EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OFFICE OF THE U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

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2024 SPECIAL 301 PUBLIC HEARING

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WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2024

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The public hearing convened via video teleconference, at 10:00 a.m. EST, Daniel Lee, Panel Chair, presiding.

## PRESENT

DANIEL LEE, Assistant United States Trade Representative, Office of Innovation and Intellectual Property, Panel Chair CLAIRE AVERY-PAGE, Office of the U.S. Trad

CLAIRE AVERY-PAGE, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Director for Innovation and Intellectual Property

WON CHANG, Treasury Department, International Economist

ALEXIS CHERRY, Department of Agriculture, Senior Trade Advisor

MARY CRITHARIS, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Deputy Chief Policy Officer

ALLISON FEDORKA, Department of Homeland Security

JOSEPH ALEXANDER HAMILTON, State Department, Deputy Director, Office of Intellectual Property Enforcement

EMILY LANZA, U.S. Copyright Office, Senior Counsel

CHRISTOPHER MERRIAM, Department of Justice, Prosecutor, Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section STEVAN MITCHELL, Department of Commerce, Director, Office of Standards and Intellectual Property, International Trade Administration JESSICA POMPER, Department of Commerce, International Trade Specialist, Office of Intellectual Property Rights, International Trade Administration

ANNE SNYDER, Department of Health and Human Services, Senior Global Health Officer, Trade and Health

## WITNESSES PRESENT

IVAYLO SHOTEV, Government of Bulgaria VOLODYMYR MUZYLOV, Government of Ukraine BRIAN SCARPELLI, ACT - The App Association GUAN JIAN, China Chamber of International Commerce

QI RUOYIN, China Chamber of International Commerce

JONATHAN MCHALE, Computer and Communications Industry Association

JAIME CASTANEDA, Consortium for Common Food Names

MATT PRIEST, Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America

KEVIN ROSENBAUM, International Intellectual Property Alliance

THOMAS VALENTE, Intellectual Property Owners Association

CLAIRE CASSEDY, Knowledge Ecology International PETER MAYBARDUK, Public Citizen

PAUL KILMER, Trademark Working Group

PATRICK KILBRIDE, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Global Innovation Policy Center

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10:00 a.m.

CHAIR LEE: Good morning. I'm going to call this hearing to order.

Good morning. My name is Daniel Lee.

I am the Assistant United States Trade

Representative for Innovation and Intellectual

Property.

I would like to welcome everyone to the public hearing for the Annual Special 301 Review. It's good to see everyone again after the hiatus from holding these hearings in person.

Just as a brief overview, the Special 301 Review is a statutorily-mandated exercise we undertake each year to develop an overall strategy to ensure adequate and effective intellectual property rights protection and equitable market access in foreign countries for United States persons that rely on protection of intellectual property rights such as copyright and related rights, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets.

Ensuring that U.S. owners of intellectual property, or IP, have a full and fair opportunity to compete around the globe is one of the trade priorities outlined in the President's Annual Trade Policy Agenda.

This is the 36th Annual Special 301
Review and the 12th public hearing that USTR has hosted in connection with the review.

I would like to note for the record that today is Wednesday, February 21st, 2024, and that this hearing is taking place at the Office of the United States Trade Representative, or USTR.

We will make a transcript of today's hearing available to the public on USTR's website at ustr.gov. This is also being video recorded, and we'll put that up as well.

Today's hearing is scheduled to go to approximately 2:30, and we will have an hour-and -a-half break for lunch from 12:00 to 1:30. And I just want to ask for everyone's cooperation, for those of you staying, to keep the hearing on

track.

So, at this point, I would like to ask all the colleagues at the table -- that is, the hearing panel -- who all come from various U.S.

Government agencies that serve on the Special 301

Subcommittee to introduce themselves. So, we'll start here with Claire.

MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Claire Avery-Page. I'm the Director for Innovation and Intellectual Property at USTR.

MS. LANZA: Good morning. My name is Emily Lanza, and I'm Senior Counsel for Policy and International Affairs at the U.S. Copyright Office.

MR. HAMILTON: Good morning. My name J. Alexander Hamilton, and I am the Deputy Office Director in the Office of Intellectual Property at the U.S. Department of State.

MR. CHANG: Hi. My name is Won Chang,
Department of Treasury, International Affairs,
Office of International Trade and Investment

1 Policy. Thank you. 2 MR. MITCHELL: Good morning. I'm Stevan Mitchell. I direct the Office of 3 4 Standards and Intellectual Property for the 5 International Trade Administration, a bureau of the Department of Commerce. 6 7 MS. CRITHARIS: Good morning. My name 8 is Mary Critharis. I'm the Deputy Chief Policy 9 Officer and the Deputy Director for International Affairs of the United States Patent and Trademark 10 11 Office. 12 MR. MERRIAM: Good morning, everyone. 13 Christopher Merriam from the Department of 14 Justice's Computer Crime and Intellectual 15 Property Section. We're part of the Criminal Division. 16 17 MS. FEDORKA: Good morning. My name is Allison Fedorka. I'm with the Department of 18 Homeland Security, Trade and Economic Security 19 20 and Trade Policy. 21 MS. SNYDER: Good morning. My name is

Anne Snyder. I'm a Senior Global Health Officer

in the Office of Global Affairs at HHS.

MS. CHERRY: Good morning, everyone.

My name is Alexis Cherry. I'm Senior Trade

Advisor in the Foreign Agricultural Service at

U.S. Department of Agriculture, covering

geographical indications.

CHAIR LEE: All right. So, to continue, the Special 301 Subcommittee of the Trade Policy Staff Committee, comprised of the agencies you've just heard from and chaired by USTR, conducts the Annual Special 301 Review.

Stakeholder contributions and contributions from Washington-based agencies and our embassy-based personnel around the world are critical to this review process. The Subcommittee is currently in the information-gathering phase on behalf of the agencies here. We thank you for the views, inside opinions, and factual information you will share with us today.

The schedule of today's hearing is comprised of interested parties from foreign governments, civil society, and the private

sector who responded to USTR's notice in the Federal Register published on December 6th, 2023, and voluntarily requested the opportunity to appear at this public hearing.

As a reminder, the purpose of today's public hearing is to provide the Special 301 Subcommittee with additional information that we can use in the deliberations that will lead to the publication of the 2024 Special 301 Report to Congress on or about April 26, 2024.

This year, we have received public filings that address over 65 countries and many country-specific IP protection and enforcement issues that may negatively affect our bilateral trading relationships. These filings are available to the public at regulations.gov, and the Docket No. is USTR-2023-0014.

So, just to recall the statutory authority for the Special 301 Review, our Special 301 Report is the result of a congressionally-mandated annual review of the state of intellectual property rights protection and

enforcement in trading partners around the world, which the Office of the U.S. Trade

Representative, USTR, conducts pursuant to

Section 182 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended by the Omnibus -- well, we'll just say "as amended."

The provisions of Section 182 are commonly referred to as the Special 301

Provisions of the Trade Act; hence, the Special 301 Report. Specifically, Section 12 of the Trade Act requires that the United States Trade Representative identify countries that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights or that deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on intellectual property protection.

The statute requires USTR to determine which, if any, countries should be identified as priority foreign countries. Acts, policies, or practices that are the basis of the country's identification as a priority foreign country can be subject to the procedures set out in Section

301 to 308 of the Trade Act.

In addition to the statutorily-defined priority foreign country definition, USTR created the Priority Watch List and Watch List Categories to assist the Administration in pursuing the goals of the Special 301 Provisions.

USTR is also charged with developing Priority Watch List Action Plans, where a country has been placed on the Priority Watch List without a change for at least one year.

So, I'd like to go over briefly the format of today's hearing. So, each party -that is, each witness -- has been allotted 10
minutes. Each person will start with five
minutes of prepared statements, leaving five
minutes for panel questions. We will be keeping
time, and we'll flash a time to you when one
minute remains. It looks like this. And we will
be fairly strict with the time limits and may
need to cut you off so that we can stay on
schedule.

The panel will hold its questions

until the presenter concludes his or her statement. In some cases, we have prepared questions based on the written filings you submitted. In other cases, we will respond to your testimony today.

In general, please keep in mind the purpose of this hearing: to provide information that the Subcommittee can use in satisfying the charge of the Special 301 statute when conveying your testimony and responding to any questions we may ask.

So, without further delay, I'd like to invite the government of Bulgaria to start us off. Please go ahead and introduce yourself, including your name, title, and organization, and begin your testimony.

Thank you.

MR. SHOTEV: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dear Hearing Committee, my name is

Ivaylo Shotev. I am Deputy Minister of Economy

and Industry of Bulgaria. I'm here leading a

delegation, pursuant from the decision of the

Bulgarian Council of Ministers that was taken the 14th of February this year.

In this delegation next to me, I would like to say that this is Mariya Pavlova, which is Deputy Prosecutor General of Bulgaria. Our delegation also consists of advisors to the political cabinet to the Prime Minister, head of the Cyber Crime Department, the National Investigative Service, and the Director of Copyright Directorate of the Minister of Culture.

One of the aims we have is additional discussions and meetings afterwards, in order to continue working on the topic of IP protection and enforcement.

I would like to thank you for having us here. We fairly appreciate our good cooperation, and we wish to continue our strategic partnership. It is important to know that we fully understand that in order to live in this common world, it is not only a matter of privileges, but it's also a matter of responsibilities.

And Bulgaria is very proud of its IT sector. It is one of the most highly developed, not only in Eastern Europe, but in Europe as well. We have a great number of American films that are made in our country, films with companies with American capital. We wish to continue working in order to have the environment for these to continue and to develop even further.

The Republic of Bulgaria confirms our commitment to ensuring the protection of intellectual property rights in Bulgaria.

Concrete expressions of this are the following: we have made recent legislative changes in this direction, and the second is the efforts for the enforcement of these changes.

Firstly, it is important to say that we passed through a period of political crisis in Bulgaria. We had five parliamentary elections, and we were able to form a government in the summer. And shortly after, authority was passed to our Parliament, which gives the legislative

framework in order for our trade partners' concerns to adopt evidence sampling in our criminal cases.

So, after a prolonged period of discussions in the Parliament, we were able to pass this through, and it is already part of our legislative from the 4th of August. So, shortly after the government was formed, we went through this process in order to ensure the framework is there. The amendments are based on, basically, a proposal from an inter-minister working group and the Ministry of Justice.

We've had numerous discussions how to obey the law, how to go about this, and they provided for the prosecution of persons who created conditions for online piracy -- for example, through the establishment and maintenance of torrent trackers, web platforms, chat groups online, applications for the exchange of pirated content, and other activities.

We have to take into account, though, our specifics of our legal system, because it's

1 different. It's literally different. way we went about it in order to make the 2 amendments and to achieve the intended result of 3 evidence sampling, and thus overcome the lack of 4 5 evidence sampling in our legislative with regard to intellectual property offenses, we have gone 6 7 through this process. It is completed. 8 So, it's celebratory to get the 9 statistics in because the law was done just quite 10 recently. And I will be happy to answer all 11 possible questions, if I may. If I'm not able to 12 answer, we will be able to submit them in person. 13 So that you get the most information that you may 14 need. 15 Thank you very much. 16 CHAIR LEE: Thank you very much. 17 The first question we have today comes 18 from USTR. 19 MR. SHOTEV: Okay. 20 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. 21 So, as you just described, we

understand that, as an alternative to evidence

1 sampling, Bulgaria made progress in addressing 2 deficiencies in the investigation and prosecution 3 of online piracy cases by passing the August 2023 act amending and supplementing the Criminal Code. 4 Your submission identifies Article 5 172a, paragraph 2 of this Act as providing for 6 7 the criminal prosecution of persons who create 8 conditions for online piracy through the 9 development and maintenance of torrent trackers, 10 web platforms, chat groups, and applications for 11 online exchange of pirated content. 12 So, under this Act, have there been 13 any criminal prosecutions under Article 172a, 14 paragraph 2? MR. SHOTEV: We currently are able to 15 16 inform that we are working on such. 17 hopefully, we are able to get it completed and 18 have official people that have been sentenced for 19 criminal activities. From our legislative, it is 20 now a criminal act. 21 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Okav. 22 So, yes. There is. MR. SHOTEV:

1 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. CHAIR LEE: Okay. 2 Thank you. 3 Our next question comes from the Copyright Office. 4 5 MS. LANZA: Thank you. In your submission, you note that the 6 7 Ministry of Culture is preparing draft amendments 8 and supplementations to the Copyright and 9 Neighbouring Rights Act to enable effective counteraction to unauthorized online distribution 10 11 of objects protected by copyright and neighboring 12 rights. What is the status of these draft 13 amendments? 14 MR. SHOTEV: Currently, they're 15 working. They're pretty much done, as far as I 16 know. And we have also a panel which is a 17 consultation panel, an advisory panel, from the 18 Ministry of Councils. It's all started working. 19 So, from there, we're going to have also a 20 framework which we're going to implement. 21 And also, I would like to share with

you that we have done a lot in terms of making

the environment for this in order to exist, in terms of there's a lot of work towards -- when a person goes online to look for some type of movie, you go directly, direct to a subscription-based platform, which is the official content is the first thing you see.

And from the Minister of Culture, there are numerous activities. For example, I must note that we are part of the EU Intellectual Property Office Project Agorateka, which is also a part of online content. So, basically, there is official online -- you can go and it goes to the subscription-based. So, pretty much the piracy, you don't really see it, no, anymore.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you very much.

Our next -- yes, we have time for one more question, I think. Our next question comes from the Department of Justice.

MR. MERRIAM: Thank you very much for your testimony, and we appreciate the detailed outline of your law enforcement activity and the updates on the laws.

