

EU backs away from copyright sanctions in Canada trade deal

Leaked documents reveal fear of an ACTA-style fallout

← [Jennifer Baker](#) (IDG News Service)

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← Following a meeting of the European Union member states on Oct. 5 leaked documents have shown this week that the E.U. plans to back away from criminal sanctions in its copyright agreement with Canada.

CETA, the Canada-E.U. trade agreement, is currently being negotiated. It initially included many paragraphs lifted directly from the controversial ACTA (Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement) pact that was shot down spectacularly by the European Parliament earlier this year. ACTA triggered widespread protests from citizens concerned that it would breach their online civil liberties.

Now, according to documents from the Cyprus Presidency of the E.U. seen by IDG News Service, the CETA text has been greatly watered down in order to avoid a similar outcome. The intellectual property protection chapter is now understood to say that countries "may" provide for criminal procedures and penalties.

Even the European Trade Commissioner, Karel De Gucht, who pushed hard for the ACTA agreement, admits that changes must be made. "Since the negative vote of the European Parliament on ACTA, we have been changing the language obviously," he [said](#) in an interview with [VIEWS.eu](#). "We should have no illusions, there are still a number of difficult issues to tackle."

However, there are still compromises to be reached over so-called "camcording" -- filming in a cinema. Canadian negotiators have asked for criminal sanctions on this, but according to the leaked E.U. documents, there is no enthusiasm for such strong wording in Europe. Canada has had a specific law against camcording since 2007.

The pressure is now on negotiators as the agreement is due to be finalized by the end of the year.