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Saudi Customs Ranks First Worldwide in Fight Against Commercial Fraud

RIYADH- Saudi Customs ranked first in the fight against commercial fraud, counterfeit and intellectual property rights protection among 179 Member States in the World Customs Organization for the year 2012.

The percentage of the seizures of Saudi Customs amounted to 36.5% of the total seizures of Member States Customs, while U.S. Customs ranked second by 14.9%; Chile, the third by 10%; and Italy, the fourth by 7.7%.

This came in a report issued by the meeting of the Customs Cooperation Council of the Organization held recently in Brussels, Belgium.

On this occasion, the Minister of Finance Dr. Ibrahim Al-Assaf expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Crown Prince, for their unlimited support to Saudi Customs.

Source: Alriyadh Newspaper



Microsoft Continues to Support Jordan's Anti-Piracy Campaign

AMMAN- The Department of the National Library continues its campaign which was launched earlier this year to crack down on retail shops across the Kingdom selling pirated software, with the aim of safeguarding copyrights and ensuring a legal and safe environment for consumers and innovators.

The Jordanian Intellectual Property Law Number 22 for the year 1992 and its amendments state that fraudulent and pirated software are illegal in the Kingdom.

“Our goal is to ensure an environment that nurtures creativity and is free of violations, and to encourage innovation in all fields, because selling or buying illegal software has a negative impact on the Kingdom’s economy and society as a whole. Therefore, we - at the Department of the National Library - will continue to track and crack down on all parties that buy and sell pirated programs, in line with the Jordanian Intellectual Property Law,” said the department’s Director General, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Abbadi.

Abbadi noted that the National Library’s copyright office investigates an average of 40 cases a month. He also added that the department is cooperating with Microsoft to combat piracy.

“We constantly receive complaints about pirated software and CDs promoted falsely as Microsoft products, and we have so far seized thousands of these counterfeit programs. We follow up on these cases until they are referred to court, and the

necessary legal measures are taken,” Abbadi said. Software giant Microsoft also supports the Department of the National Library’s efforts to raise awareness among resellers and consumers on the dangers of using pirated software and the importance of buying original programs. “At Microsoft, we believe that we have a responsibility to help build an economy in an environment that safeguards intellectual property, so that innovation and research flourish,” said Sana Jaser, Intellectual Property Lead at Microsoft Jordan, commending the “valuable” efforts of the various government bodies, including the Department of the National Library, in combating piracy.

In a study commissioned by Microsoft earlier this year, the IDC found that one in three PCs around the world with counterfeit software installed will be infected with malware in 2013.

“We need to change people’s mindsets in Jordan with regards to piracy. We need to make it clear to them that it is a crime. It is stealing, whether you are a consumer or a business owner. That is why Microsoft is committed to working hand in hand with the Department of the National Library to implement the Jordanian Intellectual Property Law, in a bid to develop the software sector and raise awareness of copyrights and reveal the importance of using original software. Microsoft also works on raising the awareness of business and company owners of their responsibilities in this regard and the need to institutionalize the use of original software,” she said.

Source: Zawya



الانترنت العربية. مستقبنا
Arabic Internet. Our Future

Arabic TLD First To Go Live; Who Does What In Multi-Stakeholder Internet Self-Governance

DURBAN - , شبكة, the Arabic word for “web” or “network”, the Russian words for “online” and “network” and the Chinese word for “game” is one of the first new top-level domains ready to go live after the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) signed four contracts during its opening session in Durban, South Africa. Despite what might be seen as emblematic of a “greater” ICANN, discussions in Durban continue on discrepancies between local law and ICANN contracts. They also continue on the very functioning of the private multi-stakeholder model for self-regulating the name space itself.

In an effort to internationalize, ICANN announced yet another engagement center at Geneva, to support cooperation with international organizations like the UN International Telecommunication Union. ICANN just before the start of the meeting announced that 1,092 new TLDs have passed the initial evaluation process – a check on technical, financial and operational capability of the applicants for new domain name zones, from (the Vatican’s application

for Catholic in Chinese) to .office (from US software giant Microsoft).

The standard contacts for the new registry operators (who run the central database for the new name zones) and the registrars (who sell the domains to users) were completed just in time for Durban as a pre-requisite to get the process moving.

Yet Registry Agreements (RA) and Registrar Accreditation Agreements (RAA), heavily debated for months or even years, both still contain issues that could cause problems for companies according to their respective local laws. Data protection was mentioned prominently at meetings of the ICANN Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC).