MR. SHOTEV: Yes.

MR. MERRIAM: In the submission, you note that the Patent Office, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Prosecutor's Office are working together through joint initiatives to reduce the spread of counterfeit goods, both physically and online. Can you provide any details on those joint initiatives and how they're affecting the spread of counterfeit goods?

MR. SHOTEV: I think we have done a great amount in this regard, as Bulgaria is one of the possible channels that these goods come through. We have seen a great rate of goods that have been seized and goods that have been pretty much completed, the cases. So, I think in this regard we are very good. In this regard, we are good, yeah.

MR. MERRIAM: Thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Maybe we have time for just one more question from the Department of Homeland Security.

MR. SHOTEV: If I'm able to just share

with you some little bit more information, if I am allowed?

CHAIR LEE: Okay.

MR. SHOTEV: I want to make sure we have to know that we made an intellectual property sector within our newly-formed Cyber Crime Directorate. So, that is very important because we have a new Cyber Crime Unit from 2021, 2022 actually, and it will improve the work of the Ministry of Interior in relation to intellectual property crimes.

So, pretty much the capacity-building is there. Our prosecutors and this system have gone through a number of educations, I would say, in order to get the knowledge how to go through from beginning to end to get this process done.

So, we are pretty much here to confirm our firm stand on this piracy, and I believe we are doing whatever is necessary to combat this, and we will continue doing this. That is all.

CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony.

1 MR. SHOTEV: Thank you very much. 2 CHAIR LEE: Next up is the government 3 of Ukraine. Please go ahead and --4 5 MR. MUZYLOV: Yes, thank you. CHAIR LEE: -- your name, title, and 6 7 affiliation for the record, and please begin your 8 testimony. Thank you. 9 10 MR. MUZYLOV: So, hello, Subcommittee 11 Members and Representatives. It's an honor for 12 me to be here today with you. 13 My name is Volodymyr Muzylov. 14 the First Secretary at the Embassy of Ukraine and 15 active head of the Government Section at the 16 Embassy of Ukraine in the U.S. 17 So, on behalf of the government of 18 Ukraine, I'd like to express the highest respect 19 for the Office of USTR and all the government 20 institutions, and for all participants in the 21 Special 301 hearings. The government of Ukraine

expresses gratitude to the U.S. Government for

unwavering support of Ukrainian applicants and the whole Ukrainian IP and innovation system.

The government of Ukraine defines the development of the national IP system as its priority task, despite the ongoing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The law of Ukraine of April 1st, 2022

-- actually, just months after the beginning of
the full-scale invasion -- introduced a legal
mechanism for protecting the IP interests of
persons, preventing the loss of IP rights during
martial law.

The implementation of this mechanism is also available for applicants to provide them with maximum assistance for the effective management and enforcement of IP rights under the martial law regime.

The government of Ukraine managed to complete the institutional reform of the IP system in Ukraine. The newly-established Ukrainian National Office for Intellectual Property and Innovation began to perform the

functions of the National Intellectual Property Authority as of November 8th, 2022.

Within the framework of its activities, the Ukrainian IP Office introduced effective instruments of IP and innovation, combined with broad public discussions and transparency of its activities.

The government of Ukraine is intensifying the activities of its advisory board in the IP field. On October 6th, 2023, the composition of the IP Council was expanded to include representatives of government and non-governmental institutions.

The following regulatory acts were adopted to improve the IP system and strengthen the production of IP rights:

The new law on copyright and related rights, which, in addition to harmonization with EU standards, introduced forward-looking provisions. In particular, cases of exception and limitations for content in the digital environment by cultural heritage institutions,

2.1

and rights to non-regional objects generated by computer programs, including artificial intelligence.

Second, procedures for protection of moral rights of authors in respect of work passed into the public domain in the absence of heirs.

Third, procedures of acquiring and losing the status of orphan works, of course. On September 8, 2023, Ukraine acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty to increase public interest in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

And the last one, new rules of procedures of the Appeals Chamber with the Ukrainian IP Office.

Also, drafts of new bylaws were also developed, including the rules of filing applications for industrial property rights and conducting their examinations, as well as the legal status of patent attorneys.

In order to mobilize support from the international community, the government of

Ukraine is taking active measures to cooperate with international, regional, and national IP institutions; in particular, with Commercial Law Development Program of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the USPTO, WIPO, the European Union Intellectual Property Office, and the European Patent Office.

In July 2023, the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WIPO aimed at restoring Ukraine's innovation and creative sectors and ecosystem.

For planning issues in the sphere of collective management, license software issues, and strengthening IP rights enforcement -- that's a usual problem for Ukraine previously -- in particular, on the internet, the following should be noted:

Firstly, the Register of CMOs maintained by the Ministry of Economy, where it now includes 19 CMOs that have the right to carry out voluntary collective management within their catalog.

1	Taking into account the fact that the
2	results of some accreditation competitions were
3	cancelled in 2021, and the three-year period of
4	accreditation in many spheres was about to expire
5	in 2022, the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine
6	planned to start forming a new composition of the
7	accreditation commission at the end of February
8	2022, and then, hold new competitions.
9	Unfortunately, these plans were hindered by the
10	full-scale invasion by Russia in February of
11	2022.
12	At the same time, Ukrainian
13	legislation established during martial law CMOs,
14	TV and radio organizations are released from
15	submitting accounting, financial, and other
16	CHAIR LEE: I'm sorry to interrupt but
17	the time is up.
18	MR. MUZYLOV: Yes.
19	CHAIR LEE: So, if you have a couple
20	of sentences to wrap up, so that we have time for
21	our questions.

MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you.

22

Sure. Yes.

As you can see, there are a lot that we could present what was done by the government, despite of Russian aggression, because, for us, it's extremely important to pay special attention to IP protection. Specifically, because, right now, for us, it's essential to support IP rights, especially right now where one of the main assets to defend our country is actually development of intellectual weapons, like drones, occupational intelligence. So, right now, for us, it's even more important than previously to pay special attention to that.

So, thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you. The first question we have comes from USTR.

MR. MUZYLOV: Uh-hum.

MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you very much.

So, we discussed Ukraine's IP reforms during the November 2023 U.S.-Ukraine Trade and Investment Council meeting here at USTR. We appreciated your updates and your Special 301 submission, and the commitment to IP issues,

1	despite the full-scale invasion and ongoing
2	aggression by Russia.
3	What IP-related reforms are you
4	finding the most challenging and why?
5	MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you so much for
6	this question.
7	So, it's very broad and important.
8	So, that's why the government of Ukraine will
9	provide its response in written form. Thank you.
10	CHAIR LEE: Thank you. Our next
11	question comes from the Patent and Trademark
12	Office.
13	MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you for your
14	testimony.
15	We would like to inquire, what is the
16	status of implementing the 2022 law entered into
17	force in January of 2023 on copyright and related
18	rights?
19	MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you. We will
20	provide the response in written form.
21	CHAIR LEE: All right. Next is a
22	question from the Department of Homeland

Security.

MS. FEDORKA: In your submission, you note that, in 2023, Customs made 347 decisions on suspension of customs clearance of goods on suspicions of IPR violations. In 78 cases, counterfeit goods were destroyed under Article 401 of the Customs Code of Ukraine. And in another 49 cases, small batches of counterfeit goods were destroyed. Of the 220 cases that did not result in destruction, what was the reason? And do you have specifics concerning the number of cases where the rights-holders chose not to initiate a court action?

MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you. We will check with our customs service and get back to you with a written response.

MS. FEDORKA: Thank you.

MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you. And our final question comes from the Treasury Department.

MR. CHANG: Thank you.

Can you clarify what are non-original

1 objects generated by a computer program that are 2 protected under Law No. 2811's sui generis 3 database rights? 4 MR. MUZYLOV: Thank you. We will get 5 back to you with the original response. 6 you. 7 CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you for your 8 testimony. 9 Thank you. MR. MUZYLOV: 10 CHAIR LEE: All right, so, it looks 11 like we are pretty much on schedule, if not a 12 couple of minutes early. At this point, we will 13 be moving from the government witnesses to the 14 non-government witnesses, and the first up is 15 ACT, the App Association. 16 MR. SCARPELLI: Thank you. 17 CHAIR LEE: Please state your name, 18 title, and organization for the record, and 19 please begin your testimony. 20 MR. SCARPELLI: All right. Thanks. 21 Thanks for having me here. 22 Brian Scarpelli, Senior Global Policy Counsel with the ACT, The App Association.

On behalf of The App Association, thank you for this opportunity to share our views with you all to inform the review to identify countries that deny adequate federal protection of IP rights or deny fair and equitable access to U.S. persons who rely on IP.

As a little background, the The App
Association is a global policy trade association,
a policy advocacy trade association, a nonprofit,
for the small business technology developer
community. And our members are entrepreneurs,
innovators, independent developers within the
global app ecosystem, we call it, global digital
economy, and are engaged across consumer and
enterprise verticals in between them.

So, we have some economic data that we always include in our testimony and things like that. And the value of the ecosystem that we give is approximately \$1.8 trillion annually and responsible for over 6 million American jobs, and our segment of the industry is serving as a key

driver of the Internet of Things revolution.

So, the global digital economy holds great promise, great opportunity for small technology developers, app development companies, but our members do face an array of trade barriers when entering new markets or staying in some key markets abroad.

So, these barriers can take many forms

-- laws, regulations, policies, or practices -aimed at protecting domestic goods and services

from foreign competition, artificially

stimulating exports, et cetera, or in some cases

failing to provide adequate and effective

protection of IP.

So, while these have different forms, they all in our view have the same effect -- impeding U.S. exports and investment at the expense of U.S. economic growth and job creation. So, harming American workers.

These barriers do include intellectual property violations, and we go into a lot of detail in our testimony, our written testimony,

about where we see them and the ones that rise to the top through our membership.

But the infringement and theft of IP, whether it's copyright, trademarks, patents, or trade secrets, presents a major threat to our members and the billions of consumers who rely on their digital products and services. So, strong, good, fair protection of IP for each of those four areas is critical to their businesses.

Other relevant barriers include requirements to provide source code for market entry. Some governments have proposed or even implemented policies that make legal market entry contingent on the transfer or inspection of proprietary source code. So, for our community -- small business, app developers, and tech companies -- forced disclosure or transfer of source code is an untenable risk for theft and piracy. And there's, sadly, lots of examples where that has come to be. So, it effectively locks them out.

The infringement and theft of IP

online threatens consumer welfare by undermining the ability of creators like our members to innovate, invest, and hire. App developers that drive the global digital economy are subject to an estimated loss of \$3 to 4 billion in revenue annual due to pirated apps alone.

This is a statistic that we've cited before. But between 2013 and 2018, our members and publishers lost an estimated \$17.5 billion to pirated apps alone. This kind of revenue loss presents a major threat to the success of our members, the app economy, and harms consumers. And each of the IP at issue is a distinct utility that our members rely on.

These violations lead to customer data loss, interruption of service, revenue loss, reputational damage. And for the smaller members, without the ability to distribute risk across a bunch of different product streams/offerings, it can be an end-of-life occurrence.

So, I'd just, finally, note that we

want to reiterate our concern with the October
25th, 2023 announcement of apparent withdrawal of
support for some digital trade policies,
including one related to source code in the
context of the World Trade Organization and,
apparently, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework
for Prosperity.

We are seeking to compete and innovate
across the digital economy and ask for support
from the U.S. Government for the time-tested,
bipartisan digital trade principles that have
provided a foundation for our growth and job
creation here domestically.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our views here. I hope we can assist today and moving forward in taking questions and coming back with statistics, anything at all. Thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you. Our first question comes from USTR.

Washington DC

MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you.

So, on China, your submission raises

concerns about the Chinese government's application of the controversial Essential Facilities Doctrine for IPR. Have there been any recent developments relating to the Essential Facilities Doctrine in China's courts and at the State Administration for Industry and Commerce, or other agencies?

MR. SCARPELLI: Really appreciate that question. Yeah, that remains a huge concern.

You know, a slight tangent, but we do go out of our way in our written comments to differentiate with respect to applying the Essential Facilities Doctrine to regular patents. How different it is for a special kind of patents, standard essential patents.

And interestingly, we see the policy in China more aligned with global norms, including that of the United States, with SEPs.

The broad application of the Essential Facilities Doctrine to -- I guess you could call them NEPs, non-essential patents, remains a concern.

1 I hope it is okay. I'd love to take 2 back and see if there might be some new breaking 3 updates. I think the ones that drive us to 4 continue to include this in our written 5 testimony, the examples are pretty longstanding. CHAIR LEE: Thank you. Next up is the 6 International Trade Administration. 7 8 MR. MITCHELL: Yes. In your 9 submission, you note that India has not yet 10 implemented various obligations under the WIPO 11 Internet Treaties, WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO 12 Performances and Phonograms Treaty. Which 13 obligations under those treaties would you 14 highlight as not yet having been implemented? MR. SCARPELLI: If it's okay, I'd love 15 16 to follow up with you all on that. I appreciate 17 your question. 18 CHAIR LEE: Great. The post-hearing 19 docket will open this afternoon, so feel free to 20 do a submission. 21 Our next question comes from the U.S. 22 Copyright Office.

MS. LANZA: Thank you.

ACT's comment mentioned that inadequate frameworks continue to present challenges to App Association members in Vietnam. Can you please explain the comments -- specifically, what frameworks and what specific challenges they present to your members?

MR. SCARPELLI: Thank you for that

I think most of our concerns with Vietnam rest in enforcement certainty, in the ability to enforce IP. So, what filters up to us from our membership is inconsistency with respect to that.

