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CISAC REGRETS THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S DECISION CONCERNING RECIPROCAL REPRESENTATION CONTRACTS

*CISAC and its members count the full costs on creators and users
of a recent Commission Decision*

Paris, July 16, 2008 – CISAC regrets a recent Decision of the European Commission which targets 24 authors' societies in the European Economic Area. The Decision concerns the reciprocal representation contracts existing between those societies for certain exploitations of musical works via the internet, satellite and cable.

The membership issue raised by the Commission has been overtaken by events a long time ago. The interests of the individual creator lie at the heart of collective administration. The principle that creators are free to join whatever society they choose is therefore already well established and widely applied by societies throughout the EEA. As for the issue of exclusivity, the EEA societies have accepted for decades that contracts between them should be based on non-exclusive arrangements.

CISAC's main disappointment with the Decision, however, lies in the way in which the Commission has responded to the territorial delineations within societies' reciprocal representation contracts. Whilst it is true that the Decision's approach to territoriality will inevitably lead to a catastrophic fragmentation of repertoire and therefore to legal uncertainty for music users, it is the Commission's assertions that the Decision is somehow in the creative community's interest which has been of particular surprise to CISAC.

Loudly and clearly (but apparently to no avail), the creative community has told the Commission that the community remains deeply concerned about a Decision which claims to act in the name of creators but which in fact is being imposed on them against their express wishes. Time and time again, the creator has pleaded that the Commission's proposed course of action will lead to a calamitous decline in artistic creation, cultural diversity and creators' income.

CISAC and its members continue to count the full costs of the Commission's decision - not just on the world's 2.5 million creators whose interests have been jeopardised by the Commission's stance on territoriality, but also on users.

CISAC, serving authors worldwide

Presided by Robin Gibb of the legendary Bee Gees and award-winning Mexican filmmaker Alfonso Cuarón, CISAC – the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers – aims at increasing both the recognition and protection of creators' rights worldwide. In a global and digital world, CISAC's main missions are to reinforce the international network of copyright societies, to be their spokesperson in all international debates and to reassert authors' inalienable right to live by their creative work. Through the 222 authors' societies from 119 countries that it counts as members, CISAC indirectly represents more than 2.5 million creators and publishers of artistic works in all genres including music, drama, literature, audiovisual, photography and the visual arts. In 2006, the royalties collected by CISAC's member societies in their respective territories topped €7.155bn. Founded in 1926, CISAC is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation. Its worldwide headquarters are in Paris, with regional offices in Budapest, Buenos Aires, Johannesburg and Singapore. www.cisac.org

CISAC Media Relations

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