

Regional symposium on brand building and intellectual property rights held in HK

In view of France's worldwide experience in managing famous brands and to maximize the awareness of local business enterprises about the importance of intellectual property rights (IPR) and brand protection, the Intellectual Property Department jointly organised a regional symposium today (January 27) with the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong, the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Hong Kong, the Comité Colbert and Union des Fabricants.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the symposium, the Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology, Mr John Tsang, said, "An essential element of brand building is brand protection. Hong Kong provides an effective legislative framework for businesses to gain protection of their brands and the legal framework of protection is backed by vigorous enforcement against infringement offences at all levels.

"Apart from formulating enforcement strategies, cultivation and promotion of the public's awareness of and respect for IPR is of paramount importance on a long term basis."

The Vice Minister for State Administration for Industry & Commerce, People's Republic of China, Mr Li Dongsheng, said, "China urgently needs to have a number of brands that are influential in world markets. To achieve that, we need to further strengthen exchange and co-operation in the areas of brand-based trading and intellectual property protection. We should learn from international experience and at the same time strengthen protection of trademarks. Today's Symposium will provide us all with a great opportunity to exchange ideas on these matters."

Other officiating guests included Director General of Institut National de la Propriété Intellectuelle, Mr. Benoît Battistelli; and Director of the Office of the Director-General, World Trade Organisation, Mr. Stuart Harbinson.

Entitled "Creating Wealth through Brand Building", the two-day symposium is being held at the Hong Kong Exhibition and Convention Centre, today and tomorrow (January 28).

The symposium is one of the major events in the celebration of the "Year of France in China." It brings together senior government officials and senior executives of business enterprises from France, the Mainland and Hong Kong. The most effective strategies for creating wealth through brand building, brand management and brand protection will be shared at the symposium.

Speakers from prominent business enterprises such as Remy Cointreau, Tsingtao, Goldlion, Lacoste, Li Ning, Alcatel, Quanjude Group, TechTronics, Peugeot have been invited. In the panel discussion for government administrators and enforcement agencies, government officials and intellectual property professionals will exchange views on IPR policies and administration systems for defending the brands in the region.

Representatives of French trade organizations such as Comité Colbert, Union des Fabricants and Institut National de la Propriété Intellectuelle, which have a wide experience in the areas of IPR protection in luxury goods, industrial and artistic products and properties, will share ideas on brand building, how to prevent counterfeiting and protecting brands in national and international level.

The co-organisers are the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council; and the supporting organization is the China Trademark Association.

Ends/Thursday, January 27, 2005