



## **Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Emerging consumer protection trends and challenges: Implementing the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection**

29 November 2018, Geneva, Switzerland

**Palais des Nations, Room XI (Third Floor, Building A)**

Consumer protection is a fundamental policy for the development of healthy global markets. Empowered consumers can make informed decisions according to their needs and means thereby playing an active role in the market. Consumer protection policies are essential to balance asymmetries between consumers and traders, to enforce law against infringers and to provide for dispute resolution and redress for consumers. Furthermore, innovation is happening at a speed never seen before, directly affecting consumers and markets at national, regional and global levels. This requires appropriate policy and regulatory responses. The UNCTAD Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting Emerging consumer protection trends and challenges: Implementing the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection will address some of the current consumer protection trends and challenges in policy-making and in the digital economy, while discussing the means of better implementing the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection.<sup>1</sup>

Considering the revised United Nations Guidelines, the question arises: how to make consumers' interest count? The first panel will discuss ways in which governmental consumer protection authorities' advance consumers' interest in the wider policy-making process. These include stronger evidenced-based policy-making through public consultations and surveys, behavioural insights and impact assessment.

The second panel will elaborate on consumer protection in the digital era, which is high on the agenda of consumer protection agencies and other relevant government institutions. The revised United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection include new guidance arising from the digital economy, including on digital platforms, the protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers and consumer data protection, among others. This panel will focus on the growing importance of strengthening consumer protection regimes and upholding consumer rights in the digital marketplace, especially in developing countries.

The outcome of this meeting will feed into the preparations for the Eight United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Multilaterally Agreed Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices to take place in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> [A/RES/70/186](#)

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## DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

- 10:00 – 10:15**                      **Opening remarks**  
Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Director, Division on International Trade and Commodities (DITC), UNCTAD
- 10:15 – 13:00**                      **Session 1: Making consumers count: Promoting consumer protection in general policy-making**  
**Moderator:** Ms. Teresa Moreira, Head of Competition and Consumer Policies (CCPB), DITC, UNCTAD  
**Panellists:**
- **Ms. Alia Abbas**, Director General of Economy and Trade, Lebanon
  - **Mr. Hugh Stevenson**, Deputy Director, Office of International Affairs, Federal Trade Commission, United States
  - **Ms. Sara Rafael Almeida**, Policy Analyst – Behavioural Insights Joint Research Centre, European Commission
  - **Mr. Steve Mac Feely**, Head of Statistics and Information, UNCTAD
- 13:00 – 15:00**                      **Lunch break**
- 15:00 – 18:00**                      **Session 2: Upholding consumer rights in digital markets**  
**Moderator:** Ms. Ebru Gokce Dessemond, Ms. Ana Cipriano, Mr. Arnau Izaguerri, CCPB, DITC, UNCTAD
- Discussion 1: Consumer protection and digital platforms**  
**Lead discussants:** **Mr. George Lusty**, Senior Director for Consumer Enforcement, Competition and Markets Authority, United Kingdom and **Mr. Akira Yoshida**, Policy Analyst, OECD
- Discussion 2: Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Consumers**  
**Lead discussant:** **Mr. Fernando Blanco Muiño**, National Director, National Directorate for Consumer Defence, Argentina and **Mr. Shirish Deshpande**, President, MGP-India
- Discussion 3: Consumer data protection**  
**Lead discussant:** **Mr. Thomas Blöink**, Deputy Director General Consumer Policy, Digital Society, Federal Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, Germany

Delegates wishing to speak during the session are invited to inform the UNCTAD secretariat accordingly by contacting Mr. Arnau Izaguerri ([arnau.izaguerri@unctad.org](mailto:arnau.izaguerri@unctad.org)) and Ms. Ebru Gokce Dessemond ([eburu.gokce@unctad.org](mailto:eburu.gokce@unctad.org)).