IFA©T-GC

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT – GREATER CHINA

**For Immediate Release**
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# CUSTOMS COPYRIGHT CRACKDOWN = CHEERLESS CHRISTMAS FOR PIRATES

***45 Arrested and 100,000 Pirated Optical Discs Valued at HK$2.3 Million Seized in Raids on Hong Kong Pirate Retailers***

Hong Kong – Hong Kong Customs and Excise reported results-to-date in Operation Fire Tornado, a seasonal blitz on retailers selling pirated and counterfeit consumer goods during the Christmas and New Year holiday season.

Between December 1 and 20, with assistance from the International Federation Against Copyright Theft – Greater China (IFACT-GC), enforcement officers from the Hong Kong Customs Intellectual Property Investigation Bureau and Special Task Force launched an anti-piracy operation against hawkers and retail outlets selling pirated optical discs across Hong Kong.

The operation resulted in 269 cases of copyright infringement, the arrest of 42 men and three women aged between 14 and 62 years old and netted nearly 100,000 pirated optical discs with a total retail value of HK$2.3 million (US$294,872). The majority of the infringing DVDs seized were MPA member company movie and TV series titles, including "Beowulf", “The Brave One”, "The Golden Compass", and "Resident Evil: Extinction", all currently showing in Hong Kong cinemas and not yet legitimately available on DVD.

“The impressive results from this operation are the latest installment in Hong Kong’s success story in combating movie piracy” said IFACT-GC Executive Director and General Manager Sam Ho. “The raids hit almost every known retailer of pirated movies in Hong Kong and supports the business of cinemas, legitimate retailers and local and overseas movie makers. The government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is sending a very clear message that IPR theft will not be tolerated and that’s great news for the future of Hong Kong’s creative industries.”

On November 30, IFACT-GC joined the Motion Picture Association’s (MPA) ***Operation Blackout***, an aggressive anti-piracy enforcement campaign aimed at increasing anti-piracy actions over the holiday season in December 2007 and January 2008. ***Operation Blackout***, supported in 13 countries and territories across the Asia-Pacific region focuses on the prevention of illegal camcording of newly released titles in cinemas, Internet piracy, and the production, distribution and sale of pirated DVDs.

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***About the MPA:*** *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its member companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Los Angeles, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA's anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA member companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. For more information about the MPA, please visit www.mpa-i.org.*

***About the IFACT-GC:*** *The International Federation Against Copyright Theft – Greater China was established in 2006 by the Motion Picture Association to protect the film industry in the Greater China region from the adverse impact of copyright theft. IFACT-GC works closely with its supporters, government and enforcement authorities to protect the Greater China film and television industry, retailers and movie fans. For more information about the IFACT-GC, please visit www.ifact-gc.org.*

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