



Mr. Peter Mandelson
European Commissioner for Trade

Mr. László Kovács
European Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union

European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels

Geneva, 2 July 2008

Re: Geographical Indications (GIs) and the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA)

Dear Commissioner Mandelson and Dear Commissioner Kovács,

The Organization for an International Geographical Indications network – OriGIn – is a worldwide network of geographical indications' producers representing some 80 organisations and more than two-million producers. OriGIn advocates for the establishment of an effective international system of protection and enforcement of GIs and promotes them as a tool for sustainable development.

OriGIn is closely following the ACTA negotiations and supports such an initiative aimed at strengthening the global enforcement of intellectual property rights. In this regard, we would like to draw your attention on the strategic value of covering Geographical Indications (GIs) under the ACTA.

The TRIPs Agreement recognizes Geographical Indications as intellectual property rights, together with patents, trademarks, copyright, etc. Moreover, the market of geographical indications' products has been experiencing growing problems in terms of abuse. Since GIs provide consumers with key information about the quality of products they wish to purchase, methods of production, etc., those misappropriations (such as counterfeited foodstuff and beverage) have not only the potential to mislead consumers as to the true origin of products, but also to generate serious problems to their health.

Including Geographical Indications in the scope of the ACTA is therefore an urgent need, both to protect the legitimate interests of GI producers that have developed their products throughout years of hard labor as well as consumers' health and well-being.

I remain at your disposal for any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Luis Fernando Samper
President, OriGIn