



European Communities Trade Mark Association

June 2009

28th Annual Meeting in Vilnius

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This Conference marks the end of my first year as ECTA President. The year has been one of significant transition and consolidation. We started the year focussing on the relocation of the ECTA office from Antwerp to Brussels. This was officially achieved on 1 December 2008 when we opened the new office in its new location at the heart of Brussels on the 9th floor at Rue des Colonies 18/24, premises, which are within a stone's throw of the European Commission.

Anne-Laure Covin, our new Legal Co-ordinator, joined us there, together with Cathy van Vuuren. An additional administrative assistant, Sonia Drabbé was then recruited and joined the office on 15 February 2009.

I would particularly like to pay tribute at this stage to my First Vice-President, Annick Mottet, who played a significant role in both the recruitment and relocation to Brussels.

Symbolically perhaps, with our new start in Brussels, I have taken the opportunity to set up a Project Team to make an objective review of the ECTA organisation and its activities and make recommendations for adoption by management and Council for changes to be made to position the Association well for the future. This team has divided its focus to look at four areas, namely Membership, Internal Organisation, our positioning among other Professional IP Associations and our Conferences and other Educational Activities.

We will communicate to you new initiatives which emanate from the Project Team and which have been adopted by the Management Team and your Council.

Our Committees have again been active in preparing and publishing a number of Position Papers. The Paper, which attracted most publicity, was the Position Paper we published relating to the proposed reduction to CTM fees: *"How to better balance OHIM's budget – the way forward"* – *The compromised solution as proposed at the last Joint Meeting of the Administrative Board and the Budget Committee of the OHIM.*

Other Position Papers, published on our website in the last 8 months have covered the following:

- Codification of Council Directive 89/104/EEC of 21 December 1998;
- Comments on deletion of the requirement of a basic application or registration with the possibility to designate the office of origin for international registrations; deletion of the dependency clause; possibility to designate the country of origin as for any other country; deletion of transformation;
- Proposed changes to the Locarno classification system for industrial designs;
- Position Papers on business perspectives on International cooperation, Enforcement, education and internet-related issues.

We are currently working on the redesign of our website. The website is our window to the world and the view we currently give through that window can be considerably improved and updated. We intend to launch the new website in the autumn.

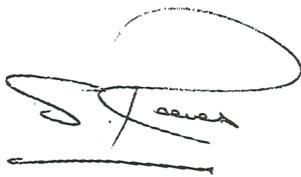
We continue to maintain ECTA's effective representation before OHIM and WIPO. Productive meetings were again held by the OHIM Link committee in February and at WIPO in June. We were particularly privileged as an Association to be granted official Observer status before the Administrative Board of OHIM as one of 5 NGOs to be awarded this status. Anne-Laure represented ECTA in that capacity for the first time at OHIM in May. One immediate result of this initiative is that all 5 NGOs have been called upon to respond to the Commission's proposal for a comprehensive study into the Trade Mark Systems in the EU. As I write, a draft of the proposed joint response to which we have had input is in circulation among the concerned NGOs. ECTA will also present to the Commission its own specific position paper in due course.

We continue to interact at the Commission with key contacts on a formal and informal basis, an interaction which has been greatly facilitated by our relocation to Brussels. Anne-Laure has been key to the improvement in our visibility at the Commission and our next official visit is with DG TAXUD on 7 July.

We have continued our Round Table Events with a well-attended event in Germany. Others are planned for Belgium and Spain. A new edition of the Gazette is also due for release soon.

I end this report by thanking all of you who have been involved in contributing to ECTA's work over the past year. Particular thanks are due to Cathy van Vuuren for her efficiency and adaptability during a considerable period of change within the Secretariat and to Anne-Laure whose energy and enthusiasm has ensured that many initiatives have been seen through to a conclusion.

Last, but not least, thanks are due to the Management Team, which has formally met twice this year. They are Annick Mottet, First Vice-President, Domenico de Simone, Second Vice-President, Keith Havelock our Secretary General and Jaroslaw Kulikowski our Treasurer. All have put other work commitments aside when required and have worked professionally and diligently to ensure the continued success of the Association.



Simon Reeves
President