IPC pledge to work with their respective governments and to support the WTO and the TRIPS Agreement.

* * *

IPC
Intellectual Property Committee of the USA
2300 M Street NW
Suite 800
Washington DC 20037

UNICE
Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederation of
Europe
40 rue Joseph II
1000 Brussels