



Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy
19th Session, 7 - 9 July 2021, Geneva, Switzerland and online

Competition Advocacy during and in the Aftermath of the COVID-19 Crisis

Friday, 9 July 2021 (10:30 - 13:00)
Palais des Nations, Room XVIII (First Floor) and online (Interprefy)

Governments actively intervened against the COVID-19 pandemic through highly restrictive measures, forcing widespread confinement to prevent the spread of infections of the population. These measures severely impacted the economy, notably in sectors such as tourism, hospitality, air transport and retail, leading to business bankruptcy and shutdowns and unemployment.

Times of crisis tend to set aside competition in favour of strong state intervention. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis induced Governments to act swiftly without necessarily prioritizing competitive markets.

Competition authorities monitored markets as well as Governments' legislative and regulatory measures, public procurement rules and state aid aimed at the economic recovery and provided advice and expertise, using competition advocacy tools to protect and promote competitive markets' structures and functioning.

The goal of this session is to debate on how competition advocacy can be an instrument to spread competition culture and improve the functioning of markets, and how competition authorities are responding to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this session, the delegates may wish to discuss the following questions:

- (a) What are the challenges faced by competition authorities in the aftermath of COVID-19, to contribute to economic recovery and re-establish competition in markets where governments have intervened with restraint policies?
- (b) What kind of advocacy activities are needed in that regard?

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WORK PROGRAMME

10:30 - 10:40 **Presentation by the UNCTAD Secretariat**

10:40 - 12:15 **Speakers**

- Mr. Andrés Bernardo Barreto González, Superintendent, Superintendence of Industry and Commerce, Colombia
- Dr. Mahmoud Momtaz, Chairman, Egyptian Competition Authority, Egypt
- Mr. Ashok Kumar Gupta, Chairman, Indian Competition Commission, India
- Ms. Cani Fernández, Chairwoman, National Commission of Markets and Competition, Spain

12:15 - 13:00 **Questions from the floor**

Delegates wishing to speak during the session are invited to inform the UNCTAD secretariat accordingly by contacting Mr. Juan Luis Crucelegui (juanluis.crucelegui@un.org) and Dr. Pierre Horna (pierre.horna@un.org).