And I don't want to be dismissive of improvements in that jurisdiction and others, but yes, really, the concerns essentially rest under the existing framework, which I suppose could be improved in the sense that the existing framework is lending to a pretty good deal of uncertainty for digital economy enforcement of copyrights.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you. And our final

question.

1 question from the State Department. 2 MR. HAMILTON: Good morning. In your submission, you nominate 3 4 Mexico for the Priority Watch List because of, 5 quote, "constitutional challenges that are rendering the question of law unusable in Mexican 6 7 courts." Can you please provide an example of a 8 specific law, provision of the challenged law 9 -- excuse me. Can you please provide an example 10 of a specific provision of the challenged law 11 that has not been usable in Mexican courts? 12 for that example, did the courts say that the 13 provision was not enforceable because of the 14 constitutional challenge? 15 MR. SCARPELLI: Thank you for that I would love to follow up with further 16 question. 17 testimony on it. I very much appreciate that. 18 CHAIR LEE: All right, thank you. 19 We can squeeze in one more question 20 from the Department of Justice. 2.1 MR. MERRIAM: Back to SEPs. But,

regarding Brazil, on page 7 of your submission,

you note that Brazil is seeing an influx of SEP disputes in which injunctions are being rapidly awarded without serious competition consideration. Could you elaborate on that issue a little bit, on the types of things that you're seeing? Specifically, is it connected to flaws in Brazilian law, lack of understanding of the issue by the judiciary, or some other factor?

MR. SCARPELLI: Thank you. Yes, a

MR. SCARPELLI: Thank you. Yes, a very good question.

So, kind of the underlying issue that we see in Brazil, and in other jurisdictions we talk about such as Germany, it is that these standard essential patents are, indeed, unique and different from other patents. With a regular patent, you can arbitrarily exclude at will someone from using a patent generally.

With a standard essential patent, that holder is choosing to walk into a standard-setting process and volunteering to all to provide fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory licenses to the patent in order to enable anyone

to use that open standard. So, it does place them in, essentially, a gatekeeping role for access to markets that are reliant on the standard.

So, when injunctions are awarded as if that competition dynamic doesn't exist, it does distort competition, and effectively, it locks out, particularly, members like our smaller companies that don't have the resources and experience in this complex area of patent licensing, who are simply trying to use an open standard, like wifi, LTE, 5G, to stand on and invent on top of it, and compete.

MR. MERRIAM: Thank you.

MR. SCARPELLI: And I'm sorry, I didn't directly answer you. I think Brazil's existing competition law does, generally, provide an adequate framework, and patent law seems to provide an adequate framework for this dynamic to be considered, for, essentially, proportionality to be considered before the awarding of a patent injunction.

1 So, there may be not as much 2 familiarity as you would like to see from the 3 judiciary in awarding these injunctions, where 4 they are, basically, acting as if the standard 5 essential patent is a regular patent. 6 MR. MERRIAM: Thank you. Very 7 helpful. 8 MR. SCARPELLI: Okay. Thank you. 9 CHAIR LEE: Thank you for your 10 testimony. 11 We actually have a couple of last-12 minute cancellations today. So, unfortunately, 13 the Biotechnology Innovation Organization and 14 Marc Busch, both are not able to make it today. 15 So, if the China Chamber of International 16 Commerce is here, we'll just go ahead and move 17 forward with the schedule. 18 Please go ahead and state your name, 19 title, and organization for the record, and begin 20 your testimony. 21 MR. JIAN: Thank you, Chair, and good 22 morning, Distinguished Members of the Special 301

Subcommittee.

My name is Guan Jian. I'm a partner of Beijing Global-Law Law Firm, and the lady on my right hand is my colleague. Her name is Qi Ruoyin. And we attend today's hearing on behalf of the China Chamber of International Commerce, and the short name, CCOIC. Thank you for CCOIC's opportunity to testify today.

And CCOIC is a national chamber of commerce in China with more than 350,000 enterprise members across various sectors, and the CCOIC pays close attention to the intellectual property rights protection in China in its daily work and we regularly host IP forums in China. It also seeks intellectual property protection on behalf of the members.

CCOIC and our members have witnessed significant progress that China has made in our protection. Therefore, we would like to assist the Subcommittee to provide more information in this regard through submitting written comments and attending this hearing. We sincerely wish

that the efforts made by CCOIC will be helpful for the Subcommittee to draft their report of 2024.

To avoid repetition with our written comments, our testimony today focuses on three points. First, it's beyond doubt that China nowadays attaches great importance to IPR protection. And to implement China's phase one agreements, China has revised many IPR rules and regulations and has issued judiciary opinions, as have past governments, for the purpose of implementation.

We didn't do that in the last six consecutive years which have been witnessed by the CCOIC. China has regularly released or published various things, reports, or guidelines to direct or strengthen IPR protection. A careful reading of those documents, we suggest, is that China is encouraging the technology innovation through IPR protection, instead of requiring or pressuring technology transfer from foreign entities or companies to Chinese

companies. This innovation initiative is, obviously, to mitigate the risk of a chokehold or the risk of instability.

Secondly, the best efforts made by
China to protect IPR should not be ignored by the
Subcommittee when making assessments for the 2024
report. Taking into account the goods and online
piracy as an example, it's not only a big
concern, obviously, of the U.S., but it's also
that China pays great attention to it.

China has taken routine actions, such as a routine action or some other special actions or campaigns to protect IPR relating to such as the Winter Olympics, Asian Games; new plant variety of seeds, and films, et cetera.

For the long-term actions to the general administration of customs, China seized 61,000 batch of suspected imports and exports infringing groups, which is in total more than 77 million pieces of goods. The Minister of Public Security has detected more than 84,000 cases of crimes in the fields of food safety, drug safety,

and environmental protection, and arrested a large number of criminal suspects.

No one country in this world would be able to 100 percent eliminate piracy. Therefore, we believe that maybe the Subcommittee may also take into account the ongoing base efforts that have been made by the Chinese government.

Certainly, the U.S. schedule of concerns should be, obviously, assessed by the Subcommittee against at least the standard prima facie evidence in your decision. For example, one is reduced fees and certain examination time for criminals will lead to the benefits, and trademark resolution will become easier. This allegation has no merits and should be rejected by the Subcommittee.

We believe that reduced fees in a certain time period might be might be a kind of echo. It was introduced years ago. However, it's not fair that this incremental reform is not appropriate simply because there is a remote possibility that the decision might go wrong.

1 Thank you very much. This concludes 2 my testimony. Thank you. 3 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. The first question comes from USTR. 4 5 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. You write that "China has established 6 relatively complete civil, administrative, and 7 8 criminal legal systems for the protection of 9 trade secrets." Have there been any updates with 10 implementation of the amended criminal law, 11 including finalization of a draft judicial 12 interpretation or revisions to the prosecution 13 standards that you can share? 14 MR. JIAN: Based on our knowledge at 15 hand, that draft is not finalized yet. 16 CHAIR LEE: And if you do have further information after the hearing, please include it 17 18 in a post-hearing submission. 19 MR. JIAN: Yes, sir. Thank you. 20 CHAIR LEE: The next question comes 21 from the Department of Justice. 22 MR. MERRIAM: Thank you for your

testimony today.

Your submission notes that the amendments to the Civil Procedure Law avoid "dual rulings, mitigating dilemmas created by courts competing for jurisdiction in foreign-related IP cases, specifically in standard essential patent disputes." Could you please explain in further detail how these amendments will be implemented in the context of standard essential patent disputes?

MR. JIAN: So, you're talking about the SEPs?

MR. MERRIAM: Correct.

MR. JIAN: Okay.

MS. RUOYIN: Sorry, sir, could you repeat the name of the document?

MR. MERRIAM: It was referred to -and I apologize because I don't have the full
submission in front of me -- but the amendments
to the Civil Procedure Law.

MS. RUOYIN: Amendments to the Civil Procedure Law. Do you mean to refer to the

behavior preservation system in the Article 100 of the Civil Procedure Law, to this amendment?

MR. MERRIAM: We're talking about the

MS. RUOYIN: SEP?

MR. MERRIAM: Yes, the application to SEP disputes.

MS. RUOYIN: Oh, yes. So, actually, we have a case which is named the GuangDong Oppo Mobile Telecommunications Corporation v. Sharp Corporation. And in this case, the court has explained the Civil Procedure Law about how they can apply it in the specific cases. And in this case, we considered that in this SEP license. n We focused more on the contractual nature of the case and the core issue in the dispute. It's the determination of the terms of the global license for the portfolio of the SEP in question. And in applying these SEP cases, we used the parallel litigation in the extraterritorial court in principle. And we think that this application of the SEP will not affect the operation of other

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1 legal systems in other member countries in the 2 trade agreement, and such application also 3 complies with China's own Civil Procedure Law in 4 deciding the jurisdiction of the cases. 5 MR. MERRIAM: Thank you. That was helpful. It would help us in our further 6 7 analysis of this question if you could provide 8 the citation to the case you mentioned. 9 right now --10 MS. RUOYIN: Yes, we can provide it 11 post-hearing. 12 MR. MERRIAM: Thank you very much. 13 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 14 And we have one more question of the 15 Patent and Trademark Office. 16 MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you for your 17 testimony. 18 In your submission, you state that the latest Patent Examination Guidelines of 2023 19 20 "have established specific and clear rules for 21 the examination of supplementary experimental 22 data in pharmaceutical patent applications."

you please elaborate what efforts have there been to train patent examiners and ensure consistency among examiners in applying these new rules?

MR. JIAN: Sure.

MS. RUOYIN: So, actually, the China National Intellectual Property Administration had published a revised Patent Examination Guideline, and such Guideline clearly stipulates that the relative examination standards are required to be considered by the individual patent examiners.

And also, there is a series of articles written by the Patent Reexamination and Invalidation Department of the China National Intellectual Property Administration in which there are many views and it provides the views from the point of the examiners to see how they can review the specific cases based on the caseby-case factual.

And we actually have provided the specific standard in the article, the Interpretation 5, which we have provided the specific factors considered by those examiners.

1 CHAIR LEE: Thank you so much for your 2 testimony. 3 All right. Next, we have the Computer & Communications Industry Association. 4 5 Thank you. If you don't mind stating your name, 6 7 title, and organization, and then, please begin your testimony. 8 9 Good morning. MR. McHALE: 10 My name is Jonathan McHale, Vice 11 President at the Computer & Communications 12 Industry Association for Digital Trading. 13 Thank you for this opportunity to 14 convey our views in this 2024 Special 301 15 process. CCIA is a trade association of 16 17 internet and technology firms, many of whom 18 export goods and services that are regulated by 19 the domestic IP laws of trading partners. As rights-holders, CCIA members firmly 20 21 value intellectual property protection. However, 22 these strong U.S. exporters are discouraged from

entering markets where they do not provide equitable treatment or impose extortionist requests for payments to subsidize domestic industries.

I would like to focus on two specific issues addressed in our filing.

First, the need for USTR to address discriminatory audiovisual quotas, particularly where inconsistent with free trade agreement obligations.

And second, continued concern about the rise of ancillary rights and mandatory bargaining codes in foreign markets.

First, the Special 301 process should consider measures that introduce content quotas or expenditure requirements, a market intervention that most obviously constitutes a, quote, "discriminatory non-tariff barrier." as defined the Special 301 statute. This includes any investment obligations to acquire or produce local content that affects U.S. IP intents of industries such as streaming providers that are

engaged in the global distribution of content.

CCIA's written submission details concerns with Canada's Online Streaming Act, as well as Australia's proposed new framework.

The nexus between Special 301 and content restrictions is further supported by the special obligations Canada has under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, USMCA. Implementing legislation directs USTR to evaluate any discriminatory measures reliant on the cultural industries exception and to consider appropriate actions to compensate for any adverse effects.

Since Canada's Online Streaming Act would clearly violate several USMCA provisions, but for Canada's invocation of the cultural industries exception, it clearly implicates

19 USC 2242(f)(A). USTR neglected to address this issue last year, when Canada's policy was fully formed. CCIA urges USTR not to repeat this oversight in the forthcoming report to Congress.

In fact, the Special 301 Report is a perfect vehicle to begin detailing whether and to

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what extent the Online Streaming Act adversely affects the United States' economic interests, as a patently discriminatory non-tariff barrier, and begin a process of legal analysis of the measure and consideration of appropriate responses.

Like Canada, Australia is subject to rules under AUSFTA designed to prevent discriminatory treatment of U.S. content. Unlike Canada, Australia did not take a broad exception to these rules, but, rather, negotiated a very narrow, quote, "non-conforming measure."

These provide in exceptional circumstances a basis to violate the rules; namely, a situation where Australian content is not reasonably available to Australian consumers.

In our view, current market conditions in Australia provide no basis for invoking that exception. In fact, Korean content has boomed with the advent of streaming services, and therefore, we urge USTR to ensure that Australia does not introduce measures inconsistent with its obligations.

Second, CCIA reiterates longstanding concerns regarding the spread of ancillary copyright in foreign markets in the form of snippet taxes or related regulatory initiatives.

CCIA first raised concerns on ancillary copyright in 2012.

Since then, the internet industry has witnessed the spread of these detrimental laws throughout Europe, Canada, Australia, and currently being proposed in New Zealand, UK, and Indonesia. These measures -- essentially, private taxes -- will impede market access for U.S. exporters. And many studies have concluded that they are unlikely to achieve their purported goals.

