

March 31, 2011

The Honorable Eduardo Jose Castaneda Murillo  
Representative, House of Representatives – Partido Social de Unidad Nacional – Partido de la U  
Congress of the Republic of Colombia  
Claustro Santa Clara Calle 9 No 8 -92 Primer Piso  
Bogota DC, Colombia

**Re: PL 163-2010 on approval for Colombia's accession to the Protocol relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks adopted in 1989, and amended in 2006 and 2007.**

Dear Mister Representative Castaneda Murillo:

The International Trademark Association (INTA) is grateful for the opportunity to provide comments on PL 163 concerning Colombia's accession to the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks. We congratulate your leadership as the Second Commission and the Plenary of the House of Representatives consider the bill's approval during the present legislature.

As you may already be familiar with INTA from our committed support and activities promoting the Madrid Protocol in Colombia, and more specifically with our support for passage of PL 061/2010 in the Colombian Senate last year, INTA is a 133 year-old membership association dedicated to the advancement of trademarks as elements of fair and effective national and international trade. Today our members represent over 5,700 corporations, law firms and professional associations from a wide variety of industries, from more than 190 countries. There are some 35 INTA members in Colombia.

Since 2006, INTA has taken a leading role in educating governments and legislatures through seminars and workshops in Latin America, to promote the advantages of the Protocol and to assist through providing support for preparing trademark operations to take on additional tasks and requirements of the Madrid System. In the process, INTA has facilitated a dialogue with authorities, the legal community and the private sector. It is INTA's assessment that the net result of the awareness campaign is a growing interest and recognition by governments in Latin America that the Protocol is a valuable trading tool.

Our activities and support letters can be found on the INTA website for further reference.  
<http://www.inta.org/Advocacy/Pages/MadridProtocolinLatinAmerica.aspx>

The Madrid Protocol, one of the most important international trademark treaties, introduced changes and modernized the registration of trademarks under a trademark registration system that had been in place since 1891. The Protocol retained the same basic purpose of the Madrid Agreement, whereby trademark owners can file simultaneously for registrations in numerous jurisdictions through one single application in one language that can be in Spanish. In today's complex global markets, there is no need to follow the traditional country-by-country approach, which leads to an increase in the cost of trademark registration and represents a barrier to trade.

As a major trading partner in the region, Colombia can take the lead in its approach to economic development through adopting pragmatic policies designed to promote trade and social well being simultaneously. INTA also believes that the Protocol will be an instrument to help local businesses which in turn will contribute to Colombia's economic growth and will facilitate the registration of trademarks coming from abroad.

In sum, INTA encourages members of the House of Representatives of the Congress in Colombia to take all actions necessary to approve PL 163-2010 on Colombia's accession to the Madrid Protocol. The Association encourages Colombia to optimize its trademark office operations under the harmonized registration procedures in order to reduce costs and other burdens for both local and international trademark owners.

We hope that these comments are of assistance to you and members of the House of Representatives of the Congress in Colombia. We also thank you, Representative Castaneda Murillo, for presenting PL 163 and wish for its successful approval during the present legislature leading to Colombia's accession.

Sincerely,



Gerhard Bauer  
President