

Minutes of 23rd Meeting
Working Group on Consumer Product Safety, November 22, 2023

The UNCTAD Working Group on Consumer Product Safety (WGPCS) held its twenty third second teleconference on 22 November 2023 (at 8.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. Geneva time). The objective of the meeting was to discuss developments in the work plan for the period 2023-2024 until the eighth session of the Intergovernmental group of experts on consumer protection law and policy (1-2 July 2024).

Adopted workplan 2023-2024

1. **Recommendation on general consumer product safety**: South Africa and the European Commission, as leads of the activity, informed that the first meeting of drafting committee will be held online next Tuesday 28 November at 2 p.m. Geneva time. The meeting will discuss the building blocks of the recommendation and existing international instruments (UN Guidelines, [Recommendation on Preventing Cross-Border Distribution of Known Unsafe Consumer Products](#), and the OECD recommendations). The drafting committee may also propose a detailed work plan with schedule and deliverables. Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and the United States had already volunteered to take part in the drafting committee, and any other participants of the WGPCS is welcome to join. The European Commission will circulate the link to this meeting.
2. **Model law for the implementation of the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products**: an agreement (MOU) with the American University is currently being negotiated. The objective is to provide a general framework of cooperation to collaborate in the drafting of a model law that is consistent with a 2020 UNCTAD Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Consumer Protection Law and Policy Recommendation on Preventing Cross-Border Distribution of Known Unsafe Consumer Products.¹

Colombia and the United States volunteered to participate in the planning and drafting committee. The United States will schedule a meeting with volunteers, the American University and the secretariat to agree on next steps. Volunteers will propose a table of contents to the American University.

3. **Fourth Joint EC-UNCTAD workshop on consumer product safety**: will take place on 12 December from 2 to 3.30 p.m. in Brussels (in-person and online), an invitation (with registration link) will be circulated shortly. The goal is to brainstorm on how to maximize the potential of research in advancing product safety, as it is an area which has not been widely researched yet. The event will feature an initial discussion with researchers and then an interactive part will all participants. Interpretation in English and French will be provided.

¹ See [Recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products](#), 10 October 2023.

Following a question from South Africa, participants of the WGCPs are encouraged to disseminate the invitation to national stakeholders (especially researchers).

This activity can also be linked to [UNCTAD's Research Partnership Platform on Competition and Consumer Protection](#), which strengthens UNCTAD research and policy analysis capacities and links research findings to the UNCTAD technical cooperation pillar.

4. **UNCTAD e-Commerce Week: Shaping the Future of the Digital Economy (4-8 December 2023)**: UNCTAD-COMESA-EC will host an online session on "Regional cooperation for safer online consumer markets" on 4 December from 1 to 2 p.m. Geneva time. The session will discuss the current regional policy frameworks in pursuit of a common agenda to enhance consumer information and data sharing on product safety in online markets, to help digital markets to be more trustful, transparent and fair. Speakers in the session include:
 - Dr. Willard Mwemba, CEO, COMESA Competition Commission;
 - Ms. Isabelle Pérignon, Director for Consumers, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission; and
 - A representative of the Swiss-Arab Chamber of Commerce

Please [REGISTER](#) online to attend.

5. **Workshop on consumer product safety in online platforms (17 April 2024)**: following the discussions at the IGE, the WGCPs could host a workshop dedicated to consumer product safety in online platform markets.² Mexico and Korea supported this initiative. Korea will be able to contribute as speaker as KCA concluded 2 types of pledges with: (i) ordinary B2C online marketplaces and (ii) on P2P online marketplaces regarding issues sustainability and second-hand goods which can be unsafe (or require prescription). This has already yielded results with online marketplaces. The European Commission suggested to approaching local online marketplaces who may have joined the pledge.
6. **Other activities:**

As a reminder, there is an Informal Steering Committee that is open for all WGCPs participants. Interested colleagues should write to rreglaa@profeco.gob.mx and xgaliciap@profeco.gob.mx.

The UNCTAD secretariat will circulate a concept note for its first publication on product safety, as a collection of essays from jurisdiction around the world. The secretariat will circulate terms of reference and ensure geographical balance and high-level participation.

The UNCTAD secretariat informed participants that it is hosting an in-person side-event to [Consumers International Global Congress](#) on 8 December from noon to 1 p.m. EAT (Nairobi time) on means to enhance the consumer movement. Interested participants can sign up here: <https://forms.office.com/e/PQPpAqaBF0>

² See [Building trust in digital markets through enhanced consumer protection on online platforms](#), 21 April 2023, pages 10-11.

