

China – world's largest counterfeit centre

The United States has filed complaints against China with the World Trade Organization, criticizing the country's protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) as inadequate. Annual transactions of counterfeit brand-name products made in China are estimated at \$542 billion

■ **2002:** China joins WTO – Beijing steps up fight against copyright piracy

■ **2003:** Nine in 10 DVDs available in China are illegal copies, 92% of computer software and 500 million copies of books a year are pirated

■ **2004:** IPR criminal prosecutions total 2,787. Production of over 5,000 copies defined as serious IPR offence

■ **2005:** 3,567 IPR prosecutions

■ **2006:** 3,634 prosecutions. Average of 19.5 million illegal publications seized each month. **Proportion of fake computer software falls to 86%**

■ **Mar:** Customs seize 17,893 fake Motorola and Philips mobile phones

■ **Aug:** 47,600 cartons of counterfeit Marlboro cigarettes seized

■ **Dec:** Customs seize 45,000 fake medical tablets, including 25,000 counterfeit Pfizer tablets



■ **2007:** China's piracy laws toughened, serious IPR offence threshold reduced to 2,500 copies. **Prison term raised to seven years**