



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Experts Converge in Nigeria to Tackle the Issues of Counterfeiting

**Lagos, 1 November 2022:** The Intellectual Property Rights and Innovation Project in Africa (AfriPI) has organised the Consultative Roundtable on Counterfeiting in Nigeria on 1-2 November 2022. The hybrid event will be held at the Eko Hotel and Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos.

Online participation in this groundbreaking discussion is open to the public who can register via the following link: <https://register.internationalipcooperation.eu/event/ar/1/icd-afripi-gis-consultative-roundtable-on-counterfeiting-12>

Previous studies by international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development have revealed that African countries are targeted destinations for counterfeit goods such as pharmaceuticals, foods and beverages. Key economies in Africa, such as Nigeria, must assume a leading role in raising awareness and acting against the counterfeiting of intellectual property rights (IPR).

Counterfeit products can threaten consumers' health and, in some cases, lives. Serious dangers have been linked to counterfeit products ingested by consumers (food, drink, medicines) or put directly on the skin (cosmetics, fragrances). Other examples of dangerous counterfeit goods include counterfeit pesticides, which can be harmful to the environment as well as pose serious health risks to people, or fake car batteries, which can again cause serious health, safety and environmental damage. Some of the most frequent consequences of using fakes are biological, chemical and physical injuries, strangulation, choking, burns, electric shock, fire or damage to hearing, just to mention a few. It is therefore important to combat the distribution of counterfeit goods in Nigeria as it is essential to protect society, the economy and the environment from the threats they pose.

As a result, the Consultative Roundtable on Counterfeiting in Nigeria will be devoted to exchanging knowledge, ideas and experience on the socio-economic implications of counterfeiting and IPR infringement. It will also focus on IPR enforcement and seek solutions to the problems raised. The event will cover counterfeiting and piracy in various industries, that include the film industry (Nollywood), pharmaceuticals, alcohol trade, and agriculture.

The objectives of the Consultative Roundtable will be:

- to raise awareness of the dangers of counterfeiting and piracy and increase respect for intellectual property rights;
- to provide a platform for international experts to discuss trends, challenges, and best practice in IPR enforcement to curb counterfeiting;
- to provide a platform for IPR enforcement stakeholders to share their experience and best practice in IPR enforcement matters;
- to establish networks among participants to support, facilitate and coordinate IPR enforcement and strengthen their efforts and systems to detect, deter and punish the trafficking of counterfeit goods.



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AfriPI, project funded by the European Union and implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)



Some of the key stakeholders who will attend the round table include the Delegation of the European Union to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Economic Community of West African States, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, the World Intellectual Property Organization (Nigeria Office), the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), the Standards Organisation of Nigeria, INTERPOL and Africa International Trade and Commerce Research.

## Background

### 1. About intellectual property rights

Intellectual property rights ('IPRs' or 'IP rights') are legally enforceable rights over the use of inventions or other creative works. According to the definition of the World Intellectual Property Organization (<https://www.wipo.int/about-ip/en/>), 'IP is protected in law by, for example, patents, copyright and trade marks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create. By striking the right balance between the interests of innovators and the wider public interest, the IP system aims to foster an environment in which creativity and innovation can flourish.'

IPRs include trade marks, patents, utility models, industrial designs, copyright, plant breeders' rights, layout designs of integrated circuits, geographical indications, new plant varieties and traditional knowledge, genetic resources, and expressions of folklore. However, certain variations in definitions and categories may be found in each country.

IP rights, as intangible assets, are key to the competitiveness of businesses in the global economy. IP rights are a primary method of securing a return on investment in innovation, creativity, and reputation. Apart from helping companies to protect their inventions from competitors, IP rights can also be an essential source of cash flow through licensing deals or IP sales. They are also a significant pull factor for attracting investors.

### 2. About AfrIPI

AfrIPI is a pan-African project that aims to support the European Union in creating, administering, utilising, protecting, and enforcing intellectual property rights across Africa. It follows international and European best practices and supports the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The overall objective of the AfrIPI project is to facilitate intra-African trade and African and European investment. You can read more about AfrIPI at [www.afripi.org](http://www.afripi.org).

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