

## Middle East Intellectual Property Newsletter Vol. 96 Enforcement Remedies in the Middle East: Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, and Lebanon

### Introduction

For companies operating in the Middle East, effective intellectual property (IP) enforcement is more than just protecting trademarks or patents—it is about securing market position, preserving brand integrity, and safeguarding investments in markets known for persistent counterfeiting challenges.

This second installment in the Special Newsletter Series focuses on Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, and Lebanon—four complex, but commercially important markets. Each country presents its own unique legal framework, enforcement culture, and operational hurdles, requiring tailored strategies for IP protection.

These jurisdictions form part of critical trade corridors in the region, but their IP enforcement systems are often underdeveloped, inconsistent, or influenced by political and economic factors. Each presents a different enforcement reality, requiring right holders to balance legal options with practical ground-level realities.

### Enforcement Remedies in Iran

#### *Overview*

Intellectual property enforcement in Iran is complex and highly centralized, with the state playing a dominant role in intellectual property matters. Enforcement relies heavily on border controls, Customs intervention, and court action, with relatively limited administrative enforcement options in the marketplace. While the legal framework for intellectual property protection exists, practical enforcement remains challenging due to bureaucratic obstacles, sanctions-related isolation, and limited international cooperation.

Despite these challenges, right holders doing business in Iran must understand the available enforcement mechanisms, particularly at the border, since Iran remains a significant transit hub for goods moving into neighboring markets.

#### *Key Enforcement Authorities*

Authority	Role	URL
Iranian Intellectual Property Center (IPC)	Handles registration of trademarks, patents, and industrial designs.	<a href="https://iripo.ssaa.ir">https://iripo.ssaa.ir</a>
Iranian Customs Administration (IRICA)	Responsible for border enforcement and seizure of infringing goods.	<a href="https://www.irica.ir">https://www.irica.ir</a>
Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (NAJA)	Conducts investigations and raids, particularly for large-scale counterfeiting.	<a href="https://www.police.ir">https://www.police.ir</a>
Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran	Handles civil and criminal intellectual property cases.	<a href="http://dadiran.ir">http://dadiran.ir</a>

#### *Relevant Laws*

- Patents, Industrial Designs and Trademarks Registration Act (2008)<sup>1</sup>
- Copyright Protection Act (1970)<sup>2</sup>
- Customs Law (2011)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/7706>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/7708>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/14520>

These laws apply across all regions of Iran and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- **Iranian Customs Administration (IRICA):** Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs generally fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical assessment beyond visual inspection.
- **Intellectual Property Center of Iran (IPC) (under the Ministry of Justice):** Oversees trademark, patent, and industrial design registrations but does not directly enforce these rights. It plays a role in policy-making and dispute resolution.
- **Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance:** Primarily responsible for copyright enforcement, particularly in media, publishing, and entertainment industries. It does not handle patents, trademarks, or industrial designs.
- **Judiciary (Special IP Courts):** Handles patent, industrial design, and trademark disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority has a distinct role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

### ***Border Measures***

#### ***Customs Recordation:***

Iran offers voluntary trademark recordation with IRICA (Iranian Customs Administration).

- **Fees:** Approximately USD 200 per class.
- **Validity:** 1 year, renewable.

#### ***Ex Officio Enforcement:***

Yes—Customs authorities may detain suspicious shipments without prior complaint if infringement is suspected.

#### ***Notification Process:***

When Customs detect suspicious goods:

- The registered agent or right holder is notified (if the mark is recorded).
- The notification contains basic shipment details and often photographic evidence.
- The right holder has 10 days to confirm infringement and initiate enforcement action.

If a trademark is not recorded with Customs in Iran, there is no automatic notification process for suspected infringing goods. Customs officials typically do not proactively alert right holders unless they have been specifically requested to monitor shipments.

#### ***Sanctions:***

- **Fines:** Amount varies but can reach USD 50,000 for large-scale cases.
- **Product Disposal:** Seized counterfeit goods are typically destroyed at the infringer's expense.
- **Imprisonment:** Up to 3 years for deliberate and repeated violations.
- **Repeat Offenders:** Face escalating fines and longer prison terms.

