Dear Delegate and/or Partner:

The *Nineteenth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy* (IGE) will be held from 7 to 9 July 2021, in Geneva, Switzerland.

The draft provisional agenda and organizations of work with all other relevant documentation, is available following this link: https://unctad.org/meeting/intergovernmental-group-experts-competition-law-and-policy-nineteenth-session

The meeting will have a hybrid format (notwithstanding possible changes to current restrictions in relation to COVID-19), being held at room XX of the Palais des Nations in Geneva and allowing for remote attendance using **Interprefy** digital platforms, in accordance with the following practical information:

1. Participation and registration

Online registration is mandatory and should be completed through the following link: https://indico.un.org/event/35381/

To facilitate approval of registration, Permanent Missions of States members are requested to inform the UNCTAD secretariat of the name(s) and title(s) of their representative(s). Kindly note that the letter of credentials of representatives should be uploaded to the system during the online registration process.

Each delegation participating in the meeting shall consist of a head of delegation, and not more than two other accredited representatives.

Other participants (i.e. representatives of members of UNCTAD and representatives of specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental bodies wishing to attend as observers) are also eligible to participate in the session as observers and should register online by the same date using the link above.

Due to the need to comply with the current meeting rooms' physical capacity limitations, registration will be closed on **25 June 2021 at close of business of Geneva**.

Any enquiries concerning registration should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; e-mail: meetings@unctad.org.

1.1. Participation at the Palais

For the registered participants who wish to come to the Palais des Nations and attend the meeting in-person, please confirm in advance as all meetings have limited capacity for health and safety reasons. The COVID-19 related security measures established by the Swiss Authorities are currently available here: https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/aktuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov/massnahmen-des-bundes.html

Please familiarize yourself with these measures. They will also be publicized on the official website of the meeting.

1.2. Participation remotely via online platforms

For the registered participants attending the event virtually, please note the following:

Guidelines for virtual participation will be available in the webpage of the meeting. Delegations are requested that only one person per delegation uses the speakers' link. As the link is not

individualized, different representatives can connect at different times. Other members of the same delegation should use the viewers' link.

A link to access each session using **<u>Interprefy</u>** will be sent the day before the session is scheduled to start.

1.3. Online viewing

The meeting sessions can be followed through the UNOG platform available at: <u>https://listen-live.unog.ch/</u> Available languages will be English, French and Spanish. Please note that this platform does not allow for remote interventions from participants.

2. Logistics for virtual participation (through Interprefy)

We request that participants register as soon as possible to facilitate quality assurance tests prior to the meeting dates. Links for the test and for the virtual meeting will be sent to the e-mail addresses used for registration. The link to the virtual meeting will be sent to registered participants one day in advance of the start of the session.

More information about **Interprefy** is available at <u>https://www.interprefy.com/</u>

a) Testing connectivity and devices

To avoid technical problems during the live meeting, we strongly encourage participants to do an **Interprefy** preliminary test of their device and connection by using the following link: <u>test platform</u>

b) Links to the virtual session & nomenclature

Links to the virtual meeting will be sent to registered participants the day before the start of the meeting.

When you access the speakers' link, please use the following nomenclature to identify yourself:

- For representatives of member States: Name of country + name of person

- For representatives of IGOs & NGOs and other Experts: Name of organization + name of person

Participants who receive the viewers' link will only need to click on the link and select the language in which they wish to hear the proceedings.

To avoid a crash of the system from an overload of connected participants, we request delegations to only have one person per delegation using the speakers' link. As the link is not individualized, different representatives can connect at different times. Please ensure that the above-mentioned nomenclature is used. Other members of the same delegation should use the viewers' link.

c) Tips

Here are key tips to ensure that you can connect correctly:

- Please **DO NOT USE A MOBILE OR TABLET DEVICE**. Only use a laptop or a desktop computer.

- For the browser, please use Google Chrome/Mozilla Firefox/Edge updated to the latest version.

- Please use a **WIRED** headset for audio. **DO NOT** use a headset connected through Bluetooth or the computer's built-in microphone.

Wired headset

d) Support

Please note that connectivity problems are beyond the secretariat's control. This is an Internet-based platform and if the participant has a connectivity problem the secretariat cannot intervene remotely. Therefore, delegates are strongly encouraged to test the connection. While those with a viewers' link can easily logout of the meeting and then reconnect, it takes longer for those with a speakers' link to reconnect as credentials need to be entered again.

e) Participation types and limits

The **Interprefy** platform supports around 300 speakers (able to raise their hand and take the floor) and 1,000 viewers (able to follow the session but unable to take the floor). Sessions will have separate links for speakers and viewers. Given the limit of 300 speakers, regional group coordinators, member States and organizations are requested to participate in the discussions through one representative who will take the floor. Remaining delegates will be allowed to follow the sessions as viewers.

3. Recommended practices for participants in meetings with remote interpretation

Remote meetings are very different from in-person meetings. Please bear in mind that communicating through an interface platform adds an extra layer of complexity to any interaction. With the objective of offering the best quality interpretation possible, and helping speakers to communicate their message more effectively, the Interpretation Service has identified a set of practices to contribute to the smooth conduct of meetings.

a) Internet connection

- Use of an ethernet cable, connecting directly to the modem, instead of Wi-Fi, is strongly recommended.

- Participants who wish to take the floor are strongly advised to connect via a computer, not via a tablet or smartphone.

b) Microphone

- Use high quality unidirectional microphones[1], separate or attached to a headset, preferably with a USB connection to the computer used for participating in the meeting.

- Microphones should provide for echo cancellation.

- Avoid using earbud-type microphones.

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[1] Microphones should reproduce audio frequencies between 125 Hz and 15,000 Hz, with a variation of maximum +/- 10dB. Microphones shall comply with IEC 60268-4.

- Built-in computer microphones should not be used.

- Position the microphone at a reasonable distance (i.e. not so close that breathing is picked up) and speak directly into it.

c) Setting

- Participate from a quiet room with the doors and windows closed to avoid reverberation, echoes, and other noises that may distract other participants.

- Background noise and interference should be eliminated (turn off loud air conditioning, etc.).

- All sound notifications on all devices should be turned off before the meeting starts.

- All other non-essential applications on the computer should be closed.

- The platform should be open on just one browser.

d) Camera and image

- It is strongly recommended that participants who wish to take the floor have access to a camera as interpreters rely heavily on the facial expressions and body language of participants to do their job properly.

- The camera should provide a clear, front-on view of the speaker, ideally from the waist up.

- Avoid strong backlight, such as from a window.

e) When taking the floor

- Microphone and camera should be turned on only when taking the floor.

- Papers should be kept away from the microphone while speaking to avoid rustling that distorts the sound.

- **Speak at a moderate pace**.

- The microphone should be turned off at the conclusion of each statement, and remain muted, to avoid sound distortion.

Thank you and best regards,

The Secretariat.