



Press release

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Judges from China, Europe, US, India and Japan gather in Shanghai for an international exchange on IPR protection

Senior judges from China, the European Union, the United States, Japan and India concluded a two-day international conference hosted by the Supreme People's Court of China (SPC) in Shanghai today on how the judiciary can better protect and enforce intellectual property rights (IPR). The '2008 International Conference on Judicial Protection of IPR' proved beneficial to all participants and strong interest was expressed to hold another exchange in the future.

With the support of the EU-China IPR2 Project, judges from Germany, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom joined their esteemed colleagues from SPC, including Vice President Xi Xiaoming who gave opening remarks and Chief Judge Jiang Zhipei from SPC's IPR Division, who presided over the opening ceremony and its first session on new trends in IPR judicial practice.

With IPR protection being a pillar of Chinese national policy, Xi Xiaoming, in his keynote speech, called for a full exchange of information, expanding common understanding and enhancing co-operation among the international participants, towards stronger IPR protection.

Dr Michael Pulch, Minister Counsellor for the Delegation of the European Union to China & Mongolia, was also present, and said in his opening remarks,

"We are very pleased that the EU-China IPR2 Project is a co-sponsor. The EU welcomes the continuing interest from senior IP judges in China in sharing their questions, views and experiences with their counterparts in Europe and in the wider international arena. It is a great time for us to learn more about international judicial best practice, and to learn more about China. The EU envisages technical exchanges such as this as pivotal to enhancing this understanding and reinforcing our long-term strategic partnership."

The EU acknowledges continuing and concerted efforts, including those of China, to adjust the system of intellectual property protection in an international context. This is not possible without a judiciary that is empowered to effectively and consistently enforce intellectual property rights in accordance with the rule of law.

IPR2 is the joint EU-China co-operation project implemented by the Chinese government together with the European Patent Office, which will target effectiveness of intellectual property rights enforcement. Involvement in this Conference is one of IPR2's first and, taking into account the level of speakers featured during the next two days, its flagship activity on the enforcement-related part of IPR protection.

Leading international judges joined an impressive array of experts and representatives of the highly acknowledged, Quality Brands Protection Committee of China Association of Enterprises with Foreign

Investment (“QBPC”), which worked with the SPC to organise the first International Conference on Judicial Protection of IPR in 2006, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, also sponsors of the Conference, to discuss and compare the most recent developments and challenges in the field of intellectual property.

The meeting provided a unique opportunity to promote new approaches to solving similar problems shared by different legal systems; and to help strengthen the efficiency of these systems by learning about successful experiences in other countries. In the longer term, this will mean closer ties between different jurisdictions, a stronger international judicial network and a better understanding of how to address new challenges at the international level, with enhanced co-operation between trading partners.

The EU-China Project on the Protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR2) was launched in 2007 by the European Commission and the Government of People’s Republic of China. The objective of the project is to improve the effectiveness of IPR enforcement in China. Building on the success of IPR1 from 1999-2004, which promoted international standards of IPR protection in Chinese legislation, **IPR2 targets the reliability, efficiency and accessibility of the IP protection system in China.** This is done by closely co-operating with and providing technical support to the different levels of the Chinese legislative, judicial, administrative and enforcement authorities to help build their capacity; as well as improving access to information for users and officials and reinforcing support to right holders. With EUR 16.275 million in joint funding over 4 years (EUR 10.85 from the EU and 5.425 from China), IPR2 reflects the EU and China’s long-term commitment to developing a sustainable environment for effective IPR enforcement in China.

The European Patent Office (EPO) is the European implementing organisation; who together with the Chinese implementing organisation, the Department of Treaty and Law of the Ministry of Commerce of China, have an office based in Beijing. The EPO is supported in specific areas with expertise from its Member States and the Office for the Harmonisation of the Internal Market (OHIM), responsible for registering the European Community’s Trademarks and Designs.

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For further information:

IPR2 project web site: www.ipr2.org

Delegation of the European Commission to China web site: www.delchn.ec.europa.eu

Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China: www.english.mofcom.gov.cn

China IPR portal: www.ipr.gov.cn