#### ***Market Raids***

### ***Administrative Complaints:***

There is no independent administrative complaint mechanism for intellectual property enforcement in Iran. Market raids are typically initiated through the judiciary following a formal complaint from the right holder.

### ***Police Raids:***

The Law Enforcement Command (NAJA) conducts market raids based on court orders, especially for large-scale counterfeiting cases.

### ***Ex Officio Market Raids:***

Limited—in practice, market raids only happen after a right holder complaint.

### ***Raid Process:***

- Police, often accompanied by judicial officers, conduct on-site inspections.
- Suspected infringing goods are seized and catalogued.
- A report is submitted to the court for further legal action.

### ***Sanctions (Market Raids):***

- Fines: Imposed based on the court's assessment of the commercial scale of the infringement.
- Imprisonment: For deliberate counterfeiting, up to 3 years.
- Product Disposal: Counterfeits are typically destroyed once a court confirms infringement.

### ***Judicial Remedies***

#### ***Civil Litigation:***

Right holders can file civil cases seeking:

- Injunctions to stop sales and distribution.
- Damages for financial harm and reputational damage.
- Seizure and destruction orders.

#### ***Criminal Prosecution:***

For severe or repeat infringements, right holders may escalate cases to criminal prosecution.

- Penalties may include:
  - Fines ranging from 10,000,000 to 50,000,000 Iranian Rials (~USD 20 to 100).
  - Imprisonment up to 3 years.
  - Permanent business closure for chronic offenders.

### ***Special Notes***

- Judicial proceedings in Iran can be lengthy (often exceeding 2 years), particularly if foreign right holders are involved.
- Political factors can affect case outcomes, especially if the case involves high-profile domestic importers.
- Customs recordation is highly recommended, as border enforcement tends to be the most effective tool.
- Judicial enforcement is document-heavy, so ensuring perfect paperwork (including properly legalized Powers of Attorney and certified translations) is critical.

- Training Customs officials on product identification is advisable, as product training improves enforcement outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

Enforcement in Iran is heavily centered around border controls and judicial action, with limited administrative pathways. Right holders who want to protect their brands in Iran must focus on:

- Timely Customs recordation.
- Building strong relationships with local counsel.
- Being ready to initiate legal action promptly when needed.
- Training Customs officials to identify genuine products quickly.

While enforcement challenges exist, particularly with political and bureaucratic complexities, right holders who combine recordation, active monitoring, and strong local representation stand the best chance of protecting their rights effectively.

### **Enforcement Remedies in Pakistan**

#### **Overview**

Pakistan plays an important role in regional trade and manufacturing, particularly in textiles, pharmaceuticals, and consumer goods. As a result, counterfeiting and intellectual property infringement remain widespread issues, particularly in major commercial hubs such as Karachi, Lahore, and Faisalabad.

While Pakistan's legal framework for intellectual property protection has improved significantly in recent years, enforcement is still inconsistent due to capacity constraints, procedural delays, and the sheer scale of informal markets. Nevertheless, a combination of border measures, market raids, and judicial remedies is available, and recent government efforts have strengthened cooperation between enforcement bodies.

#### **Key Enforcement Authorities**

Authority	Role	URL
Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO Pakistan)	Oversees registration of trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights; coordinates IP policy.	<a href="https://ipo.gov.pk">https://ipo.gov.pk</a>
Pakistan Customs (Federal Board of Revenue - FBR)	Responsible for border enforcement and seizure of counterfeit goods.	<a href="https://www.fbr.gov.pk">https://www.fbr.gov.pk</a>
Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)	Investigates intellectual property crimes, particularly cases involving organized counterfeit networks.	<a href="https://www.fia.gov.pk">https://www.fia.gov.pk</a>
Police (Provincial Police Departments)	Conducts market raids and in-market enforcement based on complaints.	Varies by province
Intellectual Property Tribunal	Handles civil and criminal intellectual property cases in <b>specialized courts</b> .	<a href="https://ipo.gov.pk">https://ipo.gov.pk</a>

