

Washington, DC --The **Congressional Ethiopia and Ethiopian American Caucus** and the Intellectual Property Caucus held a briefing on “

Intellectual Property as a basis for sustainable development: Ethiopia as a Case Study”

. This was the first of a

Sustainable Development

briefing series sponsored by the Caucus. The Caucus seeks to focus attention on the critical need to alleviate chronic poverty, hunger, the plague of HIV/AIDS, and the need to develop technical and physical infrastructure, by enhancing the cultural, economical, and political bridge between the US government and Ethiopia. This particular briefing addressed the need for economic development in Ethiopia and how the US can benefit while contributing to this cause.

Intellectual Property (IP) is a growing US concern in its trade relations. Supporting the efforts of developing nations such as Ethiopia to create and manage their own IP assets (i.e. music and patents for names of Ethiopian coffee regions) will strengthen the global IP system, to the benefit of all nations. Ethiopia is a leader among developing nations in its efforts to own and manage its IP assets to increase its export income, and these efforts are being closely watched by development experts and international agencies. It is in the US interest to help the developing nations to participate in the global system of IP protection as the US seeks to protect its own IP in growing markets.

BRIEFING:

Host: Rep. Mike Honda, Chair of Ethiopia Caucus

Moderator: Shlomo Bachrach. Mr. Bachrach has long been associated with development in Ethiopia, beginning in the 1960s with USAID. He is currently a member of the Intellectual Property team assisting the Ethiopian government. In addition, he is known to many as the manager of a widely read listserv distributing current news about Ethiopia.

Panelist: Mr. Ronald Layton, a widely known consultant in the use of IP to alleviate poverty, will speak about his work in Ethiopia.

Panelist: Mr. Robert Winter, of the prominent law firm of Arnold and Porter, is an advisor to the Ethiopian government and will describe some of the IP issues of law and regulation facing Ethiopia and other developing nations.

Invited Panelist: Representative from Starbucks Coffee Company.

Following the briefing, there was reception sponsored by the **Citizens League of Ethiopian Americans** to celebrate the Ethiopian New Year.

Bringing a Taste of Ethiopia

, CLEA featured Ethiopian cuisine and cultural presentations, including a traditional coffee ceremony. In honor of Ethiopian Americans' contribution to American culture and society, the Capitol Hill community gathered to acknowledge an important ally in the development of democracy and the fight against terrorism.