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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT – GREATER CHINA

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IFACT-GC SUPPORTS RENEWED, REINFORCED GOVERNMENT ANTI-PIRACY REWARD SCHEME

New HK$20,000 Reward Aimed at Catching Pirate Camcording Syndicates

Hong Kong – On May 6, the Hong Kong Customs & Excise Department (HKCED), the International Federation Against Copyright Theft – Greater China (IFACT-GC) representing the Motion Picture Association in Hong Kong and six other copyright industry representatives announced the renewal of a reward scheme designed to encourage individuals to support law enforcement efforts in stamping out copyright piracy.

The Anti-Piracy Reward Scheme provides significant cash rewards for people who provide information that leads to the arrest of copyright infringers involved in the production, distribution and/or sale of pirated optical discs and/or illegal camcording of movies in cinemas. Since its launch in 1998, information received through the Anti-Piracy Reward Scheme has resulted in over 160 arrests, the seizure of more than 2.1 million pirated optical discs and paid over HK$1.9 million in rewards to informants.

With effect from April 26, 2008, information leading to the arrest of a person illegally camcording a movie inside a cinema together with the seizure of the camcording equipment will result in a reward of HK$20,000 (US$2,564). This proactive measure strengthens the reward scheme and targets the criminal camcording syndicates who steal movies from cinemas in order to produce illegal DVDs and downloads.

“More than 90% of newly released movies that appear on pirated optical discs around the world and illegally on Internet streaming sites and P2P systems originate from illegal camcorder copies,” said Sam Ho, Executive Director and General Manager of IFACT-GC. “This makes it absolutely vital that rights owners and enforcement authorities cooperate to shut down the source of pirated camcorded movies. The renewed, reinforced Anti-Piracy Reward Scheme sends a clear message to camcording pirate syndicates – ‘You are not welcome in Hong Kong’.”

Under Hong Kong law a person commits an offence if they have in their possession (without lawful authority or reasonable excuse) any video recording equipment in a place of public entertainment. Anyone breaking the law may be fined up to HK$50,000 and imprisoned for up to three months.

Hong Kong Customs takes strict enforcement action against the illegal camcording of movies. Under the Copyright Ordinance, making of an infringing copy of a film for the purpose of trade and business is a serious offence which attracts a heavy penalty, namely, imprisonment for 4 years and a fine of HK$50,000 for each infringing copy.

The HKCED administered Anti-Piracy Reward Scheme is supported by the Motion Picture Association, Business Software Alliance, Entertainment Software Association, Hong Kong Optical Disc Manufacturers Association, International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (Hong Kong Group) Limited, Motion Picture Industry Association and Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

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About the MPA: *The Motion Picture Association and Motion Picture Association – International (MPA) represent 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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