

Fair Standards Alliance General Assembly calls for new spirit of collaboration to drive Europe's innovation

Brussels, 22 June 2016 – The members of the Fair Standards Alliance have renewed their call for Europe to reject a culture of litigation and embrace a culture of transparent and fair licensing terms for standard essential patents (SEPs) during their two day General Assembly in Brussels.

Members of large European champion companies, multinationals and numerous SMEs have gathered together this week to work toward building Europe's vision for innovation through the licensing of standards-essential patents (SEPs) on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms.

“Historically, the debate on the nature of patent licensing – especially among tech companies – has been fractious. The Fair Standards Alliance is helping to change that and I am pleased to acknowledge that's due in no small part to the diversity and unity of our members. Big and small companies, European and international, have all come together to become the ‘voice of reason’ whereby we seek the right for all businesses to use standard essential patents under fair and transparent licensing terms. We cannot and will not accept that Europe's future economic growth is held hostage by a number of companies bent on endless litigation as a means to reap profit at everyone else's expense.” said Robert Pocknell, FSA Chairman.

Fair access to essential patents at fair prices will be the key to ensure people everywhere benefit from the fully integrated world of the future including the Internet of Things (IoT). SMEs as well as large corporations require fair access to such patents to ensure a level playing field which can help nurture the innovation which will drive Europe's digital economy in the decades to come. For far too long, there has been a culture of litigation with a number of companies using their patent catalogue to the detriment of innovation and the spirit of digital advancement. With every high-tech product containing hundreds, even thousands of patented technology units such a culture has been harmful to establishing Europe's digital growth agenda.

About FSA

Launched in November 2015 and based in Europe, the Alliance seeks to promote the licensing of standards-essential patents (SEPs) on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms.

The FSA believes that the entire innovation ecosystem is threatened by unfair and unreasonable SEP licensing practices. Failure to honour the FRAND commitment that exists in most standardisation licensing creates barriers to market entry, threatens to stifle the full potential for economic growth across major industry sectors, and ultimately curbs consumer choice.

PRESS RELEASE

The FSA's member companies, who hold more than 160,000 patents and spend more than 32 billion euros per year on R&D and innovation, include: AirTies, BMW, Cisco, Dell, Fairphone, Google, HP, Intel, ip.access, Juniper Networks, Lenovo, Micromax, peiker acustic, Sierra Wireless, Telit, u-blox and Volkswagen.

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