



UNCTAD XIII

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

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UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD

LUNCHTIME EVENT

COMPETITION AND CONSUMER POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT: UNCTAD AND SWITZERLAND CAPACITY-BUILDING PROGRAMMES SUPPORT FOR LATIN AMERICA

25 APRIL 2012, ROOM 105, 1-3 P.M

BACKGROUND

The COMPAL Programme is a capacity-building Programme on Competition and Consumer Protection Policies, which provides assistance to 12 countries, namely, Bolivia (the Plurinational State of), Ecuador, Colombia, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The founding members of COMPAL, which are Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru, supported by the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO - Switzerland).

The programme aims at strengthening capacities in various institutions dealing with competition and consumer protection issues in the 12 countries. In addition to providing support at national level, the programme promotes the exchange of experiences and best practices among its members and promotes regional cooperation on competition and consumer protection policies.

The COMPAL Programme is a platform for action that incorporates the three pillars of UNCTAD's approach (research and analysis, capacity-building, technical assistance and consensus building). COMPAL offers the possibility for countries with advanced/mature competition regimes to share experience with young competition agencies. This has been the motivation for the association of Brazil during the implementation of COMPAL II.

COMPAL is, therefore, in line with the UNCTAD XIII sub theme "Strengthening all forms of cooperation and partnerships for trade and development, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation"

The reasons why COMPAL has been successful in the field, include:

- (a) Excellence and impact of its outputs and activities.
- (b) The commitment of the competition and consumer authorities to issue decisions of substance and quality. The key role of national project coordinators.
- (c) Its contribution to the level of design of public policies that aim at reducing barriers to doing business.
- (d) The promotion of the consistency of competition policy with other policies such as investment promotion, industrial policy.

Based on the positive experience with the implementation of the COMPAL programme, SECO and UNCTAD intend to expand and intensify their cooperation in the field of competition law and policy and consumer protection. Under the COMPAL programme, UNCTAD has benefited from the expertise and support of further Swiss institutions and partners, such as the Swiss Competition Authority (COMCO) and the University of Zurich of Applied Sciences (ZHAW). UNCTAD and SECO are currently negotiating a Strategic Framework Agreement which will cover SECO-funded projects in the field of competition law and consumer protection.

PURPOSE

The event will showcase the successful experiences and positive impact of COMPAL in Latin America, including the recently created UNCTAD-SELA working group on trade and competition, how it has assisted young competition and consumer agencies, and the lessons learned for other countries. The meeting will also serve as a forum to explore how COMPAL activities can be expanded to other interested countries.

OUTCOME

1. Sensitization of COMPAL as an innovative and effective platform for capacity-building in the areas of competition and consumer protection policies.
2. Expansion of COMPAL to other regions of the world.

ORGANIZATION

The lunch event will be attended by:

- (i) COMPAL member countries' representatives;
- (ii) Other beneficiary countries
- (iii) SELA Permanent Secretary
- (iv) Civil society (private sector)

AGENDA

Introductory remarks Secretary General of UNCTAD.

- Mr. José Rivera. SELA Permanent Secretary
- Mr. Hans-Peter Egler, Head of the Division for Trade Promotion of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
- COMPAL Programme members
Mr. José Miguel De la Calle, Superintendent of Industry and Commerce of Colombia.
Mr. Luis Diego Vargas, Commissioner of COPROCOM, Costa Rica
Mr. Hebert Tassano, President of the Institute for the Defence of Competition and Intellectual Property (INDECOPI), Peru.
- **Experiences from other countries**
- Ghana
- Indonesia
- Egypt
- Vietnam
- Laos

Panel discussion (60 min)

Moderator: Guillermo Valles, Director of DITC/UNCTAD

“Lessons learnt from COMPAL and other capacity-building programmes in the areas of competition and consumer protection policies, including areas for possible replication”

The way forward: COMPAL and Beyond (15 min)

Presentation by Hassan Qaqaya. Head of Competition and Consumer Policies Branch/UNCTAD

DOCUMENTS

(http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/DocumentList_____6372.aspx)

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