



Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 2010

Justice Department Announces New Intellectual Property Task Force as Part of Broad IP Enforcement Initiative

Attorney General Eric Holder today announced the formation of a new Department of Justice Task Force on Intellectual Property as part of a Department-wide initiative to confront the growing number of domestic and international intellectual property (IP) crimes.

"The rise in intellectual property crime in the United States and abroad threatens not only our public safety but also our economic wellbeing. The Department of Justice must confront this threat with a strong and coordinated response," said Attorney General Holder. "This Task Force will allow us to identify and implement a multi-faceted strategy with our federal, state and international partners to effectively combat this type of crime."

The Attorney General's announcement follows a summit meeting convened last December by Vice President Biden, a long-standing champion of U.S. intellectual property rights-holders. At that meeting, which was attended by Attorney General Holder and other cabinet heads, the Vice President discussed the importance of stronger enforcement and supported actions to raise the priority of combating IP theft and improving coordination -- including the establishment of an intellectual property task force at the Department of Justice.

"Theft of intellectual property does significant harm to our economy and endangers the health and safety of our citizens," said Vice President Biden. "This administration is committed to stronger and stricter enforcement of intellectual property rights, and this new task force is a step in the right direction."

The Task Force, to be chaired by the Deputy Attorney General, will focus on strengthening efforts to combat intellectual property crimes through close coordination with state and local law enforcement partners as well as international counterparts. It will also monitor and coordinate overall intellectual

property enforcement efforts at the Department, with an increased focus on the international aspects of IP enforcement, including the links between IP crime and international organized crime. Building on previous efforts in the Department to target intellectual property crimes, the Task Force will also serve as an engine of policy development to address the evolving technological and legal landscape of this area of law enforcement.

As part of its mission, the Task Force will work closely with the recently established Office of the Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator (IPEC), housed in the Executive Office of the President and charged with drafting an Administration-wide strategic plan on intellectual property. As part of its mission, the Task Force will assist IPEC in recommending improvements to intellectual property enforcement efforts.

"Americans produce more technologies, more brands, more creative works and more innovation than any other nation on Earth," said Victoria Espinel, the U.S. intellectual property enforcement coordinator.

"President Obama is committed to ensuring that the value created by American workers and enjoyed by communities around the world is protected. The Justice Department's new task force will play a critical role in supporting the Administration's ongoing efforts to protect American intellectual property and the millions of jobs that depend on it."

The Task Force will include representatives from the offices of the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General, and the Associate Attorney General; the Criminal Division; the Civil Division; the Antitrust Division; the Office of Legal Policy; the Office of Justice Programs; the Attorney General's Advisory Committee; the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys and the FBI.

As part of its broader intellectual property initiative, the Department will also step up policy engagement with foreign law enforcement partners, develop a plan to expand civil IP enforcement efforts, and leverage existing partnerships with federal agencies and independent regulatory authorities such as the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Communications Commission.