Hubert Schöttner, from the German Ministry of Economics, warned that registrars could be trapped between ICANN contractual obligations and local law. “As government, we need to balance the interests of law enforcement, privacy and data protection,” he said

Source: Intellectual Property Watch



Central Bank and UAE Banks Federation Sign MoU with Dubai Courts

ABU DHABI -The UAE Central Bank and UAE Banks Federation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dubai Courts, on regulations of appointing legal banking experts.

This follows the MoU signed with the Ministry of Justice last year to ensure the execution of the Federal Government strategy in modernizing laws and Federal economic legislation to keep pace with UAE economic growth, and in line with Federal Law 07/2012 on regulating the profession of legal experts before UAE judicial authorities.

The MoU was signed at the Ministry of Justice premises in Abu Dhabi in the presence of Dr. Hadeef bin Jouan Al Dhaheri, Minister of Justice, and in the presence of AbdulAziz Abdulla Al Ghurair, Chairman of the UAE Banks Federation , Saeed Abdulla Al Hamiz, Assistant Governor for Banking Supervision, Central Bank, and Dr. Ahmed Saeed bin Hazim, Director-General of Dubai Courts.

The MoU is intended to promote, develop and regulate the legal experts' profession before the judicial

authorities, since banking disputes incorporate sophisticated technical banking issues due to the ongoing dynamic and continuous development of the industry.

In coordination with the Ministry of Justice, the Central Bank has developed a mechanism and regulations to approve banking experts firms and the licensing of their experts. Renewal of these firms will be evaluated by the above committee based on the regulations set by the Ministry of Justice.

In May 2012, a MoU was signed between the Ministry of Justice, Central Bank and UAE Banks Federation on regulations of appointing legal banking experts. The MoU included criteria and procedures of examination of banking experts in UAE courts and the mechanism for approval of banking experts firms and their experts. Following on from that MoU, the UAE Central Bank and UAE Banks Federation signed in June 2013 a further MoU with Ras Al-Khaimah Courts, on regulations of appointing legal banking experts.

Source: Emirates News Agency (WAM)

Tunisia Wins Green Light to Issue Sukuk

TUNIS - Tunisia's parliament has passed a law that will allow the state to issue Islamic bonds, or sukuk, a move that could help narrow a gaping budget deficit and boost foreign currency reserves, which have fallen to critically low levels. The bill received 102 votes in parliament, during a session held recently.

Finance Minister Elyess Fakhfakh told the parliament that his ministry planned in November or December to issue a sovereign sukuk to raise \$700 million as the government is keen to develop Islamic finance, while the Parliamentary Finance Committee Chairman Ferjani Dogman said the sukuk would help diversify Tunisia's funding sources, but were "not aimed at Islamisation of the economy".

A Tunisian sukuk issue could potentially attract large amounts of Islamic-oriented funds from the Gulf.

Tunisia is running a large state budget deficit, which it has projected at about \$3.2 billion this year, and political tensions are hurting its ability to finance itself. The North African country, which has also signed a \$1.7bn standby loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund, is struggling with rising inflation and a big external deficit as well as its uncertain political outlook.

Source: Gulf Daily News



Antigua and Barbuda Forms Committee to Oversee Partial Suspension of U.S. Intellectual Property Rights

SAINT JOHN'S - The government of Antigua and Barbuda is moving forward with plans "to suspend certain concessions and other obligations relating to United States intellectual property rights" in retaliation for the US's violation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services. The WTO has already found that the US violated the terms of the services agreement by banning online gambling on websites hosted offshore, and it has authorized Antigua and Barbuda's suspension of American IP benefits as a form of trade retaliation.

Antigua and Barbuda announced the formation of a selected committee to oversee the process of partially suspending the United States' TRIPS benefits. According to the press release, "The seven-member 'WTO Remedies Implementation Committee' (the 'RIC'), chaired by Antiguan Attorney General Mr. Justin Simon QC, is responsible for directing the government's plan to build the framework necessary to suspend selected US intellectual property rights to the tune of US \$21 million per year, effective from April, 2006." The committee is also tasked with ensuring that the suspension of IPR rights is done "in full compliance with all applicable international and domestic laws that might relate to the suspension of the intellectual property rights."

Antiguan officials and their attorneys have indicated that they would prefer to negotiate a solution in which the US changes its discriminatory policy, but negotiations have been unsuccessful. In January Mark Medell noted that it had taken the threat of TRIPS suspension to bring the US to the negotiating table. Nowadays, Attorney General Justin Simon said that "the United States has not yet put a fair settlement offer on the table. Whether or not recourse to these remedies will convince it otherwise, in any event at least, there will be some substantial compensation to Antigua and Barbuda as IP suspensions."

Source: infojustice.org

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