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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
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Delegations will find attached, for information, the statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its Member States at the above-mentioned WIPO meeting.

WIPO Advisory Committee on Enforcement (ACE)

15th Session

Geneva, 31 August - 2 September 2022

Opening Statement by the EU

Chair,

1. On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, we congratulate you and your Vice-Chairs for your election. The European Union and its Member States are pleased to see that the Committee is back in full operation and takes place in its usual format for the first time since 2019. We are looking forward to continuing actively the cooperation and work under the agreed work program.
2. The European Union and its Member States strongly support the mission of this Committee as it offers a unique opportunity at international level for the exchange of information on new trends and challenges, practical experiences, and good practices in the fight against counterfeiting and piracy. We consider this exchange among WIPO Member States particularly valuable, not least because they provide inspiration and ideas for the further development of our own initiatives, such as the forthcoming EU Toolbox against counterfeiting.
3. Therefore, the European Union and its Member States are highly committed to usefully contributing to the Committee's work. In that regard, we are pleased that at this session there are contributions from the Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sport, the Danish Patent and Trademark Office as well as the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).
4. As the business models adopted by IP infringers make extensive use of the internet to distribute their products and services, we are glad to see that the opportunities and challenges resulting from the digital era will remain in the focus of discussion during this session of the Committee. We stand ready to continue the exchange of information on national experiences related to institutional arrangements concerning IP enforcement policies and regimes, and we will be particularly interested to hear about national initiatives to address online IP infringements and the role of online intermediaries in IP enforcement.

5. At the same time, we welcome that the agenda also addresses in a balanced manner the fight against counterfeiting in the physical environment by looking at the role of transport and logistics services and the role of customs in border measures.
6. We very much welcome the specific agenda item on new technologies in IP enforcement. Given that the way in which organised crime groups involved in IP infringement operate is becoming more sophisticated, it is even more important that we explore the full potential of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, content recognition technologies or blockchain, and make these technologies available for enforcement purposes. We are very pleased that the work of the European Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights concerning the use of blockchain technology to fight counterfeiting will be presented in this session. We are convinced that taking full advantage of the possibilities brought by technologies such as blockchain can be a game-changer in the fight against trafficking counterfeited goods, in particular in view of its potential to track and trace an authentic product throughout its supply chain.
7. We equally look forward to the exchange of information on national experiences on awareness building activities and strategic campaigns as a means for building respect for IP among the general public, especially the youth. In this context, we also would like to thank the WIPO Secretariat for preparing the document (WIPO/ACE/15/2) on the recent activities of WIPO in the field of building respect for IP. The document contains an impressive list of activities undertaken during the reporting period and a comprehensible summary of their contents. It is particularly pleasing that WIPO was able to continue its efforts in providing legal and technical assistance to Member States.
8. As WIPO is the global forum for all intellectual property related matters, the EU and its Member States would like to emphasise once again WIPO's important role in coordinating Member States' efforts to more effectively combat IPR infringements. Chair, we are looking forward to fruitful discussions under your leadership and you can count on our active support.

Thank you.