#### **Relevant Laws**

- Trademarks Ordinance of 2001<sup>4</sup>
- Patents Ordinance of 2000<sup>5</sup>
- Copyright Ordinance of 1962 (amended 2000)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/3479>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/3478>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/3482>

- Customs Act of 1969<sup>7</sup>

These laws apply across all regions of Pakistan and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Pakistan Customs (Federal Board of Revenue - FBR): Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs typically fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical assessment.
- Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan): Oversees trademark, patent, industrial design, and copyright registrations, sets IP policies, and raises awareness but does not have direct enforcement powers.
- Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP): Addresses unfair competition and deceptive marketing practices, particularly in cases involving trademark misuse, but does not handle patent or industrial design enforcement.
- Judiciary (Intellectual Property Tribunals & Courts): Handles patent, industrial design, and trademark disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority has a distinct role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

### ***Border Measures***

#### ***Customs Recordation:***

Pakistan offers voluntary trademark recordation with Pakistan Customs.

- Fees: Approximately USD 250 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

#### ***Ex Officio Enforcement:***

Yes—Customs officials are authorized to detain suspicious shipments even without a prior complaint, provided the trademark is recorded.

#### ***Notification Process:***

When Customs identifies suspicious goods:

- The right holder or its local agent is notified (if the mark is recorded).
- Notification includes shipment details, product images, and documents related to the importer.
- The right holder has 7 working days to respond and confirm infringement.

If a trademark is not recorded with Customs in Pakistan, there is no automatic notification process for suspected counterfeit goods. Customs officials do not proactively inform right holders unless a specific enforcement request is made.

#### ***Sanctions:***

- Fines: Determined by the courts, depending on value of the goods and intent.
- Product Disposal: Seized counterfeit goods are typically destroyed.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/3487>

- Imprisonment: Up to 3 years for serious counterfeiting offenses.
- Repeat Offenders: Face higher fines and more severe sentences.

### **Market Raids**

#### **Administrative Complaints:**

There is no unified administrative complaint process for intellectual property enforcement in Pakistan. Instead, right holders may file complaints directly with the Police or FIA.

#### **Police-Initiated Raids:**

Market raids are conducted by provincial police departments (Punjab Police, Sindh Police, etc.), usually triggered by right holder complaints.

#### **Ex Officio Market Raids:**

Rare—while some provinces conduct periodic anti-counterfeiting campaigns, these are more reactive than proactive.

#### **Raid Process:**

- Police conduct a physical inspection at the targeted premises.
- Suspect goods are seized and documented.
- A formal case is prepared and may escalate to the Intellectual Property Tribunal if warranted.

#### **Sanctions (Market Raids):**

- Fines: Starting around USD 1,500, but variable based on case scale.
- Product Disposal: Counterfeits are confiscated and destroyed upon confirmation.
- Imprisonment: May apply in serious cases, particularly if organized counterfeiting is involved.

### **Judicial Remedies**

#### **Civil Litigation:**

Right holders may file civil suits through the Intellectual Property Tribunal, seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Compensation for damages.
- Destruction orders for counterfeit goods.

#### **Criminal Prosecution:**

In serious cases, including large-scale counterfeiting, right holders may request criminal prosecution through the FIA or police.

- Penalties include:
  - Fines based on the value of goods.
  - Imprisonment up to 3 years.
  - Business closure for repeat offenders.

### **Special Notes**

- Judicial processes are slower in Pakistan compared to administrative actions, but the specialized Intellectual Property Tribunals have improved case handling.

- Customs officers benefit greatly from product training provided by right holders—brands are encouraged to hold training sessions to educate Customs about product authentication.
- The informal economy is significant, and counterfeit goods frequently enter through unmonitored land borders.
- Online Enforcement: Pakistan is ramping up its online enforcement efforts, though the framework remains less mature than physical enforcement.
- Repeat Offenders: Courts impose progressively severe penalties, but enforcement follow-through can be weak, especially in provinces where local influence interferes with enforcement.

### **Conclusion**

Enforcement in Pakistan requires a multi-pronged strategy, combining:

- Proactive Customs recordation.
- Close cooperation with provincial police.
- Active market monitoring through local agents.
- Well-prepared litigation strategies for escalation.