In conclusion, the Special 301 process should place a greater emphasis upon discriminatory practices directed at U.S. internet services that create new rights for domestic industries. Where countries fail to implement norms to facilitate the trade, or fail to adhere to commitments made to protect them,

1 U.S. export opportunities are lost. 2 Thank you. 3 CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you very 4 much. 5 Our first question comes from the Patent and Trademark Office. 6 7 MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you very much 8 for your testimony. 9 Regarding Colombia, on page 11 of your 10 submission, you state that "Colombia has not 11 complied with its obligations under the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement to provide 12 13 protection for internet service providers, as 14 noted in the 2020 Special 301 Report. 15 Legislation from 2018 that sought to update 16 copyright law and implement the U.S.-Colombia 17 Free Trade Agreement...chapter includes no 18 language on online intermediaries. The 19 legislation that seeks to implement the U.S.-20 Colombia Free Trade Agreement copyright chapter 21 also does not appear to include widely recognized 22 exceptions such as text and data mining, display

of snippets or quotations, and other nonexpressive or non-consumptive uses. Without
protections required under the Free Trade
Agreement, intermediaries exporting services to
Colombia remain exposed to potential civil
liability for services and functionality that are
lawful in the United States and elsewhere."

Can you please provide the name and a link to the text of the draft legislation that you identified in your submission? And can you, also, provide the names of the companies' intermediaries that have had issues with enforcing these rights in Colombia?

MR. McHALE: Okay. Let me take the second question. With respect to countries that are failing to enforce rights, it really is a question of the risk, moving forward, of not having rights and obligations clearly spelled out in the law.

With respect to the specific law being referenced, I'm going to have to get back to you on that, and we'll look to put that in

1 supplementary testimony. 2 Thank you. 3 CHAIR LEE: Yes, just the second part 4 of that question was less about countries, but 5 specific companies or specific intermediaries that are having trouble enforcing law in 6 7 Colombia. Do you have any further information on 8 that? 9 MR. McHALE: At this moment, I do not. 10 CHAIR LEE: Okay, got it. 11 All right. Our next question is from 12 Treasury. 13 Hi. MR. CHANG: Thank you. 14 So, CCIA states that, based on, quote, 15 "a CRTC proposal to prioritize content whose IP 16 ownership is wholly Canada, it is possible that 17 the majority of U.S. investments would not 18 qualify as meeting mandatory expenditure goals" 19 -- close quote -- in the Online Streaming Act in 20 Canada. 21 Could you explain more about your 22 concerns and how possible is that outcome?

Thanks.

MR. McHALE: Sure.

So, Canada has put in place a series of priorities of what they are attempting to achieve through their cultural policies in order to stimulate the development of content in Canada. What our argument has been in many of these countries is the U.S. firms are big investors in the market. Lots of production takes place in Canada. They are a big contributor to the development of the industry in that nation.

One of the abilities of U.S. companies to be able to take advantages of resources in foreign markets is the ability to own the IP of any resulting investment they make. And what Canada has done in its recent rulemaking is to suggest that, in order to qualify as meeting some of the quotas or expenditure requirements that are set, the content that will qualify has to be owned by a Canadian entity, rather than the investor who may not be himself Canadian.

1	So, it's a disincentive for foreign
2	firms, particularly U.S. firms, to invest in the
3	market and create content because, if you can't
4	own the resulting IP, it doesn't really make
5	sense.
6	CHAIR LEE: All right. Thank you for
7	your testimony.
8	MR. McHALE: Thank you very much.
9	CHAIR LEE: Next is Consortium for
10	Common Food Names.
11	MR. CASTANEDA: Good morning.
12	CHAIR LEE: If you don't mind, please
13	state your name, title, and organization, and
14	then, please begin your testimony.
15	MR. CASTANEDA: Sure.
16	My name is Jaime Castaneda. I'm
17	Executive Vice President for the U.S. Dairy
18	Export Council, the National Milk Producers, and
19	I'm also the Executive Director of the Consortium
20	for Common Food Names.
21	I have worked for 25 years promoting
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the U.S. dairy industry, U.S. rural jobs, and, of

course, now with defending common food names.

A little over 10 years ago, the U.S. dairy community for a while, as well as several other food sectors, were confronted with a new intellectual property challenge designed to destroy the very basic framework of IP rules and market access commitments. After failing to advance this GI campaign during the Doha Round, the European Union started a direct, full campaign to monopolize common names like Parmesan, port, bologna, and many hundreds more.

But, by claiming these generic terms as protected geographical indications or indicators, the EU began a strategic scheme to eliminate competition and appropriate generic terms for cheeses, meats, wines, and beers, among others. Suddenly, all these manufacturers began to lose their ability to market and sell their products in markets around the world.

In response to these new challenges, U.S. dairy producers, supported by partners in the food sector, helped us establish the

Coalition for Common Food Names to protect producers, consumers, and retailers, and the rights to use the generic terms that have been part of the public domain for generations.

Despite the efforts of CCFN, Europe's aggressive campaign and attacks on American exports are growing and escalating. Throughout 2023, U.S. producers and exporters faced increased restrictions or attempts to impose restrictions on the use of common food and various terms in various markets. These abuses or geographical indication rules not only contradict international commitments adopted by U.S. trading partners, but call into question the integrity of procedures under the intellectual property systems of the different countries involved.

These GI regulations are not impartially written and enforced. Quite the opposite. Unlike most intellectual property rules, the pursuit of GI restriction is done by a foreign government under the table, not through

the actions of individual applicants. This creates a deeply imbalanced power and funding dynamic that omits the greater challenge that opponents face in most IP systems versus the advantage provided to applicants.

All of these have happened while the United States has stayed still during previous administrations. The IP approach has failed U.S. producers when it comes to negotiations between Europe and trading partners.

objectively through an impartial and objective process. The results of EU trade agreements are made in obscurity. Even where a public opposition process is conducted, the decisions about how, not whether, to register the EU's requested GIs are conducted at the trade negotiating table. These are government-driven barriers to trade that require a government-driven response to counteract.

Despite years of advocacy from Congress and CCFN members with the U.S.

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Government, we have yet to stop the European
Union from bullying other countries into agreeing
to their demands, hurting U.S. jobs. We applaud
the Biden Administration for showing a strong
interest in restoring some balance in the
discussions, but we need to be even more resolute
in making sure that any country that violates its
straight commitments just to appease the EU -example, Chile recently -- will pay the
consequences.

For years, the United States had not much EU and bilateral agreements. In fact, we have seen how the EU forces countries to disregard their own IP rules and hurt their own producers and consumers without acting with equal force.

It is the right time to be loud and clear to the world. If any country damages the interests of the United States by giving into the EU unreasonable demands, there will be consequences. It is time for the United States to have a clear policy to defend consumers,

manufacturers, and retailers, including many of
American small businesses, and fight the
monetization of generic food and general names.

Going forward, we expect the EU to
continue its false narrative that GIs are sacre

continue its false narrative that GIs are sacred protections that cannot be questioned. The reality is that GIs in the EU represent a minuscule portion of their own agriculture and

represent ever-moving goal posts.

Fortunately, we're not resigned and accepting whichever fate the EU assign us. The U.S. Government has made strides to grapple with this topic recently, but there is more to do. The United States has unmatched economic and political influence. It is time to use it.

We applaud the Biden Administration for increasing the awareness and we hope that, actually, this is going to turn into specific results and outcomes.

Thank you so much.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

The first question comes from USTR.

MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you.

Your submission describes how increased restrictions on the use of common food and beverage terms in various markets have called into question the integrity of procedures under the intellectual property system of the different countries involved. Please elaborate on how such restrictions have impacted the integrity of procedures under IP systems and provide some examples from the trading partners discussed in your submission.

MR. CASTANEDA: Sure.

As I explained, it's, basically, very clear. The EU negotiates and overcomes/supersedes any IP rule with respect to any country in the negotiating table. Examples are many, many, many. So, let me give you one.

Feta, for instance, was an absolutely generic term in Canada. Canada, in fact, had a trademark for prosciutto di parma. And, in fact, Canada completely disregards the fact that, actually, they have something that we will never

1 do here, something that, actually, they had a 2 trademark and they disregard that. They had, 3 actually, generic terms and they completely disregard and provide, actually, protection 4 exclusively for feta for Europe. 5 Chile, for instance, they just 6 7 actually -- Parmesan has been a generic term for 8 almost 100 years. And Europe and Chile 9 negotiated a trade agreement in which Chile 10 decided that, actually, there was only protection 11 for anybody who was in the market prior to, 12 actually, 2000 -- whenever they negotiated the 13 trade agreement. 14 So, I can go on and on and on, but, 15 for us, this is the type of things that actually 16 intellectual property officers around the world 17 that are negotiating with the EU are, actually, 18 undermining the IP rules, something that the 19 United States would never, never do. 20 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 21 The next question comes from USDA.

Thank you.

MS. CHERRY:

On China, your submission notes that,
"In February 2023, CCFN opposed the recognition
of `Fontina' as a GI, however, Chinese
authorities have not released the result of the
opposition process." Unquote.

Please share your experience from participation in the opposition process, such as whether Chinese authorities have engaged with your concerns or whether there were procedural deficiencies that Chinese authorities should address.

MR. CASTANEDA: Thanks for your question.

China is a great trading partner for the U.S. dairy industry and we have a lot of communications with them. However, within China, there is, I think, a couple of confusions within what the Department of Commerce does in the intellectual property. There are different, actually, organizations that deal with GIs in China.

So, we have seen that there has been

very strong conflict of opinions within China.

And a perfect example is, for instance, the

United States negotiated with China to protect

Parmesan, but, then, the IP Office may actually

have approved some exclusivity on Parmesan with

the European Union, which actually should have

been clear that they could never do that.

In addition, with respect to Fontina, we have, actually, many, many cases in which our trademarks still continue to be rejected and there is no specific reason.

I mean, going back to the previous question, I mean, there are countries that are opposing a trademark simply because, actually, of a GI in another country. I mean, if that is not actually a basic break of the rules of IP in which the United States is not going to accept a trademark only because there is a GI in Italy or in Greece, I mean that's absurd.

So, basically, with China, we're working; we're trying to understand a little bit more. So, we encourage, actually, USTR and the

other agencies of the United States to talk a little bit more for clarity on China, on how they actually are accepting or rejecting trademarks.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

We have time barely for one more question. So, I'm going to ask USDA to ask a second question.

MS. CHERRY: Sure.

For Vietnam, your submission notes that Vietnam failed for more than two years to confirm in writing these companies that have met the grandfathering clause provision under the Vietnam-EU FTA. Are there any details you can share about the difficulties that these companies have encountered due to the lack of such written confirmation?

MR. CASTANEDA: Yes. We can put all of that in writing. So, I'd be more than happy to submit further information.

And it is not just Vietnam. I mean, we have it in many other situations, and we have significant problems, as USTR knows, in Brazil,

in which, actually, they don't even have an 1 2 approved EU agreement and they are still, 3 actually, operating as if they do have the implementation of the EU agreement. 4 5 So again, we encourage, actually, USTR and the rest of the interagencies to talk to 6 7 these countries and manage these situations. 8 CHAIR LEE: Thank you very much for 9 your testimony. 10 Next, we have the Footwear 11 Distributors and Retailers of America. MR. PRIEST: Good morning. 12 13 CHAIR LEE: Good morning. 14 Please state your name, title, and 15 organization for the record, and then, please 16 begin your testimony. 17 My name is Matt Priest. MR. PRIEST: 18 I'm the President and CEO of the Footwear 19 Distributors and Retailers of America. On behalf of FDRA, thank you for the 20 21 opportunity to testify today. It's great to be 22 back in person after so many years.

business and trade association, representing 95
percent of the American footwear industry. Our
member companies work hard to design, produce,
and deliver shoes to consumers in markets all
over the world. That is why the U.S. must work
to address the failure of other nations to
protect patents, trademarks, and copyright in
both law and practice, because this supports U.S.
footwear jobs and communities.

Fighting counterfeiting is also particularly important in key sourcing locations, given the large volume of manufacturing, machinery, and footwear production knowledge in each of these countries.

My testimony will highlight several key sourcing countries, but our full written comments provide information on additional countries of concern.

First and foremost, China. China should remain on the Priority Watch List since there has not been significant change or

effective progress on IP in the past year.

Because China is a first-to-file jurisdiction, a well-established U.S. brand may discover that an unrelated Chinese party has already registered the brand's trademark. Bad actors do this to exploit the reputation of the U.S. brand or to force the American company to pay a fee to buy back the rights to its own trademark.

FDRA members continue to see a high volume of bad-faith, infringing trademark applications allowed to publish for register.

Online-to-offline enforcement brings numerous new challenges, and there is a need for greater collaboration from platforms.

Counterfeit products sold via

livestream channels are very popular in China.

The timing of the broadcast is unpredictable and the transactions are often diverted to private domains. Many counterfeit sellers also promote themselves and their agent's ability to order and ship counterfeits on social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Reddit.

It is our understanding that China may soon enact the Anti-Unfair Competition Law. We are hopeful this will serve as a possible new tool for digital enforcement against rampant online infringement and knockoffs.

Turning to Mexico, FDRA strongly recommends USTR elevate Mexico to the Priority Watch List in the 2024 Special 301 Report. The current administration in Mexico has not prioritized IP enforcement and protection. When outlining government priorities, it left out relevant IP institutions. In addition, the lack of enforcement actions and support from most of the relevant law enforcement agencies in Mexico is alarming.

Existing provisions in Mexico's customs law provides authorities with ex officio power to initiate border measures, but limit this authority to detention of suspicious products.

The law does not effectively allow customs officials to make a determination to seize and destroy IP-infringing goods. From a legislative

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perspective, Mexico also lacks a clear approach to tackle ecommerce and the impact of small parcels at the border.

Indonesia should reinforce the need to maintain consistency, recognize trademarks, and provide realistic enforcement processes and implementation. FDRA member companies have seen an increase in the local manufacturing of counterfeit shoes. FDRA believes Indonesia should work to train law enforcement agents and customs officers on product inspections and take proactive measures to investigate and enforce counterfeit activities.

