

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2019

I4F supports flooring companies named in Mohawk/Unilin instigated ITC investigation

- *Mohawk/Unilin unreservedly attack their own licensees*
- *Investigation merely procedural*
- *Domestic industry requirement not satisfied by Mohawk*
- *Unilin patents believed to be invalid and not infringed*

WILLEMSTAD, CURAÇAO – I4F, a group of companies providing patents and technologies to the flooring industry, today commented on the outright attack made by Mohawk Industries Inc. (Mohawk), Flooring Industries SARL (Unilin) and IVC USA (IVC) on several of their own licensees. This relates to a complaint filed by them before the US International Trade Commission (ITC). I4F is of the opinion that this constitutes anti-competitive behavior as Mohawk and Unilin continue to implement an on-going strategy designed to monopolize the global and US LVT markets, exclude competition and perpetuate inflated licensing fees for flooring technologies.

I4F believes that Unilin's recent announcement describing the ITC's investigation was intended to mislead since the institution of the ITC investigation is merely procedural and does not bear any relevance on the final outcome.

I4F comments, "Mohawk has fallen behind in the marketplace, and together with Unilin, have resorted to suing their own licensees. I4F will support its licensees in defense of this anti-competitive behavior by Mohawk. Institution of this complaint is merely procedural. This is just the beginning of the battle. Mohawk's position on the merits is weak on all fronts."

The defending companies are expected to challenge the validity of the asserted Mohawk/Unilin patents. In the unlikely event that the Mohawk/Unilin patents survive invalidation, the companies are expected to establish that their products do not infringe the patents and should not be excluded from importation. Mohawk/Unilin must also establish that the Mohawk group is manufacturing, or establishing manufacturing, products covered by the asserted patents in the United States. Should Mohawk/Unilin not be able to establish this, then their attempted exclusion will fail. The defending companies are also expected to challenge this domestic industry requirement.

I4F provides licensees with IP expertise, meaningful patents and cutting-edge technologies as well as access to some of the global flooring industry's best innovations, including 3L TripleLock and Click4U. Patents for I4F's technologies have been granted and filed in over 100 countries worldwide. Its patent strategy is designed to provide its licensees with flexibility as well as a strong and broad scope of patent protection in relation to its 3L TripleLock and its other technologies. I4F represents over 2,000 patents divided over clusters covering locking, surface finishing, board and wall panels, materials and panel composition as well as manufacturing processes.

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Contact:

Gilliane Palmer
+31 6 4189 9515
gilliane@i4f.com

About I4F:

*I4F is an innovations group focused on the development of patents and technologies for the flooring industry. Its portfolio includes IP for flooring installation and wall mounting systems, material compositions, surface treatment as well as laminate and board production technologies. I4F has strategic partnerships with the industry's most important IP players, including Classen, Kronospan, CFL Flooring, UWC and Kowon. The company's flagship technologies, 3L TripleLock and Click4U, provide a unique one piece drop-lock installation technique for flooring panels that eliminates the need for an additional insert on the short side. The solution is suitable for laminate, luxury vinyl tiles, expanded polymer core, solid polymer core and wooden flooring panels. International patents and patent applications for I4F's technologies have been granted and filed in over 100 countries worldwide. **Visit I4F.com***