While procedural delays remain a challenge, the availability of specialized Intellectual Property Tribunals offers a clearer judicial pathway than in many neighboring countries. Right holders willing to engage consistently and invest in local relationships will be better positioned to protect their brands effectively.

### **Enforcement Remedies in Iraq**

#### **Overview**

Iraq presents a uniquely challenging environment for intellectual property enforcement. After years of conflict and instability, the country's legal framework for intellectual property protection is gradually being re-established. However, enforcement remains fragmented between federal authorities in Baghdad and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), which operates its own Customs and commercial enforcement processes.

Despite these challenges, progress has been made, particularly in border control measures and the formal establishment of intellectual property departments within key ministries. However, in-market enforcement and judicial remedies continue to face significant delays, requiring right holders to adopt realistic, flexible strategies when protecting their rights in Iraq.

#### **Key Enforcement Authorities**

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>URL</b>
Trademarks and Patents Office (Ministry of Industry and Minerals)	Oversees registration of trademarks, patents, and industrial designs.	<a href="https://www.industry.gov.iq">https://www.industry.gov.iq</a>
Iraq Customs (General Commission for Customs)	Handles border enforcement, including interception of counterfeit goods.	<a href="https://www.Customs.mof.gov.iq">https://www.Customs.mof.gov.iq</a>
Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Customs	Manages Customs enforcement within the KRG region.	<a href="https://gov.krd">https://gov.krd</a>
Police (Economic Crime Unit)	Investigates counterfeiting cases and conducts market raids.	No standalone website (part of the Ministry of Interior)
Iraqi Courts (Civil and Criminal)	Handle intellectual property disputes and enforcement cases.	Varies by governorate

### **Relevant Laws**

- Trademarks and Commercial Data Law No. 21 of 1957 (as amended)<sup>8</sup>
- Patent and Industrial Designs Law No. 65 of 1970 (as amended)<sup>9</sup>
- Copyright Law No. 3 of 1971<sup>10</sup>
- Customs Law No. 23 of 1984 (as amended)<sup>11</sup>

These laws apply across all regions of Iraq and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Iraq Customs (General Commission of Customs): Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs typically fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical assessments.
- Ministry of Industry and Minerals (Trademarks and Patents Office ): Oversees trademark, patent and industrial design registrations and handles disputes but does not conduct direct enforcement.
- Ministry of Culture (Department of Copyright Protection): Responsible for copyright enforcement, particularly in media and publishing, but does not handle trademarks, patents, or industrial designs.
- Judiciary (Commercial Courts & Civil Courts): Handles patent, industrial design, and trademark disputes, as these require legal and technical evaluation.

Each authority has a distinct role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

### **Border Measures**

#### **Customs Recordation:**

Iraq offers voluntary trademark recordation with Iraq Customs at the federal level. KRG Customs manages its own process, but it is recommended to record trademarks separately in the Kurdistan region if goods enter through KRG borders.

- Fees: Around USD 200 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

#### **Ex Officio Enforcement:**

Yes—both federal and KRG Customs authorities have the right to detain shipments if they suspect counterfeits, although actual proactive enforcement is still developing.

#### **Notification Process:**

When Customs detains a suspicious shipment:

- The right holder (or local agent) is notified.
- The right holder is asked to provide evidence of authenticity within 7 working days.
- Failure to respond results in the release of goods.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/6167>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/10343>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/10345>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.investpromo.gov.iq/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/IQ-Law-Customs-23-1984-En.pdf>



**Sanctions:**

- Fines: Vary based on case size, but generally starts at USD 3,000.
- Product Disposal: Goods are typically destroyed after confirmation of infringement.
- Imprisonment: Up to 3 years in serious cases.
- Repeat Offenders: Subject to higher fines and criminal referral.

**Market Raids**

**Administrative Complaints:**

There is no standalone administrative enforcement body for intellectual property. Instead, market enforcement relies on police action triggered by complaints filed directly by right holders.

**Police-Initiated Raids:**

The Economic Crime Unit within the Ministry of Interior handles in-market enforcement, including:

- Investigating suspected counterfeit goods.
- Conducting raids on physical premises (shops, warehouses, distribution hubs).
- Seizing infringing goods for further investigation.

