**TACKLING CONTRABAND AND COUNTERFEIT GOODS IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

**Background:**

Many companies in Central America and the Dominican Republic suffer from the influx of contraband goods and IP theft; particularly of tobacco, alcohol and pharmaceuticals. Governments in the region also suffer from reduced tax intake and health-related problems associated with the poor quality of counterfeit goods. There is therefore mutual interest in building regional capacity to tackle this problem and raise awareness of the issue – either through better legislation or better enforcement.

Her Majesty’s Government would like to develop a regional project that would consist of training for regional policymakers and/or practitioners, bringing in global experts in the field to help develop policies and procedures. In addition, we would welcome the support of experts from companies adversely affected. This training would take place in just one of the regional markets, but we would encourage the attendance of relevant officials from across Central America and the Dominican Republic to attend. Indeed, a regional approach is vital to tackling the problem and encouraging regional cooperation is an additional objective of the project.

Encourage measures to tackle IP theft and counter the trade of contraband is in line with the UK’s G8 Presidency objectives to work internationally on trade, tax and transparency, by helping regional countries to comply with the Rules Based International Economic System.

**Purpose:**

To increase the willingness and ability for governments in Central America and the Dominican Republic (and potentially wider) to tackle trade in contraband goods, leading to a lower market share for counterfeit tobacco, alcohol and pharmaceutical products in Central America and the Dominican Republic

**Outputs:**

1. Central American governments are better trained to detect and prevent contraband goods from circulating in their markets
2. Central American governments cooperate more closely on tackling contraband
3. There is greater awareness in Central America of the negative impact of contraband and counterfeit goods on government revenues and health

**Potential Activities:**

* 1. A regional conference or training course, organised by an individual implementer in partnership with either a local government institution or regional organisation, on methods to tackle the influx of counterfeit trade. Expertise would be brought in from the UK or elsewhere. And company experts could also be used.
  2. Awareness-raising event that highlights the negative impact of trade in contraband on governments and population.

**Eligible countries:**

Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. This could potentially be extended to other Latin American or Caribbean countries, should additional funds be found.

**Timings:**

Projects will need to start by September 2013 and finish by March 2014 at the latest. We are inviting concept bids to be sent to [Ben Myers](mailto:ben.myers@fco.gov.uk?subject=Contraband%20in%20Central%20America) and [Ariel Perez](mailto:ariel.perez@fco.gov.uk?subject=Contraband%20in%20Central%20America) by no later than 01 August, using the concept bidding form.

**Budget:**

c £45,000

**Potential Implementers:**

World Customs Organisation

World Intellectual Property Organisation

ADALPI

GovRisk

UNODC

VIASOL

**Potential Local Partners:**

SICA – Central America Integration System

SIECA – Central America Secretariat of Economic Integration

Individual country police, customs or tax authorities

FECAMCO – Regional Federation of Chambers of Commerce

FECAICA – Regional Federation of Industry Chambers