



Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy

1st Session, 4-6 October 2017, Geneva, Switzerland

Lunch time event:

Boosting Confidence in E-commerce: Delivering Dispute Resolution for Consumers

Thursday 5 October 2017 (13:15 - 14:15)

Palais des Nations, Room XXVI (First Floor)

Open event

According to the [UNCTAD/CIGI-Ipsos Global Survey on Internet Security and Trust of 2017](#), lack of trust is the main shortcoming for 49% of consumers who do not shop online. How can consumer confidence be enhanced in the digital marketplace? Policy makers around the world are seeking to protect online consumers as means of boosting the digital economy, empowering consumers and achieving a more inclusive and sustainable development.

In its [resolution 70/186 of 22 December 2015 Consumer Protection](#), the General Assembly recognized that "despite the diversity of mechanisms and legal cultures that exist across Member States, consensus exists on the need for common principles that establish the main characteristics of effective consumer protection legislation, enforcement institutions and redress systems".

The [United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection](#) contain concrete recommendations for member States and businesses to develop fair, effective transparent and impartial mechanisms to address consumer complaints. Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms for consumer complaints, of administrative and judicial nature, are increasingly complemented by out-of-court alternative dispute resolution (ADR), be that conciliation, mediation or arbitration. ADR is meant to be as fair, effective, transparent and impartial as traditional mechanisms, and it is also meant to be more expeditious and inexpensive.

Indeed, consumer trust in e-markets greatly lies in the ability for consumers to access dispute resolution and obtain redress also in an online context. In particular, there are various online dispute resolution (ODR) initiatives. Their nature varies greatly: some are of national nature (Mexico's Concilianet, Colombia's SIC Facilita, Brazil's Consumidor.gov, United States' BBB) while some are of regional/supra-national nature (EU's ODR platform); some are of private nature (United States, some EU member States), while some other are hosted by governmental authorities (Latin America).

This session will outline the key aspects that effective consumer dispute resolution systems need to meet to boost consumer confidence in the digital marketplace and identify best practices and next steps in implementing consumer dispute resolution systems at the national and regional levels.

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WORK PROGRAMME

13:15 to 13:20 **Presentation by UNCTAD secretariat on Consumer Protection, E-commerce and Dispute Resolution and Redress**

13:20 to 13:50 **Moderator:** Ms.Teresa Moreira, Head, Competition and Consumer Policies Branch, UNCTAD

Panellists:

- Ms. Amanda Long, Director General, Consumers International (video-address)
- Ms. Nicole Nespoulous, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate general for competition and consumer protection affairs and fraud control, France
- Dr. Ying Yu, Law Faculty, University of Oxford

13:50 to 14:15 **Interactive debate**

Speakers

Amanda Long, Director General, Consumers International

Amanda Long is Director-General of Consumers International (CI), the world federation of consumer groups. With over 250 Member organisations in 120 countries, CI is building a powerful international movement to help protect and empower consumers everywhere. Amanda believes consumer rights can be a major agent for positive change across the globe especially in an increasingly globalised and digitalised world.

Amanda joined CI following a successful career working with blue-chip multinational FMCG corporations, small/medium-sized enterprises and the public sector. Her sectoral experience includes retail, food, water and public utilities, health, agriculture and marketing/creative industries. During her career she has effectively championed pro-consumer issues and ethical business practice and has an exemplary track record in business, social enterprise and the public sector. She has pioneered corporate social responsibility within businesses and worked with global businesses and NGOs to forge unlikely partnerships to drive powerful change for the pro-consumer agenda.

She was shortlisted for the 'Public Service' category at the First Women Awards in 2011, hosted by the CBI and Real Business magazine, and was awarded the 'Responsible Business Game Changer' Award by HRH Prince Wales charity, Business in the Community, in 2012.

Nicole Nespoulous, Deputy Head of Unit, Directorate general for competition and consumer protection affairs and fraud control, France

Nicole Nespoulous works in Directorate general for competition and consumer protection affairs and fraud control (DGCCRF), Paris (France). Since November 2015, she has been deputy head of unit in charge of the implementation in France of ADR mechanisms in the field of consumer protection and of the evaluation and control of these mechanisms. She was, previously responsible of international and European affairs in the field of consumer protection (negotiation do directives or regulations); follow-up and participation to the work of European and international cooperation networks (Consumer protection Committee of protection -CPC - International Network for cooperation and control in the field of consumer protection- ICPEN); contact point for OECD and UNCTAD).

Ying Yu, Law Faculty, University of Oxford

Dr Ying Yu Oxford of Law Faculty is a Research Fellow in Law Justice and Society at Wolfson College, and the Deputy Director of OBOR Programme in the University of Oxford.

Ying's main research interest is the rights of consumers and their legal protection, building on her former work on international trade, maritime law and private international law. Her research includes national systems, the European Union, and the international dimension. Among the numerous issues concerning such rights and protections, she has concentrated on several: the general nature of consumers' rights; forms of dispute resolution; e-commerce; financial services and cross-border transactions.