Indonesia's trademark office continues to have a very, very, very narrow interpretation of trademark rights and opposition procedures.

The trademark office should also promote a thorough review of its appeals process. Today, once a decision is made, the only additional recourse by the brand owner is to file costly and time-consuming civil litigation.

Turning our focus to Vietnam,

Vietnam's IP legal system and enforcement practices continue to change for the better.

Authorities in Vietnam remain open and willing to make changes to harmonize IP laws with international standards.

Vietnam needs to harmonize its approach to well-known mark status to make it consistent with international norms. They should also provide greater clarity for the recognition of non-traditional marks on both the examination process and enforcement.

Law enforcement agencies of Vietnam are willing to cooperate and actively support investigations raised in criminal prosecutions against online sellers who have large quantities of counterfeits seized in their connected physical warehouses.

Vietnam's review of its current ecommerce policies provides an opportunity to clearly define platform liability in case of IPR infringements.

In cases of transshipments, rights-

holders are now required to prove damages from counterfeit goods, which conflicts with current law in Vietnam and puts additional burdens on brands.

Lastly, a focus on India. FDRA recommends India undertake efforts to implement existing IP laws, reduce bureaucracy, and simplify processes. Currently, the 10-year trademark backlog at the courts and the trademark office prevents brands from filing to protect IP rights. The trademark office should modernize the highly manual data process for registering trademarks in India.

FDRA members have noticed an increasing number of counterfeiting distribution hubs in India. Enforcement remains very challenging for brands. Delays in adjudication and low penalties do not deter counterfeiters.

FDRA members are closely monitoring the implementation of India's new ecommerce law.

The law provides an opportunity to increase protection for rights-holders and define the

1 terms for platform liability in case of IPR 2 infringement. 3 FDRA appreciates the opportunity to 4 submit comments on the challenges faced by our 5 member companies around the world in protection of their IP rights. We stand ready to work with 6 7 USTR to bolster respect for, and enforcement of, 8 IP by our trading partners. Doing so protects 9 American jobs and benefits U.S. consumers. 10 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 11 Just for our panelists, I'm actually 12 going to switch up from the questions because 13 you've kind of covered some of them already in 14 your testimony, although we may still go to those to have you further elaborate. 15 16 MR. PRIEST: Sure. 17 But I would like to start CHAIR LEE: 18 with the State Department with a followup 19 question on Vietnam. 20 MR. HAMILTON: Good morning. 21 MR. PRIEST: Good morning. 22 So, regarding Vietnam, MR. HAMILTON:

on page 6 of your submission, FDRA cites the rise of counterfeiting as a concern, as brands have shifted production from China to Vietnam, stating that "counterfeiters have moved manufacturing to the country." Do you have any statistics that reflect this asserted correlation?

MR. PRIEST: I don't have a statistic per se. What I can do is go back and see what's available to provide to you at the State Department and to the broader panel here.

Now, I do know, and I think a theme that you'll find in both my written submission as well as my statement is that, as production moves around and becomes more sophisticated, counterfeiters follow suit. And so, there's almost a maturation process that happens when a country takes on more production for I think any type of good, but, in particular, footwear, where, then, it becomes also the landscape for counterfeit and knockoff activity. We see that in China in places like Fujian Province and Guangdong Province, which have been production

1 hubs for many, many years. 2 And so, it's not a surprise, but we'll 3 do some digging and see if we can find a 4 statistic for that. 5 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. The next question is from USTR. 6 7 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. 8 In regards to Algeria, have you seen 9 any results from the 2022 creation of a 10 specialized commerce court responsible for 11 litigation relating to IP and international trade disputes? And how have your members engaged with 12 13 the judicial system in Algeria? 14 That's a great question. MR. PRIEST: 15 And I'll have to come back to you on how members 16 have, specifically, engaged with the legal system 17 in Algeria. 18 I think Algeria is on a list of other 19 countries -- Morocco and Egypt, and others, Saudi 20 Arabia -- where we want to at least inform our 21 U.S. Government just to keep an eye on those.

Because, as we talk to our member companies, and

1 we are selling in markets all over the world, these kind of second- and third-tier markets are 2 3 ones to keep an eye on because they're maturing; because counterfeits flow in very frequently. 4 5 And because of ecommerce and the lack of enforcement, that's a theme that happens, I 6 7 think, in every country we do business in. 8 so, I think Algeria is no different. 9 And so, what I'll do is go back to our members and see what kind of success they've had 10 11 in engaging with Algeria. Thank you. 12 CHAIR LEE: 13 Well, turning maybe to a bigger 14 market, I'd like to ask the Justice Department 15 for a question, please. 16 MR. MERRIAM: Thanks. 17 And I appreciate your testimony. 18 You've led with this and really talked about the 19 growing challenge of the Chinese agents getting 20 involved in various commerce schemes in 21 increasing their footprint.

Yes.

MR. PRIEST:

MR. MERRIAM: But could you provide for DOJ and my colleagues at DHS a little bit of a detail on how that's working and areas that would target this sort of action, online marketplaces, as you mentioned, TikTok, or their physical marketplaces, and where should we look? Very relevant to this process, but also to our broader mission.

MR. PRIEST: Yes. You know, it's interesting you ask this because it doesn't take someone who is very astute in law enforcement or even footwear to stumble across access to counterfeit goods on these platforms, as a consumer here in the U.S. And it's something we consistently monitor.

And so, for us, it's better understanding how the platforms particularly will engage with us and collaborate on information—sharing, to value what the brands are saying when they engage with those platforms. And we've taken steps here in the U.S. The challenge is the Chinese don't seem to be as serious in

engaging with those platforms, when, in all honesty, purchasing through these channels is much more even popular than it is here.

And so, it's like a dam that's very leaky and we're trying to plug all these holes. And you can see that, as brands -- we call it kind of "high heat" -- as brands market certain products, that they have new drops, new sneaker drops.

There's the All-Star Game, which was this pass weekend, is on TV in a global marketplace, that those activities increase and the demand for those types of really sophisticated counterfeits increase, and consumers have access to it.

No longer do you have to go down to a market in New York City behind a curtain or under a blanket with knockoff sneakers. You can get very quality-made counterfeits out of these same production markets that we have.

And I think as much as the platforms feel the heat from DOJ, the Biden Administration,

the U.S. Congress on ways to collaborate with the brands, the better I think we'll all be.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

I think we can squeeze in one more question. So, I'd like to ask my colleague from DHS, Department of Homeland Security, to ask it.

MR. PRIEST: Thank you.

MS. FEDORKA: Okay. On Indonesia, you describe numerous challenges with Indonesian customs regarding the recordation system for trademarks, including complex procedures, high guarantees, and requirements for immediate responses. Please elaborate on whether foreign companies in Indonesia encounter greater difficulties under the recordation system.

MR. PRIEST: I haven't heard necessarily that foreign companies per se encounter greater difficulty. What we do understand is that Indonesia has a very kind of slim interpretation of what constitutes a counterfeit. So here, in a lot of markets, a lot of mature markets, it doesn't have to be

1 identical, right? It can be a trade dress 2 question. It could be something that is 3 "inspired by." And we have those debates amongst 4 our industry all the time. 5 Indonesia is very finite on what they think is counterfeit and what is not. And so, as 6 7 a Western brand engaging in Indonesia -- and by 8 the way, it's our No. 3 supplier to the U.S. 9 market -- so again, the knowhow and the activity 10 is there to make really high-quality shoes. 11 system seems to be not as efficient and engaging. 12 I don't think it matters where you're actually from necessarily, where the brand is from. 13 14 But because these are Western brands 15 with high demand, those are the ones that see the 16 most activity in this space. And I think that's

where our members have had challenges with Indonesia.

> MS. FEDORKA: Thank you.

MR. PRIEST: Sure. No problem.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you for your

testimony.

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1 MR. PRIEST: Yes, thank you. 2 CHAIR LEE: Okay. So, the Global Data 3 Alliance is also not available to testify today. 4 So, we will be moving next to the International 5 Intellectual Property Alliance. 6 All right. Please state your name, 7 title, and organization, and begin your 8 testimony. 9 Thank you. Thank you MR. ROSENBAUM: all. 10 11 My name is Kevin Rosenbaum. I'm the Executive Director of the International 12 13 Intellectual Property Alliance, the IIPA. 14 Thank you for the opportunity to 15 present the views of the IIPA in this year's 16 Special 301 process. 17 We applaud the U.S. Government for 18 making the Special 301 review a catalyst for 19 positive change to address the challenges faced 20 by the U.S. creative industries in key markets 21 abroad. We welcome the chance to participate

again in this crucial annual dialog.

formed in 1984 of five trade associations representing U.S.-copyright-based industries. According to a December 2022 study, the core copyright industries contribute over \$1.8 trillion to the U.S. economy, including over 52 percent of the total U.S. digital economy, and provide over 9.6 million U.S. jobs, including over 48 percent of the employment in the U.S. digital economy.

Our members are the Association of
American Publishers, the Entertainment Software
Association, the Independent Film and Television
Alliance, the Motion Picture Association, and the
Recording Industry Association of America. These
associations comprise over 3200 companies
producing and distributing materials protected by
copyright laws throughout the world.

To reach foreign markets through the legitimate, state-of-the-art distribution channels, these companies rely on copyright protection and enforcement that meet current

global standards and fast-developing best practices, and the elimination of market access barriers. Progress in these areas benefits U.S. creators, producers, publishers, workers, and consumers, while enabling our trading partners to develop and expand their own cultural and creative output.

The ultimate objective is to promote markets where the creative industries can bring even more products and services than they currently offer in an increasing variety of ways from a greater diversity of players before an ever-growing global audience. Advancing that objective is a proven means to grow U.S. exports, create good American jobs, and enhance U.S. global competitiveness.

With this broad vision in mind, IIPA has participated in every Special 301 review since the 1988 Trade Act created this process.

Given some of the other comments provided, it is worth reiterating the specific statutory language and purpose of the Special 301 review; namely, to

identify "foreign countries that deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights or deny fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons who rely on intellectual property protection."

It is critical for the Special 301 process to maintain this focus on intellectual property protection -- in our case, copyright protection and enforcement -- rather than, as some suggest, used to weaken our trading partners' copyright regimes, especially in countries where legitimate rights-holders cannot get a toehold due to inadequate copyright protection or enforcement.

In this year's submission, IIPA recommends that 23 countries be identified in the 2024 Special 301 Report, including nine countries for inclusion on the Priority Watch List:

Argentina, Chile, China, India, Indonesia,

Mexico, Russia, South Africa, and Vietnam.

Our submission also highlights additional serious concerns with legal reform

efforts in several other markets. As our submission emphasizes, the copyright regimes of many U.S. trading partners are inadequate, including a failure to meet obligations to the United States, evolving global norms, or the minimum standards of the WIPO Internet Treaties, which set global minimum standards for copyright protection in the digital environment.

The U.S. Government should press U.S. trading partners to adhere to well-established global norms, including the requirement to confine all exceptions and limitations to copyright protections within the three-step test.

The U.S. Government should also take advantage of recent trade initiatives, which include a focus on digital economy-related matters, to make progress on these issues.

Our submission also lists six enforcement challenges confronting the U.S. copyright industries seeking to compete in overseas markets, starting, of course, with internet and mobile network piracy, an

overarching challenge for all businesses that depend on copyright. This infringement threatens the viability of licensed platforms and makes it much harder for creators and producers to earn a living from their craft.

We applaud the U.S. Government for its annual review of notorious markets, which has made a significant contribution in combating systematic online copyright theft, and we urge you to redouble efforts to encourage our trading partners to adopt legal frameworks to prevent the operation or emergence of illegal services, including by fostering cooperation among all industry stakeholders in the online supply chain.

Finally, all efforts to address copyright infringement will be unsuccessful if legitimate products and services cannot be brought into a market to meet consumer demand. Whatever form they take, market access restrictions that unfairly impede the entry of legitimate products makes it easier for pirate operations to fill the void.

1 Special 301 remains a cornerstone of 2 the U.S. effort to advance modern levels of 3 protection for copyright, more effective policies and tools to enforce that protection, and freer, 4 more open markets. We look forward to our 5 continued work with USTR and the other U.S. 6 7 agencies to advance these goals. 8 Thank you, and I look forward to your 9 questions. 10 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 11 And to begin questions, our first one 12 comes from USTR. 13 Thank you very much. MS. AVERY-PAGE: 14 You state that you expect China to 15 adopt implementing regulations on the copyright 16 law revisions in late 2024. Can you have more 17 information on the possible processes that will 18 be followed, including the opportunity for public 19 What are the primary issues you would 20 want to see in implementing regulations? 21 MR. ROSENBAUM: Thank you for that

I'll certainly check and see if we

question.

1 have additional information on the processes that 2 may be followed. 3 You know, the copyright amendments were an important step forward in protection in 4 5 China, and it's critical that the implementation is done properly. There are additional 6 7 protections of technological protection measures that need to be clarified in the implementing 8 regulation and additional enforcement measures as 9 well, as we have laid out in our submission. 10 11 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 12 The next questions comes from the U.S. 13 Copyright Office. 14 MS. LANZA: Thank you. 15 IIPA noted that, in Brazil, quote, 16 "Recent positions vocalized by the Ministry of

IIPA noted that, in Brazil, quote, "Recent positions vocalized by the Ministry of Culture and ANCINE's official concerning the protection of copyrights became cause for concern." End quote.

Can you please elaborate on the positions taken by the Ministry and your specific concerns?

