Press release - June 5, 2024

FRENCH EDITION OF WORLD ANTI-COUNTERFEITING DAY:

NO FALSE START FOR A REAL VICTORY

The Union des Fabricants (Unifab), a French association for the promotion and defense of intellectual property rights, which brings together 200 member companies from all sectors of activity, **is today celebrating the French edition of World Anti-Counterfeiting Day on the theme of sport, on the eve of major international events in this sector.**





As the Olympic flame continues its journey towards Paris, France is continuing to prepare to host the 2024 Olympic Games. **More than 4 billion television viewers and more than 15 million additional tourists on French soil are expected,** who will follow the events, most of which will take place in the capital.

It should be stressed that a sporting event of such magnitude is often accompanied by a surge in counterfeit products offered to consumers, who will flock in great numbers from all corners of the globe. Indeed, counterfeiters seize this opportunity to deceive, dupe and scam buyers by selling fake products of all kinds, from all sectors of activity, most often targeting merchandise. **In 2023, the games, toys and sports articles sector took first place on the podium of seizures in France, with more than 8.6 million fake products stopped at the borders of the Hexagon.**

It is important to remember that **in France, 34% of consumers have already bought a counterfeit believing it was an authentic product;** this figure reaches **36% for 15-18-year-olds** (IFOP study 2023). Consumers must therefore be very vigilant.

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On this occasion, Unifab is unveiling the striking results of its survey of a sample of 25 companies, representative of all sectors of activity, that delisted content in 2022 and 2023:

42.5 million

illicit listings on e-commerce platforms, marketplaces and social networks!

For nearly two years, the French authorities have been working closely with the International Olympic Committee, Paris 2024 and the Interministerial Delegation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (DIJOP) in the fight against counterfeiting, in anticipation of the increase in this scourge. As a result, **more than 1,200 operational officers have been trained in a few months, in several regions of France. Numerous dismantling and seizure operations have been organized**, such as in **La Courneuve, where more than 280,000 fake products were seized and destroyed** in storage warehouses, or **the closure of 11 shops in Saint-Ouen, with several tens of thousands of counterfeits removed from the market last April**. These actions are necessary to stem the sale of counterfeits nationwide, because in addition to being a certain danger to citizens, it damages the image of the entire country and destroys the nation's intellectual heritage.

As the first official kick-off of EURO approaches, Unifab wishes to put sport and its equipment in the spotlight to warn consumers of the risks they take by consuming fake products. In turn, the Director General of Customs – **Florian Colas**, the Deputy National Director of the Judicial Police in charge of operations – **Philippe Chadrys**, the Associate Director of the Legal Department of the International Olympic Committee – **Pierre Kretterer**, the Director of Legal Affairs of Paris 2024 – **Romain Voillemot** and the Director of INPI's International Network – **François-Xavier de Beaufort** will speak to answer an eminently essential question: **"Intellectual property issues in the organization of sporting events: what actions? For what results?"**

To close these discussions, the Global Anti-Counterfeiting Group (GACG)*, whose President, Delphine Sarfati-Sobreira – Managing Director of Unifab, was elected for a 3-year term last March, will present the trophies (GAC Awards), rewarding the finest actions in the fight against counterfeiting in 5 distinct categories.

"Like sport, intellectual property is an inexhaustible mine of fundamental values, values that are essential steps toward economic stability, enhanced protection of the environment and a guarantee of quality intended to ensure the health and safety of consumers. On the eve of the kick-off of international sporting events that Paris will have the chance to host in a few weeks, our duty is to prepare as well as possible to guard against all the pitfalls that this type of event can bring; I am thinking of course of our intellectual heritage but also of the image we will project around the globe, and it is essential, not to say extremely urgent, that it be as positive and authentic as possible." says Christian Peugeot, President of Unifab.

*GACG: the Global Anti-Counterfeiting Group is the international association that brings together all national anti-counterfeiting associations around the world. It is chaired by Delphine Sarfati-Sobreira, Managing Director of Unifab, supported by Juna Shehu, Managing Director of Indicam (Italian association) and Gerard Guiu, Managing Director of Andema (Spanish association).

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