

8 April 2003

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear Mr Poettering,

RE: **FIGHT AGAINST COUNTERFEITING AND PIRACY IN AN ENLARGED EU**

Counterfeiting and piracy of consumer goods is increasingly posing a critical challenge to consumers and industry in Europe. These counterfeit products are being imported to the European market from all over the world and, counterfeiting and piracy have reached epidemic proportions, in acceding countries.

Any type of product protected by an intellectual property right (IPR) in the market is today a target for counterfeiters. This is a problem that is having a large impact on consumer and product safety, the integrity and value of intellectual property, ability to create and maintain employment opportunities and on innovation in general.

UNICE has always campaigned in favour of a determined fight against counterfeiting and piracy and has welcomed all initiatives from the European institutions encompassing anti-counterfeiting and anti-piracy measures.

Five MEPs have tabled a Written Declaration on Piracy and Counterfeiting, calling on the European Commission and the Council to ensure that current and future legislation provides strong and harmonised measures to combat counterfeiting and piracy. This Declaration must be signed by a majority of the Parliament's Members within three months of being tabled. If that target is not reached the Declaration will lapse.

UNICE feels that this Declaration can send a strong political signal of European Parliament's commitment to the fight against counterfeiting and piracy and strongly urges your political group to endorse and sign the Declaration.

We thank you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely,

(original signed by)

Phillippe de Buck