The UNCTAD secretariat reminded participants on the questionnaire on “Enhancing the consumer movement: means to facilitate the development of independent consumer groups,” which will serve as base for the background document to the dedicated session at the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy. The questionnaire is accessible in word (annexed to these minutes, to be sent to arnau.izaguerri@unctad.org) or online:

[Questionnaire in English](#)

[Questionnaire in French](#)

[Questionnaire in Spanish](#)

The next meeting of the WGCPs will take place on 14 February 2024.

Working Group on Consumer Product Safety		
23rd Meeting – List of Participants		
Name	Organization	Country
Elnur Baghirov	State Service for Antimonopoly and Consumer Market	Azerbaijan
Ruth Epsztejn, Karine Murad	INMETRO	Brazil
Patricia Heffernan	Health Canada	Canada
Nataly Rojas	Superintendence of Industry and Commerce - SIC	Colombia
Sergei Siniakov	Eurasian Economic Commission	
Eva Sinkovic, Myriam Deniel, Ilaria Bergami	European Commission	
Dra. Diana Burgos, Emiliano Arevalo and Emma Fernández	Defensoría del Consumidor	El Salvador
Rosa Moran Sullon	National Institute for the Defence of Free Competition and the Protection of Intellectual Property - INDECOPI	Peru
Ewa Sikorska	Office of Competition and Consumer Protection - UOKiK	Poland
Thezi Mabuza	National Consumer Commission	South Africa
Felicia Fara	Office for Product Safety and Standards	United Kingdom
Richard O'Brien, Tilven Salazar	Consumer Product Safety Commission	United States
Antonino Serra	Expert and on behalf FIAGC	
Tica Bosch	Observatorio del Consumo SL	

Questionnaire for UNCTAD secretariat note on: Enhancing the consumer movement: means to facilitate the development of independent consumer groups
Intergovernmental group of experts on consumer protection law and policy, July 2024

Background

The seventh session of the Intergovernmental group of experts on consumer protection law and policy requested "the UNCTAD secretariat, in accordance with guideline 97 (b), to prepare reports and studies as background documentation for the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy on the topic of **enhancing the consumer movement: means to facilitate the development of independent consumer groups.**"

Objective

The objective of this background note is to provide a general and global overview of the ongoing efforts to enhancing the consumer movement, in particular as means to facilitate the development of independent and representative consumer groups. The note will contain proposed questions for discussions as well as recommendations for follow-up.

Questionnaire

The UNCTAD secretariat is circulating the present questionnaire to officially designated contact points for the purpose of the United Nations Guidelines for consumer protection and relevant stakeholders participating in the intergovernmental group of experts. The answers received will not be made public unless requested by the interested respondent and will be attributed to the institution.

Respondents should answer to their best knowledge, answers will not be considered official positions.

Please note that the same questionnaire is presented in three languages (English, French and Spanish). Feel free to choose one of the versions to fill in your answers.

Name of country:

Name of institution:

Name, e-mail and telephone of officer:

Question 1: What is the status of independent consumer groups in your jurisdiction? (How many are there? Which are the most significant? What is their structure and their composition – members, governance? What functions do they fulfil? Do you have any material/publication to share?)

Question 2: What are the main initiatives undertaken in your jurisdiction to facilitate the establishment/development of independent consumer groups? What lessons have you learned?

Question 3: What are the types of funding are available in your jurisdiction for independent consumer groups' activities? Is there governmental support?

Question 4: What challenges do you face in your jurisdiction in facilitating the establishment/development of independent consumer groups?

Question 5: What are your priorities for the next 3 to 5 years?

Question 6: How can UNCTAD support your work in protecting consumers and facilitating the establishment/development of independent consumer groups?

Questionnaire pour la note du secrétariat de la CNUCED sur : Le renforcement du mouvement des consommateurs : moyens de faciliter le développement des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes
Groupe intergouvernemental d'experts du droit et de la politique de la protection du consommateur, juillet 2024

Contexte

La septième session du Groupe intergouvernemental d'experts du droit et de la politique de protection du consommateur demanda «au secrétariat de la CNUCED d'élaborer, en application du paragraphe 97 b) des Principes directeurs, des rapports et des études sur le renforcement Renforcer du mouvement des consommateurs : moyens de faciliter le développement de groupes de consommateurs indépendants».

Objective

L'objectif de cette note de base est de fournir un aperçu général et global des efforts en cours pour renforcer le mouvement des consommateurs, en particulier comme moyen de faciliter le développement de groupes de consommateurs indépendants et représentatifs. La note contiendra des propositions de questions à débattre ainsi que des recommandations de suivi.

