

INTERNATIONAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ALLIANCE

2006 SPECIAL 301

SPECIAL MENTION

MOROCCO

IIPA is specially mentioning Morocco in the 2006 report to highlight the great successes achieved through the negotiation of the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement in the IPR Chapter of that Agreement and to invite the Moroccan Government to immediately begin to make good on the enforcement promises made in the Agreement. The Moroccan Government just passed one of the most modern copyright laws in the world, including key protections for the digital age, and enforcement mechanisms to account for the changing nature of commercial copyright piracy. Now, the Government should commence forthwith enforcement actions against piracy, including market sweeps to clean the market of blatant and open piracy in the streets, warehouses, and locations where duplication is occurring.

Piracy: The recording industry noted that Morocco has the dubious distinction of being in first place in the Middle East and North Africa region in terms of music piracy. The recording industry estimated the music piracy rate in Morocco at virtually 100% in 2004. After a number of highly publicized market enforcement actions that followed a high-level IPR Conference in March 2005, the music piracy level gradually dropped to around 95%. Legitimate sales of recorded music are still absolutely minimal, especially for a country that prides itself for its rich cultural sector, and due to the excessively high level of piracy the majority of local music performers are incapable of surviving from the income of their artistic work. Foreign companies are, as a result, still very reluctant to invest in the creative sector in Morocco. The Government must take actions to address this blemish on its record of copyright protection.

In addition, Morocco has emerged as one of the fastest growing broadband Internet markets in the world, growing at a rate of 200% by adding a total of 135,000 DSL lines in the first three quarters of 2005, for a total installed base of 179,000 lines.¹ Given such a development, it is appropriate that the Government has added needed protections for copyright in the Internet environment, but now the Government must be vigilant to the possibility of increasing numbers of illegal downloads of copyright materials over the Internet, and act swiftly against any illegal P2P services that emerge.

¹ Point-Topic, *World Broadband Statistics Q3 2005*, December 2005, Press Rel. at <http://www.point-topic.com/content/dslanalysis/ukbb051229.htm>.

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