



BIAC key points for consultation on 29 January 2004

An Affirmative Case for Intellectual Property Rights

Rapid changes in key technological, policy and social drivers all underscore the importance of intellectual property protection. A well-developed, carefully balanced system of intellectual property rights provides a fundamental foundation for promoting and achieving sustained creativity, innovation and economic performance. IPRs remain crucial policy tools for promoting innovation and economic growth for many reasons, including:

- IP protection stimulates innovation and spurs sustainable and widespread economic growth
- IPRs promote the disclosure of inventions and pioneering information, which stimulates innovation across and within industries
- IPRs promote risky, uncertain and costly investments
- IPRs empower consumer protection in a global economy
- Effective competition policy depends on an appropriate IP regime
- IP supports the digital economy
- IP rights create new markets because IPRs are tradeable and transferable
- IP enables innovation in key economic sectors, such as healthcare
- IPRs play a crucial role at the intersection between science and innovation

BIAC believes that the structure, capacity and economic focus of the OECD make it uniquely positioned to “add value” to national and international policymakers dealing with intellectual property rights. We therefore recommend that OECD undertake an enhanced and comprehensive work programme related to intellectual property and integrate IPRs more fully, including the quality and scope of IPRs, as a core enabling condition for innovation in all OECD countries. BIAC has made specific suggestions for further work, such as focusing on emerging technological and economic drivers and developing new approaches to counterfeiting enforcement, for example, in the form of an Anti-Counterfeiting Convention.

Promoting Better Public-Private Partnerships : Industry – University Relations

The quality of all our economies depends on their ability to acquire, protect, translate, combine and apply knowledge. Whereas in the past, countries’ innovation systems were relatively independent and their companies, universities and public authorities performed quite different roles in generating, applying and controlling the flow of knowledge, today there is much greater interdependency and boundaries have become less clear-cut. Connectivity, excellence and focus have become essential to the success of any company, country or institution. With greater emphasis being given to the economic role that

universities play, it is important to address these trends in terms of the opportunities they create and thus to identify ways to use them for common benefit.

In order to increase the attractiveness of universities for industry, there is a need for policies to enhance educational systems and to strengthen the functions of universities. At the same time, governments have an important role in establishing a competitive environment between universities and in encouraging closer collaboration between industry and university. Recognising that all players need to reform in order to achieve the desired outcome, the business community will continue to promote partnerships between industry and academia.

We recommend that universities reaffirm their founding principles, while restructuring themselves to be distinctive, by achieving world-class standing in certain, if not all fields. We also recommend that universities strengthen partnerships with industry in order to more actively develop new applications for knowledge as it is being created. In addition, BIAC would like to underline the importance of

- Improved management methods at universities and strengthened leadership;
- Mobility and personnel exchange;
- Practice-oriented education that reflects current and likely future conditions in industry;
- Professional education to support the knowledge and management skills needed to commercialise knowledge.

Biotechnology for Sustainable Growth

In all its applications, biotechnology is having a significant impact on the economy as a whole and provides an increasing range of tools to improve economic performance, reduce the environmental impact of industrial activities and deliver better health outcomes. The OECD offers an ideal forum for developing policies that will help governments better utilise biotechnology's potential for contributing to sustainable growth.

In order to maximise the potential economic and environmental gains of the use of biotechnology across appropriate industry sectors, we see an important role for the OECD, among others, in the following areas: communication outreach; tools and indicators for coherent policies; analysis of economic impacts of industrial biotechnology; encouraging co-operation among sectors. We also see an important role for OECD in examining how to deliver both better health outcomes and sustainable economic benefits through the application of biotechnology and recommend that work on health-related biotechnologies be put within the overall framework of innovation and sustainable growth.

BIAC encourages OECD to strengthen its contribution to work on biotechnology as a driver for sustainable growth and to integrate biotechnology as a high priority topic into OECD's work on promoting innovation and effective science and technology infrastructure.

(The full BIAC papers on the above-mentioned issues are available on the BIAC website: www.biac.org)