Questionnaire

Le secrétariat de la CNUCED diffuse ce questionnaire aux points de contacts désignés officiellement pour le Principes directeurs des Nations Unies pour la protection du consommateur ainsi qu'aux parties intéressées participant du groupe d'experts. Les réponses reçues ne seront pas rendues publiques, sauf si le répondant intéressé en fait la demande, et seront attribuées à l'institution.

Les répondants doivent répondre au mieux de leurs connaissances, les réponses ne seront pas considérées comme des positions officielles.

Veuillez noter que le même questionnaire est présenté en trois langues (anglais, français et espagnol). N'hésitez pas à choisir l'une des versions pour remplir vos réponses.

Nom du pays :

Nom de l'institution :

Nom, adresse électronique et téléphone de la personne en charge de la réponse :

Question 1: Quel est la situation le des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes dans votre pays? (Combien y en a-t-il ? Quels sont les plus importantes ? Quelles sont leur structure et leur composition - membres, gouvernance ? Quelles fonctions remplissent-elles ? Avez-vous des documents ou des publications à partager ?)

Question 2: Quelles sont les principales initiatives prises dans votre juridiction pour faciliter la création/le développement des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes ? Quelles leçons avez-vous tirées ?

Question 3: Quels sont les types de financement disponibles dans votre juridiction pour financer les activités des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes ? Existe-t-il un soutien gouvernemental ?

Question 4: Quels sont les défis auxquels vous êtes confrontés dans votre juridiction pour faciliter la création/le développement des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes?

Question 5: Quelles sont vos priorités pour les prochains 3 à 5 ans ?

Question 6: Comment la CNUCED peut-elle soutenir votre travail de protection des consommateurs en facilitant la création/le développement des associations de défense des consommateurs indépendantes?

Cuestionario para la nota de la secretaría de la UNCTAD sobre: Fortalecimiento del movimiento de consumidores: medios para facilitar el desarrollo de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor
Grupo intergubernamental de expertos en derecho y política de protección del consumidor, julio de 2024

Contexto

El séptimo periodo de sesiones del Grupo intergubernamental de expertos del derecho y la política de protección del consumidor solicitó "a la secretaría de la UNCTAD que, de acuerdo con la directriz 97 b), prepare informes y estudios como documentación de base para el séptimo período de sesiones del Grupo Intergubernamental de Expertos en Derecho y Política de Protección del Consumidor sobre el fortalecimiento del movimiento de consumidores: medios para facilitar el desarrollo de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor".

Objetivo

El objetivo de esta nota informativa es ofrecer una visión general y global de los esfuerzos en curso para potenciar el movimiento de los consumidores, en particular como medio para facilitar el desarrollo de grupos de consumidores independientes y representativos. La nota contendrá propuestas de cuestiones para el debate, así como recomendaciones para el seguimiento.

Cuestionario

La secretaría de la UNCTAD circula el presente cuestionario a contactos oficialmente designados para las Directrices de las Naciones Unidas para la protección del consumidor y partes interesadas participantes del grupo intergubernamental. Las respuestas recibidas no se publicarán salvo solicitud de los interesados y se atribuirán a la institución que representan.

Las personas que respondan deben hacerlo a su mejor conocimiento, las respuestas no serán consideradas posiciones oficiales.

Este cuestionario está disponible en chino, español, inglés y francés. Elija el idioma que prefiera.

Nombre del país:

Nombre de la institución:

Nombre, correo electrónico y teléfono de la persona que responde:

Pregunta 1: ¿Cuál es la situación de los grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor en su jurisdicción? (¿Cuántas hay? ¿Cuáles son las más importantes? ¿Cuál es su estructura y composición (miembros, gobierno)? ¿Qué funciones desempeñan? ¿Dispone de algún material/publicación para compartir?)

Pregunta 2: ¿Cuáles son las principales iniciativas emprendidas en su jurisdicción para facilitar la creación/desarrollo de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor? ¿Qué lecciones aprendieron?

Pregunta 3: ¿Cuáles son los tipos de financiación disponibles en su jurisdicción para financiar las actividades de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor? ¿Existe apoyo gubernamental?

Pregunta 4: ¿A qué retos se enfrenta en su jurisdicción a la hora de facilitar la creación/desarrollo de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor?

Pregunta 5: ¿Cuáles son sus prioridades para los próximos 3 a 5 años?

Pregunta 6: ¿Cómo puede la UNCTAD apoyar su labor de protección de los consumidores facilitando la creación/desarrollo de grupos independientes de defensa del consumidor?