



European Communities Trade Mark Association
25th Annual Meeting in WARSAW

Erik C. Nootboom

Erik Nootboom (49) joined the European Commission in 1987. Since 1998, he is Head of the Industrial Property Unit in the Internal Market directorate-general. He has been in this position since 1998.

Nootboom is in charge of all matters relating to the EC Industrial Property policy. This includes policies on the Community Patent, the patentability of Computer Implemented Inventions, the Community Trademark and the Community Design, the Enforcement Directive, WIPO and WTO - IP matters and relations of the EC with the Harmonisation Office at Alicante and the European Patent Office at Munich.

Nootboom is included in the Managing Intellectual Property's annual list of the 50 most influential people in Intellectual Property on the globe. According to this leading international magazine for IP owners, "Nootboom is described by many as the key man for IP in Brussels" and "producing results is what matters for the Dutchman".

His main achievements in the trademark field in 2004/2005 are the successful linkage of the Community Trademark system with the Madrid Protocol, the successful revision of the Community Trademark system, including a rationalisation and a new approach on national searches, a fundamental change of the structure and working methods of the Boards of Appeal of the OHIM and an important reduction by around 37Mio€ of the total amount of annual fees, which industry should pay for the services of OHIM. Finally, Mr. Nootboom initiated a process which should lead to a closer collaboration between the trademark offices of the EC Member States and the OHIM.

In the coming year 2006, the EC policies will in particular focus on the improvement and rationalisation of the patent system within the EC and at the global level. The proposed Community patent system remains a top priority, but also work on the CII Directive (patent protection for computer implemented inventions) and the transposition of the biotechnology and the IP Enforcement directives are high on the agenda. In addition, it is envisaged that the EC will present proposals on the accession of the EC to the Hague Agreement on the international registration of industrial design

Nootboom represented the EC in many international meetings, including the WIPO Diplomatic Conferences on the conclusion of Treaties on the protection of Intellectual Property in respect of Integrated Circuits (Washington, 1989), the Protocol relating to the Madrid Agreement on the International Registration of Marks (Madrid, 1989), the new Act to the Hague Agreement on International Designs (1999), PLT (1999), the negotiations within GATT on the conclusion of an Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) and the ongoing work on the TRIPS Agreement within the WTO.

Nooteboom has a degree in civil law from the University of Amsterdam, where he specialised in copyright, industrial property law and media law. In addition to his mother tongue (Dutch), he is fluent in English, German and French. Before graduating, he started his career in IP with the reorganisation and day-to-day management of the Dutch Federation for protection and enforcement of copyright of photographers "Burafo" (1981-1982).

After graduating (1982), Nooteboom moved to the Legal Department of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, where he was legal advisor for industrial property matters. In this capacity he was charged with the preparation and proceeding with legislation on a national level and at the level of the Benelux countries.

Ocassionally, Mr. Nooteboom teaches industrial property law at the Universities of Amsterdam (NL), Leuven (B) and Alicante (ESP).