



“BEGUILING APPEARANCE – MURKY SHADOWS?” A SPECIAL EXHIBITION AT THE SWISS CUSTOMS MUSEUM

MEDIA RELEASE

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“Beguiling Appearance – Murky Shadows?” A special exhibition on counterfeiting and piracy at the Swiss Customs Museum

Everyone knows about fake handbags at the beach and replica brand-name sunglasses on the internet. But who is behind such goods? Who gains and who loses by them? And who puts themselves at risk? The STOP PIRACY Association is opening tomorrow a special exhibition on counterfeiting and piracy called, “Beguiling Appearance – Murky Shadows?” at the Swiss Customs Museum in Cantine di Gandria (Lugano).

Ordering the newest trainers online at a bargain price or buying a copy of a Swiss brand-name watch on holiday – what's wrong with that? When deciding to deliberately buy a fake, people often don't think of the consequences of their actions and usually know little about the background and extent of counterfeiting and piracy. “All too often, people have in their heads a romantic idealised image of counterfeiters being Robin Hoods who want to make it possible for everyone to buy brand-name goods at a snip of the price. However, what they don't realise is that hidden behind the whole thing is organised crime, which only has its own profits at heart” (Anastasia Li-Treyer, President of STOP PIRACY). According to estimates of the University of Milan's Research Centre on Transnational Crime, counterfeiters earn approximately €42 million every year within the EU alone. However, consumers often carelessly expose themselves to health and safety risks when buying a fake: “Around a third of all fakes seized by EU customs authorities prove to be potentially dangerous to the health and safety of consumers” (Jürg Herren, Vice-President of STOP PIRACY).

To call attention to this issue, STOP PIRACY is guesting an interactive special exhibition on counterfeiting and piracy called “Beguiling Appearance – Murky Shadows?” in two exhibition rooms at the Swiss Customs Museum.

The exhibition

The special exhibition, designed for adolescents, clearly presents the extent of faked products and shows the background to counterfeiting and illegal copying. The exhibition explains the importance of industrial property rights (trade marks, designs and patents) and the impact counterfeiting and piracy has on the economy and society. Visitors to the exhibition also learn that fake goods are produced and distributed by criminal gangs, which often sets off a chain reaction of criminal activities. Also highlighted are the health and safety risks associated with faked products by focusing on specific groups of articles (e.g. medication, spare parts, etc.), as well as the legal provisions concerning counterfeit goods. Finally, visitors discover how they can recognise a fake or a pirated product when making a purchase so as not to fall for supposed bargains that ultimately cost everyone dearly.



STOP PIRACY is the Swiss Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy platform. The non-profit organisation works to educate and raise awareness among consumers as well as to promote co-operation between the business community and the authorities. STOP PIRACY positions itself in the public domain as a provider of facts and analyses and actively informs about counterfeiting and piracy, the risks and what is actually behind it.

The **Swiss Customs Museum** presents the tasks performed by customs and explains the different functions of the Swiss border and Swiss border guards as they are today and as they were in the past. The museum devotes special exhibitions to topical issues on a regular basis, often in cooperation with other institutions. Memorable, self-explanatory installations and numerous short films in several languages introduce the visitor to the topics in a vivid manner.

Swiss customs is also a member of STOP PIRACY. With its customs controls, it makes an important contribution to preventing counterfeit goods being imported into the country and subsequently protects Switzerland as a business location. In 2015, it withdrew 12,000 fake brand-name articles from circulation. The Swiss Customs Administration applies more than 200 laws, ordinances and other legal enactments when carrying out its checks of which copyright law, trade mark law and design law are only three.

Links: [STOP PIRACY - The Swiss Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Platform](#)
[Swiss Customs Museum](#)

Photo material: [STOP PIRACY download images](#)

Further questions: **STOP PIRACY – The Swiss Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Platform**

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