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1 MR. ROSENBAUM: I will probably need 2 to get back to you with additional information in 3 writing. I appreciate that question. In Brazil, while we have seen some 4 5 positive improvements on the enforcement front, 6 there does need to be sort of a whole-of-7 government approach that needs to be taken. 8 there are several concerning legislative 9 proposals in Brazil that we've highlighted. 10 so, there's additional work to be done on the 11 legislative framework. Thank you. 12 13 CHAIR LEE: Okay. The next question 14 is from the Patent and Trademark Office. 15 MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you for your 16 testimony. 17 Can you please elaborate whether IIPA 18 members over the past year have engaged with 19 Turkey on the issues raised in the 301 Report? 20 And what roadblocks have IIPA members run into 21 that have prevented progress? 22 MR. ROSENBAUM: Thank you.

I'm happy to go back and check with our members on this, but there are several, as we've laid out, longstanding concerns in Turkey that we're hopeful can be addressed. But I will get back to you on the specific steps that we've taken to move forward in that country.

Thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

The next question is from Treasury.

MR. CHANG: Hello.

IIPA's nomination for Paraguay to remain on the Watch List focuses on a single issue --

MR. ROSENBAUM: Yes.

MR. CHANG: -- the pending legislation that was last introduced in May 2023. Your submission recognizes that this pending legislation was introduced without a sponsor and without support from Paraguay's copyright office. Your submission also recognizes that two of the original authors of the 2022 version of the draft legislation have withdrawn their support.

Can you please further explain your Watch List recommendation for Paraguay and what you expect to happen in 2024 that will seriously impede the ability of your members that rely on IP protection to operate in Paraguay?

Thank you.

MR. ROSENBAUM: Thank you. I appreciate the question.

Yes, Paraguay has this legislative proposal for an unwaivable remuneration right which would make licensing in that country -- which is, essentially, how our members do their business -- it would make it extremely challenging and create all kinds of uncertainty. And so, that is the basis for our recommendation for the Watch List in Paraguay. Even though the bill, I think as it currently stands, is dormant, there is risk that it could move, and that would, again, create all kinds of uncertainty with existing contractual relationships in Paraguay.

And also, this is something we're seeing throughout South America, is similar

1	proposals that would create all kinds of
2	uncertainty and undermine the business models for
3	the creative industries.
4	CHAIR LEE: All right. Thank you for
5	your testimony.
6	MR. ROSENBAUM: Thank you.
7	CHAIR LEE: Okay. So, we are through
8	the morning schedule. We are scheduled to take a
9	break until 1:30 p.m., and that's when we will
10	restart.
11	For those coming back, please keep in
12	mind the time it takes for our security screening
13	and processing. So, please make sure to come
14	back early, so that we can start on time.
15	So again, we are adjourning the
16	hearing until 1:30 p.m. Thank you.
17	(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
18	went off the record at 11:38 a.m. and resumed at
19	1:30 p.m.)
20	CHAIR LEE: All right. Good
21	afternoon, everyone.
22	It's 1:30. So, I'd like to get the

1 hearing started again. 2 My name is Daniel Lee. I'm the 3 Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Innovation and Intellectual Property. 4 Welcome to the afternoon session of 5 the Special 301 public hearing. 6 7 Usually, I don't go over this again in 8 the afternoon, but since it looks like pretty 9 much a different group of people, I'll just 10 mention again briefly the format. 11 So, each testifier will get 10 minutes 12 -- five minutes for their prepared statement, and 13 then, five minutes of questions from the 14 panelists up here. We will be keeping track of time. 15 16 will get a one-minute remaining notice, as well 17 as a time expired notice. 18 I will warn everyone that I think we 19 are going to be fairly strict on that, and I may 20 interrupt you if you're going over time, so that 21 we can stay on schedule.

So, with that, next up is Intellectual

Property Owners Association.

Thank you.

Could you please state your name, title, and organization for the record, and then, begin your testimony?

MR. VALENTE: Thank you. Thank you.

My name is Tom Valente, and I'm the

Senior Director for Global Affairs for the

Intellectual Property Owners Association, also

known as IPO.

I'm pleased to be with you today and would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your continued work ensuring U.S. trading partners provide adequate and effective protection of IP rights and fair and equitable market access to companies who rely on IP protection.

IPO is an international trade association representing a big tent of diverse companies, law firms, service providers, and individuals in all industries and fields of technology that own or are interested in IP

rights. IPO's membership includes over 125 companies and spans over 30 countries. IPO members make vital contributions to America's economic success by developing the advances that drive exports and create jobs.

Innovators assume considerable risks and rely on IP to protect investments in new technology. In our comments to the Subcommittee, IPO notes numerous deficiencies in, and challenges presented by, IP laws around the world.

It also notes improvements. We thank you for your work that has made these improvements possible. IPO remains optimistic that further progress can be made in 2024 and beyond.

My testimony today will address two impediments to appropriate protection of IP rights abroad: inadequate protection of trade secrets and compulsory licensing.

For years, Article 39 of TRIPS has required WTO members to ensure effective

protection of trade secrets. Since Article 39 was agreed, there have been insufficient efforts in many WTO member countries to bring the laws, regulations, and enforcement environment up to compliance with the required standard.

Further, our members are concerned with the significant risk of trade secret disclosure that could result from administrative investigations or data legislation, if sufficient protection for trade secrets is not in place abroad. IPO suggests that improving the global environment for protection of trade secrets be one of the top priorities for the Special 301 Report and for further actions.

Turning to compulsory licensing, the patent system drives and enables research and development that is delivering valuable, new innovations to society and has facilitated an unprecedented amount of collaboration that is advancing solutions to the most pressing issues facing society today. However, several countries have adopted or are considering resolutions,

laws, or regulations that promote or provide broad discretion to issue a compulsory license.

The European Commission has proposed draft legislation for the grant of EU-wide compulsory licenses. Compulsory licenses have also been issued in previous years in several countries.

licensing of IP rights with respect to all industries and technologies. Although IPO recognizes that compulsory licenses may be legally permissible in limited and rare situations, IPO believes that licensing of IP rights is best accomplished through voluntary efforts. This is because granting compulsory licenses undercuts the importance of a predictable and reliable patent system and undermines investment in innovative solutions that benefit society. Our members are also concerned with proposals to include forced tech transfer, along with compulsory licenses.

In conclusion, innovation-driven jobs

1 depend on high-quality IP systems. IP protection 2 in foreign markets is vital for American 3 innovators. It enables research, R&D, and technology that results in important offerings in 4 5 the global marketplace. We look forward to working with you to 6 7 build a global IP environment that encourages innovation and safeguards quality, high-paying 8 9 jobs in innovative industries. We again thank the Subcommittee for 10 11 its efforts to promote the protection of IP rights globally, which will sustain and grow 12 13 America's economy. 14 Thank you. 15 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 16 The first question today is from USTR. 17 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Yes, thank you. 18 On China, your submission states that, 19 quote, "Transparency in IP enforcement in China 20 appears to have declined severely and commentary

in the Chinese legal community suggests that

publication of judicial decisions of all kinds

21

will come to a halt in 2024." End quote.

Please share any additional information you have about notices or other measures issued by Chinese authorities that appear to impose this change.

MR. VALENTE: Thank you

This is actually a very important issue for IPO. In fact, our Board passes very few resolutions, and you'll notice in the last couple of years this is a resolution that was passed dealing with transparency generally of IP decisions around the world.

Our members have reported to us that they are seeing a consistent decline in court decisions being published. I cannot tell you that we know of any particular court or government decisions that have been published that have issued that announcement. However, our members are finding it's very difficult to find out anything about the court decisions unless you are involved in them.

This creates a lot of issues for us.

First, our members want to be able to track what's going on, so that they can better decide whether or not to participate in the Chinese economy, based on the products they have and whether or not those products would infringe.

Also, they want, of course, to better understand the Chinese legal system and how it is addressing IP issues, and they want to learn from the cases.

From a policy perspective, it makes it very difficult, for example, with respect to anti-suit injunctions. That's an issue that has been very concerning to our members, but because of the lack of published judicial decisions, it is unclear at this point what the state of the anti-suit injunctions are in China.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

The next question is from ITA,
International Trade Administration.

MS. POMPER: On Vietnam, your submission recommends that USTR elevate Vietnam to Priority Watch List. Have there been any

developments in Vietnam's implementation of IP code amendments or issuance of new measures that impact your recommendation?

MR. VALENTE: I am unaware of that recommendation by IPO. I can say our organization's primary concern with Vietnam has been in the trademark area, where there's been a significant backlog.

CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you.

The next question is from the Patent and Trademark Office.

MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you for your testimony.

For Brazil, your submission identifies patent and trademark application backlogs as a concern, but, then, you recognize that trademarks are being granted in six months on average and the patents backlog has decreased, with a goal to reach an average of two years from application to grant. Does IPO still consider the patent and trademark application backlog a serious concern in Brazil that should be considered for including

in the Special 301 Report?

MR. VALENTE: Thank you for the question.

IPO is very, very happy to see the reduction in the backlogs in Brazil. This is something that has been a real issue, as you know. We do believe that there's still more work to be done, particularly on the patent side. So, I believe on the patent side there's a seven-year backlog currently. And so, we would love to see that backlog be further reduced.

You know, in addition, we believe that there should be patent term adjustment. Since the decision in Brazil that eliminated the full paragraph of Article 40, which had an extension of a minimum of 10 years from the granting date, there's a significant issue there for members because of the continuing backlog. But we do applaud their efforts and we hope that they continue, but we think we should stay on it.

MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you.

CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you for your

1 testimony. 2 MR. VALENTE: Thank you. 3 CHAIR LEE: Next, we have Knowledge Ecology International, please. 4 5 Hello. Please state your name, title, and organization for the record, and then, please 6 7 start your testimony. 8 MS. CASSEDY: Hi. I'm Claire Cassedy. 9 I'm a Senior Researcher with Knowledge Ecology 10 International. 11 The USTR approached the use of exceptions to exclusive rights and patents data, 12 13 biological resources, and other knowledge should 14 be consistent with paragraph 4 of the WTO Doha 15 Declaration on TRIPS and public health. 16 In 2001, the WTO adopted the Doha 17 Declaration which stated the TRIPS Agreement, 18 quote, "can and should be interpreted and 19 implemented in a manner supportive of WTO 20 members' rights to protect public health and, in 21 particular, to promote access to medicines for

all." End quote.

The Declaration also reaffirmed the, quote, "right of WTO members to use, to the full, the provisions in the TRIPS Agreement, which provide flexibility for this purpose."

In reviewing public comments submitted to the 2024 Special 301 review, many industry organizations cite grievances concerning countries' use or even consideration of compulsory licenses. One commenter phrased it as "under the guise of TRIPS flexibilities that countries are seeking compulsory licenses," when, instead, it should read, "under the rights legally afforded them by the TRIPS Agreement and Doha Declaration."

Several commenters noted that the recent Special 301 Reports have softened the tone used in discussing compulsory licensing, acknowledging countries' freedom to use the TRIPS flexibilities in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

KEI welcomes this development and encourages the USTR to reaffirm countries' rights

to seek compulsory licenses in accordance with TRIPS.

In drafting the Special 301 Report, the U.S. should address the threats to two important copyright exceptions as well: the quotation right and the news of the day exception, both mandatory exceptions in the Berne Convention.

Rights or fees attached to quotations or news of the day create harmful and, potentially, dangerous limits on access to knowledge. USTR should oppose the global adoption of ancillary copyright regimes and other laws that place liabilities on links to news stories.

The U.S. should also defend the right for other countries to draft and include fair use provisions, such as stated in U.S. copyright law, according to which uses of copyrighted works for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research is not an infringement of a copyright.

Trade-related aspects of funding

biomedical R&D should focus less on intellectual property norms and more on the direct and indirect funding of research by the public sector. The trade-related aspects of biomedical R&D include many topics, including the levels and character of public sector funding, the rights that governments acquire, and transparency of the value chain.

Objectives for global public sector funding of biomedical R&D. By taking a more balanced approach in the trade-related aspects of biomedical R&D, it becomes more feasible to consider innovations and business models that are consistent with universal access, fiscal discipline, and innovation. Going forward, far more attention needs to be given to the trade-related aspects of funding biomedical R&D and not just the granting of patents on inventions.

Additionally, trade-related aspects of public goods continue to be a neglected area of trade policy. Climate change, refugee

assistance, pandemic preparedness and response, global poverty reduction, famine relief, policing poverty on the high seas, open sources biomedical research, locust control, and countless other global challenges are costly to address.

KEI has proposed a WTO agreement on the supply of public goods that is based upon a schedule that enables WTO members to voluntarily make binding commitments to provide or resource heterogeneous public goods.

Even without a new WTO Schedule for Public Goods, USTR can and should develop a policy on trade-related aspects of the supply of public goods.

In their comments, many industryrelated organizations were critical of ongoing
negotiations at the international level to
address COVID-19 and prepare for future pandemics
and advocated for the use of only voluntary
licensing mechanisms.

It should be noted that the U.S. Government itself regularly includes in its

contracts language for authorization and consent to non-voluntary use of third-party patents.

This authorization is done through 28 USC 1498 and Federal Acquisition Regulation 52227-5.

This was done in dozens of COVID-19 contracts and many more government contracts.

KEI has gathered more than 350 examples of contracts with a FAR authorization and consent clause from agency web pages and SEC filings.

The eighth meeting of the WHO INB for the pandemic treaty is happening this week, and the USTR should support efforts to safeguard public health, including the obligation for a country to review and update, as necessary, its national legislation for flexibilities in intellectual property laws that are relevant to dealing with a pandemic. The pandemic agreement should include an obligation to use exceptions, when necessary to achieve the objectives of the treaty, particularly for flexibilities like compulsory licenses when they require decisions by government supports.