**Ex Officio Market Raids:**

Rare-while occasional crackdowns happen, these are often linked to broader anti-smuggling campaigns rather than ongoing intellectual property monitoring.

**Raid Process:**

- Right holders (or local representatives) file a formal complaint.
- Police conduct a physical inspection.
- Goods are seized and documented.
- A report is submitted to the relevant court, which determines further action.

**Sanctions (Market Raids):**

- Fines: Usually starting at USD 2,000, depending on case severity.
- Product Disposal: Infringing goods are destroyed upon confirmation.
- Imprisonment: Up to 2 years for serious cases involving repeat offenders or organized operations.

**Judicial Remedies**

**Civil Litigation:**

Right holders may pursue civil action through Iraq's civil courts, seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Damages based on proven losses.
- Product destruction orders.

**Criminal Prosecution:**

For large-scale counterfeiting, especially cases linked to organized crime, right holders can escalate to criminal prosecution.

- Penalties include:
  - Fines.
  - Imprisonment up to 3 years.
  - Closure orders for repeat offenders.

### **Special Notes**

- The dual system between federal Iraq and the KRG complicates enforcement, particularly for goods transiting through the north.
- Customs enforcement tends to be stronger at larger ports (e.g., Umm Qasr) than at land crossings.
- Judicial processes are slow, and cases involving foreign companies often take longer due to translation and authentication requirements.
- Police cooperation can vary significantly by governorate, making local representation essential.
- Right holders are advised to build strong relationships with local counsel in both Baghdad and Erbil, as parallel action in both jurisdictions may be necessary for effective protection.

### **Conclusion**

Enforcement in Iraq requires flexibility, patience, and strong local partnerships. While legal frameworks exist, practical enforcement depends heavily on right holder initiative and proactive case management.

The most effective approach combines:

- Customs recordation at both federal and KRG levels.
- Close coordination with police units and legal representatives.
- Preparedness for slower court proceedings.
- Proactive training for Customs officers to improve detection capabilities.

### **Enforcement Remedies in Lebanon**

#### **Overview**

Lebanon has historically served as a trading hub for the Eastern Mediterranean, attracting brands and products from across the world. However, Lebanon's economic crisis, combined with weak border controls, has led to a sharp increase in counterfeit goods, especially in consumer products, cosmetics, electronics, and pharmaceuticals.

Despite these challenges, Lebanon has a relatively mature intellectual property legal framework, and enforcement is available through a combination of Customs actions, administrative complaints, and judicial remedies. However, right holders must navigate a slow court system and limited enforcement capacity, meaning direct engagement and local presence are important for successful enforcement.

#### **Key Enforcement Authorities**

Authority	Role	URL
Intellectual Property Protection Department - Ministry of Economy and Trade	Oversees trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights registrations	<a href="https://www.economy.gov.lb">https://www.economy.gov.lb</a>
Lebanese Customs	Handles border enforcement and seizure of counterfeit goods.	<a href="https://www.Customs.gov.lb">https://www.Customs.gov.lb</a>
Police (Judicial Police and Economic Crime Unit)	Conducts in-market raids and investigates counterfeiting cases.	<a href="https://www.isf.gov.lb">https://www.isf.gov.lb</a>
Lebanese Courts	Handle civil and criminal intellectual property disputes.	Varies by governorate

### **Relevant Laws**

- Industrial Property Law No. 2385 of 1924 (trademarks and patents)<sup>12</sup>
- Copyright Law No. 75 of 1999<sup>13</sup>
- Customs Law No. 4461 of 2000<sup>14</sup>

These laws apply across all regions of Lebanon and cover trademarks, patents, industrial designs, and copyrights. However, enforcement responsibilities are divided among different authorities, with some having a more limited scope:

- Lebanon Customs: Primarily enforces trademark and copyright violations at borders by intercepting counterfeit goods. Patents and industrial designs typically fall outside its enforcement scope, as they require technical evaluation.
- Ministry of Economy and Trade (Intellectual Property Protection Department): Oversees trademark and patent registrations and manages administrative complaints related to IP infringements but does not conduct direct enforcement.
- Ministry of Culture: Responsible for copyright enforcement, particularly in media, publishing, and artistic works, but does not handle trademarks, patents, or industrial designs.
- Judiciary (Commercial and Civil Courts): Handles patent, industrial design, and trademark disputes, as these require legal and technical assessment.

