

URGING IP AWARENESS

SUMMIT CITES IMPACT ON U.S. ECONOMY AND WORLD STANDING

ANDREI IANCU has a message for new members of Congress who are being sworn in this month: Become better informed about the importance of intellectual property on America's economy and its standing in the world.

The director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, who delivered the keynote address at the recent IP Awareness Summit in New York, also urged members in the audience to aid in that effort.

"I would urge folks in this room," he said, referring to the IP professionals, executives, leaders and educators present, "to talk about these issues with members (of Congress) in ways that relate to their priorities and constituents."

Other featured speakers at the second annual IPAS event on November 29 at the Columbia University School of Journalism included Manny Schecter, chief patent counsel of IBM and a member of the board of directors of the Center for Intellectual Property Understanding (CIPU);

and Adam Mossoff, director of the Center for the Protection of Intellectual Property at George Mason University College of Law. IPAS was held by CIPU, an independent nonprofit.

A key engine

In emphasizing the importance of intellectual property in America, Iancu noted that the word "right" is mentioned only once in the U.S. Constitution—and that is in regard to intellectual property rights.

"For the United States to maintain its competitive leadership, it is critically important that that we have an IP system and entrepreneurship ecosystem that encourages innovation," he said.

He added that IP is the engine that makes economic and cultural developments work and that the USPTO is focused on achieving these goals.

"For the IP system to work as intended," he said, "we must make sure future IP laws are predictable, reliable and carefully balanced."

"For the United States to maintain its competitive leadership, it is critically important that that we have an IP system and entrepreneurship ecosystem that encourages innovation."

—ANDREI IANCU, DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In responding to an audience question about "conspiracy theories" alleging that the patent system is working against inventors and misconceptions created by perpetuation of the term patent "troll," the director said we need to be specific about problems and "not engage in name-calling on either side of the issue." He said he encourages more public debate and coming up with solutions.

The nature of an increasingly competitive global economy with escalating digital technology is also a factor in the importance of IP in America, he said.

"We live in a different world," Iancu said. "For the United States to maintain its competitive leadership, it is critically important that that we have an IP system and innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem that encourages innovation, that provides stability and predictability, so folks can invest here in the U.S. confidently."

"I think we are still the leaders, but we cannot take our eye off the ball. We have huge competition."

Much at stake

IBM's Schecter summarized that "We need to close the gap between awareness and understanding. We need to raise the level of understanding. We have too much at stake with it."

"We have to figure out how to optimize the benefit of intellectual property. ... If we're going to get people to understand intellectual property, we have to overcome confusion, we have to overcome misinformation, we have to overcome our own rhetoric, and we have to overcome the pressure from our clients (and) speak honestly, to speak respectfully, and act the same way."

He added: "Those of us who really understand IP, we should feel an obligation to teach the others who need to know about IP but don't, to help them learn. If we want our competition to respect our IP, we need to respect theirs. If we want other countries to respect U.S. IP, those other countries should see us in the United States behaving the same way toward each other."

In addition to the featured speakers at IPAS 2018, there were four panels, 17 other speakers and three breakout sessions for IP owners, creators, educators, investors and others.

The CIPU is establishing an IP Education Resource Center to supply IP education materials. 📖

—EINPresswire via Center for IP Understanding



From top, left to right: Manny Schecter, chief patent counsel at IBM; former USPTO Director Todd Dickinson, senior partner at Polsinelli; Ken Seddon, president of LOT Network; USPTO Education Coordinator Joyce Ward; Maysa Razavi, International Trademark Association director of anti-counterfeiting; Adam Mossoff, Center for IP Protection, George Mason University.

IPAS 2018