1 Thank you. 2 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 3 The first question that we have for you comes from the Department of Health and Human 4 5 Services. Thank you for your 6 MS. SNYDER: 7 comments on global public sector funding of biomedical R&D. 8 9 You mentioned the need to develop 10 policy objectives on this issue. What policy 11 objectives do you have in mind and how would 12 those objectives relate to the denial of adequate 13 and effective protection of intellectual property 14 rights or the denial of fair and equitable market 15 access to U.S. persons that rely on intellectual 16 property protection? 17 MS. CASSEDY: I can definitely come 18 back -- thank you for the question -- I can 19 definitely come back with further response in 20 written comments. 21 But I would just say, for us, I think 22 it's also about, basically, looking at how we

incentivize governments to behave in a way that we would like through looking at the biomedical funding side of things, rather than just looking at IP policy. So, like, how do we get countries to grant more rights or share more and kind of share the burden of funding biomedical R&D, as well as sharing benefits?

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

The next question is from the Copyright Office.

MS. LANZA: Thank you for your submission and your testimony today, taking note of the news of the day and quotation exceptions, the copyright protection from the Berne Convention.

And you asked us to defend these exceptions against certain actions by our trading partners to create taxes, fees, or ancillary rights associated with these exceptions.

Can you please put this part of your submission in the context of the Special 301 Report, including by identifying intellectual

property rights at issue; who owns those rights, and how the actions by our trading partners are denying adequate and effective protection of those IP rights, or are denying fair and equitable market access to U.S. persons that rely on IP protection?

MS. CASSEDY: Thank you for the question.

I am not the copyright expert in my office. However, we definitely see the issue of countries wanting to incentivize supporting journalism, and things like that, through suggesting taxes, but we think there can be better ways to support journalism than through these means.

CHAIR LEE: Okay. Thank you.

Our final question is from USTR.

MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you.

In your submission, you say that copyright-holders of information in the legal and medical fields should not be able to opt out of allowing their copyrighted materials to be used

1 to train commercial artificial intelligence 2 models. 3 If a country allows all copyright-4 holders to opt their works out of training 5 commercial AI models, do you recommend that USTR list that country in the Special 301 Report? 6 Ιf 7 so, what would be the basis for listing that 8 country? 9 MS. CASSEDY: I will consult with my 10 colleagues and I'll fully answer back to you. 11 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. CHAIR LEE: Great. Thank you so much 12 13 for your testimony. 14 And again, since we're in the new 15 afternoon session with a lot of different people, 16 just a reminder -- and I'll say this at the end 17 again -- that the docket will reopen, The Federal 18 Register docket will reopen after this hearing 19 for post-hearing submissions. 20 So, next up, we have Public Citizen. 21 Please state your name, title, 22 and organization, and then, please begin your

testimony.

MR. MAYBARDUK: Peter Maybarduk. I'm the Access to Medicines Director of Public Citizen.

We're a consumer advocacy organization with more than 500,000 members and supporters and a 50-year history of protecting the public's interest before federal agencies, Congress, and the courts.

So, we believe Special 301 is in need of continued reform to protect access to medicines.

My testimony is rooted in years providing technical assistance on the ground, working with developing country governments to overcome price and supply barriers to access to medicine -- HIV/AIDS, cancer.

It's also rooted in our efforts to support a robust global response to the COVID emergency, which was marred by vast inequity in access to medical tools, at the expense of millions of lives.

Among other challenges, despite rapid publicly-funded research and development for medical tools, pharmaceutical companies overwhelmingly prioritized high-income country markets.

Like many access-to-medicines
advocates, I have witnessed developing country
health agencies and political authorities weigh
health needs against the criticism and
consequences they expect from Washington and
Brussels on behalf of patent-based prescription
drug corporations. I have seen new health
efforts blocked for these fears.

Now, historically, Special 301 has undergirded this negative pressure, giving the opponents of an access-to-medicine policy or opponents of particular governments the means and the substance to threaten support. And so, we've appeared before you many times to express our concerns.

I'm glad to be able to say today that we have seen improvements under this

2.1

Administration. You've stopped including objections related to compulsory licensing.

You've acknowledged countries' rights to the full range of flexibilities under the TRIPS Agreement.

You've acknowledged exceptions to data exclusivity to protect public health. This is welcome progress -- progress that can support health.

To take just the example of compulsory licensing, my own experience, Ecuador combined licensing with drug price negotiation to save nearly half a point of GDP in a single year.

Colombia used leverage from a compulsory licensing process to lower AIDS drug prices 90 percent; in Peru, it was 30 percent.

Both countries reintroduced parallel importation and number of other cost-saving tools as a result.

Today, Colombia is considering a compulsory license for a first-line AIDS treatment and wants to buy generic dolutegravir from the Pan American Health Organization and

save more than 80 percent off the list price, and be able to attend to the Venezuelan migrant crisis. There's a medicines patent license on this drug; a voluntary license, to IPO's point.

But Colombia and most upper/middle-income countries were excluded from the licenses, and so, aren't able to benefit from the benefits of that voluntary process, unless they pursue a compulsory measure.

Now, domestically, the Biden

Administration has taken increasingly assertive

steps to rein-in drug prices as well through the

Inflation Reduction Act, limiting prices Medicare

will pay for patented drugs. The Federal Trade

Commission is using competition law to go after

high drug prices. Reasonable pricing conditions

over at ASPR and BARDA. And importantly,

President Biden recently announced a framework

for "march-in rights," which is compulsory

licensing for publicly-funded medicines.

Again to IPO's point, there are countries experimenting with compulsory

2.1

licensing. We are one of them. The White House says its policy will put drug companies on notice if products developed using federal funds are not made available to the public on reasonable terms, including based on price. The proposal would promote the federal government's ability to license a patent such as those used to create lifesaving drugs to a competitor -- with the goal of increasing competition, bringing down costs for families. That's U.S. policy; it's changed.

And so, Special 301 should continue to change with it. Recent reports still include a swathe of criticisms that harm access to medicines, applying standards required neither by WTO nor U.S. agreements with other countries.

For example, the most recent report lists 11 countries for data protection issues; seven countries for patent linkage issues; four for patentability -- all of which delay pricecutting generic competition beyond the rules; rules, by the way, that industry played a dominant role writing in the first place.

Special 301 in recent years also seems to be giving increasing focus to areas such as injunctions, trade secrets, competition law, tech transfer. We don't object to all this, to the extent it focuses on rule of law. There are legitimate interests in each of these points.

However, when abused, we have to be a little bit careful about how far we go in these areas, because injunctions too liberally granted can be used to delay generic competition. Trade secrets have been used to block pricing and medicine safety data, including in Europe.

Competition law, the FTC is using it. And technology transfer can encourage local production, which is sort of a global consensus ever since the COVID emergency, that we need to encourage.

Now, finally, it's a core principle that we should be distinguishing between trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy, a question of rule of law or enforcement of law with the substance of law. Right? It's

1 appropriate to go after counterfeiting and 2 piracy. It's not appropriate, in our view, to 3 criticize developing countries for their WTOcompliant health policy. 4 5 We thank you for the progress. think you can go just a little bit further, and 6 7 must go further, given current U.S. policy 8 commitments. 9 We appreciate your work and time. 10 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 11 The first question we have today comes 12 from USTR. 13 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. 14 So, your submission states that the 15 Special 301 Report, quote, "should not criticize 16 countries for a lack of transparency or due 17 process, unless such criticism clearly articulates the alleged violation of a TRIPS 18 19 standard." End quote. 20 What transparency and due process 21 standards from the TRIPS Agreement should the

USTR consider when assessing other countries'

processes? And is there any value in considering best practices from U.S. Government processes as well?

MR. MAYBARDUK: I'm going to have to think upon that for a bit.

As I recall, our specific concern there is related to the listing of some countries for their pharmaceutical reimbursement policies over time, without a specific allegation that it was discriminatory in nature against U.S. countries or linking back to the TRIPS Agreement. So, I think that's the particular concern.

Regarding TRIPS Articles, I'll have to come back, but I think, you know, sort of the value that's at stake is, if we're complaining about transparency and due process, then we really need to put countries and the public on notice exactly what the concern is, so that there can be a reply. A concern about transparency needs to be fully transparent in itself.

Thanks.

CHAIR LEE: Thanks.

1 The next question is from the State 2 Department. 3 MR. HAMILTON: Good afternoon. My office at the State Department, the 4 5 Office of Intellectual Property Enforcement, is charged with compiling and coordinating the TRIPS 6 7 Article 66:2 Report annually. 8 And so, in your submission, you 9 mentioned a lack of implementation of TRIPS Article 66:2 and a lack of clarity on how 10 11 developed country members should provide 12 incentives to enterprises and institutions in 13 their territories for the purpose of promoting 14 and encouraging technology transfers to lesser-15 developed or least-developed country members. 16 What changes do you recommend that the 17 United States make its TRIPS Article 66:2 18 programs or reporting? Do you have any 19 suggestions as to how WTO members can improve or 20 add clarity around how TRIPS Article 66:2 is 21 implemented? 22 MR. MAYBARDUK: Toward technology

transfer, specifically? So, I think another value that's come out of the COVID emergency is that local production and technology transfers are, essentially, global consensus points, and we need those tools in order to ramp up local production and avoid another situation of extreme inequity.

The United States has tools under law, such as the Defense Production Act, that can facilitate that. But there are many voluntary efforts, and we would think that putting those on record in the report; putting those on record at the TRIPS Council, and elsewhere, helps compile a global record of practices that everyone can agree are helpful.

The United States Government has been supportive of the mRNA technology transfer program, backed by the World Health Organization, with producers of mRNA vaccines in 15 countries. We welcome that. We think it's very positive. It's been undertaken without any compulsory measures whatsoever, but, rather, it's an

exchange of knowledge among scientists and practitioners. And we love to see that documented and encouraged through the many tools that the U.S. Government has, which includes technical assistance, among others.

I hope that's helpful, but I'm happy to come back to each question in writing as well.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you very much.

The next question is from the Patent and Trademark Office.

MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you.

In your submission, you make several arguments as to why this Special 301 Report should not identify country policies or practices that are compliant with the TRIPS Agreement.

Congress has told USTR that a country, quote,

"may be determined to deny adequate and effective protection of intellectual property rights,

notwithstanding the fact that the foreign country may be in compliance with the specific obligations of the TRIPS Agreement." End quote.

In 19 USC Section 2242.

1 How do your arguments align with this 2 statement? MR. MAYBARDUK: Well, from what I 3 gather from what you just read -- and I'd have to 4 5 go back and look at the provision -- it doesn't necessarily -- what would be the standard for 6 7 requiring a criticism under that framework? 8 doesn't seem to compel USTR or other agencies to 9 describe inadequate protection. 10 And as we're describing, a number of 11 the policies that are at issue are increasingly 12 favored in the United States. So, I'm sort of 13 unsure what the criteria would be, then, in order 14 to list a country. 15 And please feel free to follow up. 16 Okay? 17 CHAIR LEE: Yes. We're out of time 18 for questions, but maybe if you want to take 19 another look at 19 USC 2242, and then, if you 20 want to address anything further in your post-21 hearing submissions, that would be great.

MR. MAYBARDUK: Happy to do so.

1 CHAIR LEE: Thank you very much. 2 Next up is the Trademark Working 3 Group. MR. KILMER: Good afternoon. 4 I am Paul Kilmer. I am the leader of 5 the Trademark Working Group. We appreciate the 6 7 opportunity to address you this afternoon. 8 This year, the Trademark Working 9 Group's participants highlighted four priorities. And the first is the absence of 10 11 default judgments in contentious proceedings. In 12 China, the lack of default judgments in 13 opposition and in validation proceedings 14 continues to be a big money- and time-waster for 15 U.S. companies. They are forced to submit 16 evidence and arguments in proceedings that are 17 not defended. 18 I, personally, in my private practice, 19 have had dozens of cases in the last year that were not defended, specifically, in China, where 20 21 my clients ended up spending thousands of dollars

producing evidence and arguments, where the other

party didn't bother to appear, and in some cases, couldn't even be served because their address was either fake or had changed, and they hadn't updated it in the CTMO's records.

Other jurisdictions that do not enter judgment by default include the EUIPO and a number of its member nations, as well as Brazil, Chile, Indonesia, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Switzerland.

As to what might constitute a default, we suggest that, at a minimum, applicants and registrants be required to submit a form or a letter indicating that they wish to maintain their application or registration, even if no formal defense, like our answer, is required.

The second issue. The absence of ex parte relative grounds refusals. The EU and many of its member nations, as well as the United Kingdom, lack relative grounds refusals based on likelihood of confusion. This costs American trademark owners millions of dollars every year in what would otherwise be needless opposition

proceedings.

I have had a dozen cases myself in the last year where we represented a client against an applicant in the EUIPO, and the marks were identical and the services were identical. And yet, of course, because there were no relative grounds refusals, the mark got through. My clients spent thousands of dollars in each proceeding. In fact, two-thirds of them were not defended.

So, it's another instance in which just a simple procedure like a search of the trademark office records and an examiner's citing conflicting marks would have prevented that loss of time and money.

There are some other jurisdictions outside the EU that also lack ex parte relative grounds refusals, such as Mozambique, OAPI, and Switzerland.

The third issue. The inability to collect statutory or enhanced damages for counterfeiting and bad-faith infringement. Where

actual damages or the infringer's profits cannot be reasonably demonstrated, statutory and enhanced damages are the only way in which trademark owners can recover their losses.

Nations that do not have statutory or enhanced damages for counterfeiting or blatant infringement include Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, and Turkey -- in other words, developed and developing nations.

The fourth issue highlighted by our participants is certification marks.