Each authority has a distinct role, with trademark and copyright enforcement being more direct, while patent and industrial design disputes typically require judicial intervention.

### **Border Measures**

#### **Customs Recordation:**

Lebanon offers voluntary trademark recordation with Lebanese Customs.

- Fees: Approximately USD 200 per class.
- Validity: 1 year, renewable.

#### **Ex Officio Enforcement:**

Yes—Lebanese Customs is authorized to detain suspicious shipments even without a formal complaint, provided the mark is recorded.

#### **Notification Process:**

When Customs detects suspected counterfeit goods:

- The right holder (or their local agent) is notified.
- Notification includes shipment details, photos, and importer information.
- The right holder has 5 working days to confirm infringement and file a formal objection if necessary.

If a trademark is not recorded with Lebanese Customs, there is no automatic notification process for suspected counterfeit goods. Customs officials are not obligated to inform right holders unless specific

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/5898>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/2786>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/11404>

enforcement measures are initiated. Lebanese Customs may still detain suspicious shipments, but enforcement is less systematic without a prior record.

***Sanctions:***

- Fines: Starting at USD 3,000 and increasing based on the value of goods and intent.
- Product Disposal: Confirmed counterfeits are usually destroyed, though in some cases, re-export to a non-protected jurisdiction may be permitted.
- Repeat Offenders: Face escalating fines and could lose trade licenses in severe cases.

***Market Raids***

***Administrative Complaints:***

Right holders can file complaints directly with the Ministry of Economy and Trade, which can trigger administrative action against infringing businesses.

***Police-Initiated Raids:***

The Judicial Police (Economic Crime Unit) conducts market raids based on right holder complaints. These raids are more effective when supported by clear evidence, such as purchase invoices, samples, and notarized test purchase reports.

***Ex Officio Market Raids:***

Rare-market raids are almost always triggered by right holder complaints.

***Raid Process:***

- Police, often accompanied by Ministry representatives, conduct on-site inspections.
- Suspect goods are seized and inventoried.
- A formal seizure report is filed, and goods are stored pending further legal action.

***Sanctions (Market Raids):***

- Fines: Typically ranging from USD 1,500 to USD 5,000, depending on case size.
- Product Disposal: Goods are destroyed after confirmation of infringement.
- Imprisonment: In serious cases, offenders may face up to 2 years in prison.

***Judicial Remedies***

***Civil Litigation:***

Right holders may file civil suits seeking:

- Injunctions to stop further infringement.
- Damages, including lost profits and reputational harm.
- Destruction orders for infringing goods.

***Criminal Prosecution:***

For serious or organized counterfeiting cases, right holders may pursue criminal prosecution.

- Penalties may include:
  - Fines based on the scale of the offense. The exact fine amount is determined by the courts, considering the severity of the infringement and other case-specific factors.

- Imprisonment for up to 2 years.
- Business closure for repeat offenders.

### ***Special Notes***

- Judicial processes in Lebanon can be slow, often taking 2 years or more to resolve cases, particularly when foreign companies are involved.
- Economic instability has reduced enforcement capacity, so right holders need strong local legal support to push cases forward.
- Customs recordation is critical, as border actions are usually faster and more effective than market actions.
- Training Customs officers is highly recommended, as product knowledge at border points can be limited.
- Online Enforcement: Lebanon lacks a formal online enforcement framework, so direct action against online platforms relies on private negotiations and takedown requests rather than legal mandates.

### ***Conclusion***

Enforcement in Lebanon requires patience, strong local representation, and proactive engagement. Border enforcement tends to be more efficient than market raids, especially when combined with regular Customs training and product authentication workshops.

For companies doing business in Lebanon, the combination of Customs recordation, regular market monitoring, and a readiness to pursue legal action is the most effective approach to safeguarding intellectual property.

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