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MUSIC SECTOR UNITED IN WELCOMING EU COMMISSION PLAN TO CLOSE THE TERM OF PROTECTION GAP

Brussels, 18th February 2008 – The music sector joined forces in welcoming the announcement by EU Internal Market Commissioner, Charlie McCreevy, that he will shortly come forward with a proposal to close the term of protection gap. Tens of thousands of performers, music publishers, independent and major record producers and entertainment retailers have been calling for an improvement of copyright term in Europe to match the term provided by the EU's major trading partners.

Performers and producers are provided with 50 years' protection on music recordings in the European Union, compared to 95 years provided in the United States. Improving the 50-year term of protection is a matter of fairness for the tens of thousands of talented performers who contribute to Europe's exciting, diverse musical culture. An increasing number of performers are losing this revenue stream later in life at a time when they most need it, as their early works fall into the public domain. Moreover, this is happening at a time when the Internet provides the opportunity to revive the career of older artists and find new audiences for early recordings.

The music sector therefore applauded Commissioner McCreevy's timely initiative which has the potential to have a very positive impact on the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people working in the European music sector. We also call on the Commission to use this opportunity to harmonise the terms of protection for co-written musical works and eliminate the discrepancy for performers as regards when term will expire.

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FIM – International Musicians' Union
GERA Europe – Global Entertainment Retail Association-Europe
GIART – International Organisation of Performing Artists
ICMP - International Confederation of Music Publishers
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