Certification marks are still not protectable in dozens of jurisdictions from Algeria to Yemen, including Argentina, Indonesia, Italy, and Kuwait. Certification marks are fundamental to ensure safe and effective goods and services.

There are also a wide range of often conflicting approval processes in place for certification marks, unduly burdening certifying entities. Harmonization of certification mark practice would ensure that goods and services, no

1 matter where they are provided, comply with 2 uniform standards. It may, therefore, be time to 3 consider a multilateral certification mark 4 treaty. 5 There are quite a number of issues, in addition to these, cited in our Global Trademark 6 7 Report Card. And I hope you will take the time 8 to review it. 9 Thank you. 10 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 11 Our first question for you comes from 12 USTR. 13 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. 14 So, which countries would you identify 15 as your top three countries of concern and why? 16 MR. KILMER: Okay. I think, as 17 always, China -- one, two, and three. No, not 18 China is mentioned as to improvements in true. 19 certain areas. I don't think there's any 20 question about that. 21 I think even with CTMOs becoming 22 somewhat more sophisticated in their review of

opposition proceedings, which is certainly very welcome, we're also starting to see some improvements in their adjudication of non-use cancellation proceedings. It used to be, if the registrant presented any evidence that they had ever used their mark, even if it was obviously false, the CTMO would accept it and sustain the registration. So, we are seeing improvements there.

But, that having been said, the lack of default judgments, as I indicated, is a big one for China. We really would like to see them come around to the idea that having default judgments is not just good for foreign companies, but these days it's also good for Chinese companies.

I have had instances where both my client's trademark and a Chinese company's trademark were both infringed by the same applicant or registrant, or even in a commercial setting, where we ended up in the IP Court. And, you know, the Chinese company was equally

adversely affected by the absence of a default judgment. So, I think that is certainly a big one.

In terms of the European Union, relative grounds refusals, we would love to see them do that. And the irony is that the EUIPO conducts a search and they provide the search results, but they don't cite marks against one another. It is a situation that could easily evolve into relative grounds refusals.

They, obviously, have the tools to do the searches. They're, obviously, capable of producing the results to the parties. The next step is simply refusing registrations to identical marks for identical goods or services, and that step seems fairly easy.

And the UK is now, unfortunately, in the same position. The odd thing is, both the UK and the EUIPO used to have relative grounds refusals and in the early 2000s gave them up. It was just too hard, "and we can't cite national registrations," and there are a multitude of

excuses, but I write them down, unfortunately, simply to excuses.

I think the third area is, certainly, the statutory damage area. As I indicated, you know, we have a counterfeiting situation right now in the Dominican Republic, for example, where there are no statutory or enhanced damages available. Thousands of my client's products were counterfeited. They're sitting in a warehouse awaiting destruction, and they will be destroyed. And, in fact, the government can impose a fine, but my client can't get a monetary recovery. And this is something that happens all the time in many, many countries.

Sorry, I may have gone too long on it.

CHAIR LEE: No. I'm just wondering,

I think we asked for the top three countries of

concern. And I think, the third, you gave

statutory damages. Do you have a particular

country in mind? Or is the Dominican Republic

your third --

MR. KILMER: The Dominican Republic is

1 just for the example. I think probably the best 2 one is -- where we experience all the 3 counterfeiting, of course, is Brazil. So, Brazil probably would be the top one; Dominican just 4 being a readily available example. 5 CHAIR LEE: Thanks. 6 7 The next question comes from Treasury. Hi. Your submission notes 8 MR. CHANG: recent amendments to the laws in Mexico and Chile 9 10 to create requirements for maintenance of a 11 trademark registration to substantiate use of a 12 mark, and the offering of non-use cancellation 13 proceedings to be lodged by third parties. 14 MR. KILMER: Uh-hum. 15 MR. CHANG: Can you see these as 16 positive developments? And where would adoption 17 of similar procedures and requirements be 18 impactful in Latin America? 19 Okay. In terms of the MR. KILMER: 20 opposition proceedings, yes, obviously, in 21 Mexico, having an opposition proceeding is a

valuable tool. Unfortunately, the Mexican

1 process is a bit more like our Letter of Protest 2 proceeding rather than a real opposition. 3 A client can oppose an application. The documents are forwarded to an examining 4 5 attorney and they're treated as part of the examination process. It's not a real inter 6 7 partes proceeding. So, I would love to see that. 8 I'm expired. 9 (Laughter.) 10 CHAIR LEE: But you can always submit 11 further comments in the post-hearing docket. 12 MR. KILMER: Happy to do so. Thank you. 13 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 14 I think we are to our final witness. 15 So, it's the United States Chamber of Commerce. 16 Good afternoon. 17 Please state your name, title, and 18 organization for the record, and then, please 19 start with your testimony. MR. KILBRIDE: Good afternoon. 20 I'm Patrick Kilbride. I'm the U.S. 21 22 Chamber's Senior Vice President for the Global

Innovation Policy Center, GIPC.

I'd like to leave you with four points, just in summation of our submission.

First, in terms of the broader global environment for IP, especially at the MLOs, the multilateral institutions, we're very concerned about an eroding respect for IP captured in a narrative that poses intellectual property as a barrier to access, a barrier to global production of innovative and creative solutions. We think that's, actually, in stark contrast to the reality, which is intellectual property enabling investment in those long-term, high-risk, capital-intensive areas of activity.

We would note that authorities are built into national laws and multilateral commitments on IP that enable a nimble response to crisis situations. Such authority should be the last resort, the exception that makes the rule.

Instead, what we see through the proliferation of proposals for IP waivers, forced

technology transfer measures, that this quickly becomes the rule; that IP becomes discretionary, which, essentially, erodes the basis for investment, certainly, by the private sector. We see this spilling over into critical and emerging technologies that are absolutely critical to U.S. national interests.

What's more, it's cloaked in the guise of a development agenda, when, in fact, it is these proposals would prevent developing countries from participating effectively in the innovation ecosystem that delivers solutions. In other words, they're forced to wait on the sidelines.

Unfortunately, U.S. support for the IP waiver lent credence to this narrative. And while, in May 2021, a reasonable person could have said, as part of an "all of the above," no stone left unturned strategy, that this makes sense. By June 2022, that was clearly not the case. There was no evidence of IP as a barrier. In fact, we saw IP solutions delivered to the

world.

Further entrenching this problem,
we've seen the European Union undertake a series
of legislative measures, including their general
pharmaceutical legislation, the patent package
that further weakens the basis for investment and
innovation. And frankly, we've seen similar
legislative proposals and administrative
proposals here in the United States.

The result is uncertainty for our diplomats working on the frontlines overseas.

They're trying to read the tea leaves in Washington. They lack a clear mandate. And so, we've seen a lessened ability to intervene effectively in foreign markets when there are critical IP challenges for U.S. industries.

Among those -- it was already mentioned -- the Colombian compulsory precedent, which I guarantee U.S. patients end up making up the difference.

We've seen in Brazil, unfortunately, some backsliding on what was a real improvement

in the patent backlog with no longer a minimum guaranteed term of patent, even when those are granted.

In South Africa, we've seen the government continue to pursue copyright reform that would broadly expand exceptions and limitations, and really eviscerate the ability to protect copyrights there.

And in Russia, we note that online book and journal piracy websites like Sci-Hub jumped from domain to domain and are able to evade any type of enforcement.

U.S. enforcement of trade agreements. That begins right here at home with the USMCA. With transition periods approaching in 2025, we would note that Mexico has yet to implement key provisions of that agreement, including on patentability and patent term restoration, and especially maybe the pending implementation of copyright provisions that are currently under constitutional review, and without which that

1 agreement has little value at all for America's creative industries. 2 3 Strong U.S. leadership to address all 4 of these concerns is indispensable to our 5 economic growth and our national security. living in a world that may soon be reshaped by 6 7 artificial intelligence, and we know that intellectual property will play a key role in 8 9 ensuring trustworthy and responsible AI. 10 So, for all of these reasons, we urge 11 the United States to reassert U.S. global 12 leadership on IP at the multilateral level; 13 correct this narrative that has gone off the 14 rails; empower U.S. diplomats to address country-15 specific challenges, and actively enforce the IP 16 provisions in U.S. trade agreements. 17 All of this begins with an affirmation 18 of U.S. support for IP at the Ministerial 19 Conference for WTO. 20 Thank you. 21 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 22 The first question we have for you

comes from the Copyright Office.

MS. LANZA: Thank you for your testimony today.

Does the Chamber expect that the expected adoption of implementing regulations for the copyright law revisions in China will provide an opportunity to address the concerns about the lack of recognition for live sports events broadcast as copyrightable audiovisual work?

MR. KILBRIDE: You know, I would have to tell you we'll believe it when we see it.

We're still looking at the phase one agreements and waiting to see implementation for those. So, you know, while we're hopeful -- and I would comment that what we have seen over the years, and we've measured this in the Chamber's IP index, is that China has made steady progress in folding sort of the technical administrative capabilities to have an effective IP system, but that the thumb remains on the scale, and maybe particularly in that space.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

1 The next question is from the Patent and Trademark Office. 2 MS. CRITHARIS: Thank you for your 3 testimony. 4 Your submission states that the 2022 5 ministerial decision on the TRIPS Agreement, 6 7 which is sometimes referred to as a TRIPS waiver, 8 quote, "gives away America's technology to create 9 innovative vaccine to its economic competitors." 10 End quote. 11 Yet, other submissions state that no country has used the TRIPS waiver. What evidence 12 13 do you have to support your statement that the 14 TRIPS waiver gives away America's technology to 15 its economic competitors? MR. KILBRIDE: Thank you for the 16 17 question. 18 Our view is that just by enacting the 19 waiver, the so-called waiver, the reduction of 20 commitments in TRIPS Agreement, that we have 21 effectively conceded critical ground in what's 22 really an existential debate about the role of

1 intellectual property rights; and that that 2 position is contrary to longstanding, bipartisan 3 U.S. advocacy at the global level. So, when you create additional 4 5 uncertainty in the system, investments that take many years to materialize are much less likely to 6 7 take place. That investment is going to go 8 elsewhere when we're reducing the strength of IP 9 here. 10 CHAIR LEE: Thank you. 11 The next question is, oh, from USTR. 12 MS. AVERY-PAGE: Thank you. 13 Your submission recommends that India 14 modify its strict registration requirements for 15 licensing and technology transfer. Could you 16 please describe the registration requirements you 17 feel should be adjusted? 18 Thank you. 19 MR. KILBRIDE: And thank you for the 20 question. One of the indicators that we measure 21 22 in the U.S. Chamber International IP Index is

government intervention in licensing and technology transfer. So, it's a graded scale where we look at, is there a requirement to register? Is the requirement to register specific? You know, what may be proprietary details of a contract? Is there government intervention in price-setting relative to that contract? And each of these are considered, you know, a demerit, in effect. So, the score in that indicator goes down proportionately.

And the principle here is that freedom of licensing is critical to a seamless technology transfer environment, and government intervention actually gets in the way -- I think a point that really applies more broadly to the innovation ecosystem and to all of these proposals for forced technology transfer.

CHAIR LEE: Thank you.

Next, we have a question from the Justice Department.

MR. MERRIAM: Thanks so much for your testimony today.

1 In the discussion of Brazil, the 2 Chamber mentioned Anatel's recent campaign to 3 combat illegal set-top boxes and the piracy ecosystem there, but that was a positive 4 development in the comments. 5 How long is that campaign intended to 6 7 Do you see it as a positive development? And is there a model that could be used in other 8 9 places? 10 MR. KILBRIDE: Yes, thank you for the 11 question. 12 I think no country is monolithic. And 13 I noted a moment ago some criticisms of events in 14 Brazil. By the same token, we have seen an 15 investment in copyright enforcement, in 16 particular, that we think is valuable. 17 And I should note, in fairness, Brazil 18 was, with Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, one of the 19 three biggest gainers on the Chamber's index for 20 the edition that will be released tomorrow. 21 So, yes, we do see that as a positive

development. We would have to get back to you on

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1 whether or not it's a template, but appreciate 2 what's happening there. 3 MR. MERRIAM: Thank you. CHAIR LEE: All right. Thank you for 4 5 your testimony. MR. KILBRIDE: 6 Thank you. 7 CHAIR LEE: So, that closes out the 8 testimony for today. 9 I'll try to be very brief in terms of 10 some closing remarks. 11 So, on behalf of the Special 301 12 Subcommittee, thank you to all the participants 13 for taking time out of your day to have this 14 exchange with us. 15 We appreciate the comprehensive 16 research, the thought, the problem-solving 17 efforts that went into your written submissions 18 and oral testimony. 19 In terms of post-hearing comments, the 20 Special 301 docket will reopen this afternoon and 21 will remain open until 11:59 p.m. Eastern 22 Standard Time on February 28th.

1 Post-hearing briefs by interested 2 parties that testified today are optional. 3 you decide to do that, though, please follow the instructions on the agenda or in the original 4 Federal Register notice, which is at 5 regulations.gov with a Docket No. of 6 7 USTR-2023-0014. 8 As noted earlier today, a transcript 9 and video of today's hearing will be available at 10 ustr.gov. We will do our best to get that posted 11 within the next two weeks or so. 12 So, thank you, everyone, including my 13 colleagues on the panel here and those who 14 testified today, for your contributions and your 15 time and attention. 16 And finally, a thanks to the personnel 17 at USTR who took care of today's logistics and 18 setup. 19 At this point, ladies and gentlemen, 20 the 2024 Special 301 hearing is now adjourned. (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter 21 22

went off the record at 2:22 p.m.)

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## <u>C E R T I F I C A T E</u>

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: 2024 Special 301 Public Hearing

Before: USTR

Date: 02-21-24

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate complete record of the proceedings.

Court Reporter

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