



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday February 11, 2008**

### **Australian Federal Police and Customs praised in efforts to stop counterfeit products**

Consumer goods giant Unilever today praised the efforts of Australian Federal Police and Customs in their ongoing quest to stamp out importation counterfeit goods.

This follows the charging of 2 Sydney men, due to face court tomorrow (Tues Feb 12) on charges of importing and selling counterfeit laundry powder. The charges follow a major investigation into the importation of 185 ton of allegedly counterfeit powder. The powder-branded and labelled to look like authentic OMO washing powder manufactured in Indonesia and Vietnam is alleged by authorities to be nothing more than a very cheap, inferior imitation from China.

“Washing powder is not the usual sort of white powder illegally imported into Australia that AFP and Customs take interest in- but both agencies have done an outstanding job in responding to the increasing volume of counterfeit branded products entering Australia and this particular case involving OMO.”, said Mary Weir, General Counsel for Unilever Australasia.

“Counterfeit products is a multi billion dollar criminal industry around the globe. It threatens consumer safety and brand reputation. Consumers are ripped off. It is important that those seeking to engage in this criminal activity understand they will be subject to the full weight of the law.” Ms Weir said.

In this case, Unilever detected the alleged counterfeit products in a number of small retail outlets in Sydney.. “Unfortunately, consumers bought this product in good faith- based on the high reputation of OMO in Australia- only to be disappointed.” she said.

“These charges are a great step forward in addressing the threat of counterfeit products on Australian shop shelves, so that consumers can buy well known and trusted brands, like OMO, with confidence. I can not praise the efforts of both the AFP and Customs highly enough for the efforts made in bringing these two individuals to court” Ms Weir said.

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