

**Intergovernmental Group of Experts on
Consumer Protection Law and Policy, 9th session
Room XII, Palais des Nations, Geneva
6-8 July 2026**

***Agenda Item 3: Report on the Implementation of the United Nations
Guidelines for Consumer Protection by Member States and Relevant
Stakeholder***

Statement

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

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Statement of the SIDS Group
9th Session of UNCTAD's Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection
Law and Policy

*Agenda Item 3: Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Guidelines for
Consumer Protection by Member States and Relevant Stakeholder*

6-8 July 2026 | Room XII, 3rd floor, Palais des Nations

Thank you Mr. Chair,
Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

The Dominican Republic has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Small Island Developing States Group (SIDS).

The SIDS Group express its appreciation to the UNCTAD Secretariat for convening the 9th session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy. We also thank the Secretariat for the comprehensive documentation prepared for this session, which underscores the importance of consumer product safety, cross-border enforcement, digital tools, consumer education, and capacity-building as essential pillars of effective consumer protection. We also welcome the opportunity to exchange experiences on the implementation of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection and to discuss emerging challenges in increasingly interconnected and digital markets.

For SIDS members, robust consumer protection is not merely a regulatory objective; it is an essential component of sustainable development, inclusive economic growth and public trust. As recognized in the SIDS Ministerial Declaration adopted at UNCTAD 16, we continue to face structural vulnerabilities arising from the small scale of our economies with high dependence on international trade, geographical remoteness, narrow export bases and limited productive capacities, as well as heightened exposure to external shocks, including the adverse effects of climate change. These structural realities often increase consumer vulnerability, particularly in cross-border transactions, online marketplaces and the supply of essential goods and services.

The SIDS Group therefore reiterates its strong support for the effective implementation of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection, including through strengthened legal and institutional frameworks, enhanced international cooperation, and increased technical assistance tailored to national circumstances.

In this regard, we welcome UNCTAD's continued efforts to support member States through capacity-building, peer learning and policy dialogue. These initiatives are particularly valuable for SIDS, where institutional and financial capacities remain constrained. As recognized in the SIDS Ministerial Declaration, we call upon UNCTAD to continue supporting capacity-building and peer learning so that SIDS can develop and fully benefit from competitive and fair markets where consumers are better protected, thereby advancing economic and social progress.

The rapid digitalization of commerce presents both opportunities and new risks. SIDS members are actively pursuing digital transformation and e-commerce strategies; however, these must be accompanied by effective consumer protection mechanisms capable of

addressing misleading commercial practices, unsafe products sold online, fraud, cybersecurity risks, and efficient cross-border dispute resolution. International cooperation among enforcement authorities is therefore becoming increasingly essential. Consumer education must also remain at the center of our efforts. Empowering consumers with accurate information supports sustainable consumption, and strengthens confidence in both traditional and digital markets.

Finally, SIDS reaffirm that consumer protection contributes to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by promoting inclusive markets, responsible business conduct, and resilient economies. We encourage UNCTAD and development partners to continue supporting SIDS through technical assistance, knowledge-sharing, and institutional capacity-building, consistent with the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS), the UNCTAD Strategy for SIDS, and other relevant international frameworks that promote resilient prosperity.

We look forward to the discussions ahead.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.