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Sixth session
Geneva, 18 and 19 July 2022

Report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy on its sixth session

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 18 and 19 July 2022

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I. Agreed conclusions

The Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices (Geneva, October 2020),¹

Recalling General Assembly resolution 74/270 of 2 April 2020 titled “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015 titled “Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 70/186 of 22 December 2015 titled “Consumer protection”, adopting the revised United Nations guidelines for consumer protection,

Taking note of the decision of the fifteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Bridgetown, 2021) in paragraphs 56, 62 and 127 (z) that “in the process of transformation, it is fundamental for fair, sound and robust competition and consumer protection policies and enforcement to maintain a robust, level playing field and enhance transparency for all participants, so that market access is not under anticompetitive practices. Ensuring effective competition, including through support in developing and implementing competition policies and through cooperation among competition authorities, paired with robust consumer protection in the market, will help foster economic efficiency, resulting in safer and better products at lower prices for consumers”, that “multilateral dialogue and cooperation are crucial in areas such as the governance of new and emerging technologies, including those related to data management, competition and consumer protection” and that UNCTAD should “continue to assist developing countries to formulate and implement competition and consumer protection policies and laws, facilitate cooperation among competition and consumer protection agencies, conduct peer reviews and foster the exchange of knowledge and best practices, including through multilateral forums, such as the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy and the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, and by contributing to the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conferences to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices and of the revised United Nations guidelines for consumer protection”,²

Reaffirming the fundamental role that consumer protection law and policy plays in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by ensuring access by consumers to essential goods and services, empowering consumers and protecting them from fraudulent and deceptive commercial practices and boosting consumer education to ensure more informed choices,

Welcoming the decisive measures and interventions taken by Governments in the field of consumer protection through coordinated international, regional and bilateral actions to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and attempt to mitigate the negative impact on domestic markets and consumers,

Recognizing that an effective enabling environment for consumer protection and development may include both international and national cooperation and enforcement to deal with cross-border unfair fraudulent and deceptive commercial practices,

Recognizing the need to strengthen the work of UNCTAD in consumer protection law and policy so as to enhance its development role and benefits for consumers and businesses,

Recognizing that preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products and unfair or misleading commercial practices is a priority for UNCTAD member

¹ TD/RBP/CONF.9/9.

² TD/541/Add.2.

States as it can improve consumer confidence and provide more favourable conditions for sustainable economic development,

Recognizing that effective financial consumer protection requires a sound legal and policy framework for financial services that ensures consumers' access to basic payment accounts and delivers financial education, namely on digital means, while regulating the conduct of services providers for responsible lending and safe payment systems, and that oversight and enforcement institutions are needed to ensure that healthy financial markets work for the benefit of consumers,

Recognizing that consumer protection can play an important role in upholding consumer rights in the provision of health services through consumer information and education, the regulation of unfair business practices and the promotion of good business practices,

Noting the important written and oral contributions from consumer protection authorities and other participants that enriched the debate during its sixth session,

Taking note with appreciation of the documentation prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat for its sixth session,

1. *Welcomes* the efforts of member States and other stakeholders in implementing the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection and reaffirms its commitment to providing an annual forum and modalities for multilateral consultations, discussions and exchanges of views between member States on matters related to the guidelines;
2. *Encourages* the continuation of legislative, policy-related and regulatory actions and initiatives by consumer protection agencies in response to and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as coordination and information-sharing at the international, regional and cross-border levels;
3. *Underlines* the direct and positive impact that the adoption of consumer protection policies by member States has on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in reducing inequalities within and among countries and in strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development;
4. *Congratulates* the Government of Thailand for its voluntary peer review of consumer protection law and policy, looking forward to the successful implementation of the policy recommendations and encouraging interested member States to volunteer for future peer reviews of consumer protection law and policy as implemented by consumer protection authorities, including as peer reviewers;
5. *Encourages* member States to fully implement the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products;
6. *Encourages* member States to ensure access for consumers to essential goods and services, such as public utilities and basic health services, with a particular focus on the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers, by engaging with all relevant public and private stakeholders;
7. *Encourages* member States to improve financial consumer protection, especially in relation to financial inclusion, education and literacy, remittances, overindebtedness and digitalization;
8. *Recognizes* the important role of relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, particularly with regard to inclusive consumer protection policies; welcomes the participation of consumer authorities, consumer associations, civil society, business and industry representatives and academia in the deliberations of the sessions of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy; and encourages these participants to present written papers and submissions in advance of the sessions;
9. *Encourages* the continuation of the information-gathering process on the legal and institutional framework for consumer protection, including in particular the development of the UNCTAD world consumer protection map; and invites all member States to participate in its completion and update;
10. *Emphasizes* the importance of regional cooperation in the enforcement of consumer protection law and policy; invites consumer protection authorities to strengthen their national legislative frameworks for international, regional and bilateral cooperation, in the

light of guidelines 79 to 94; and requests the UNCTAD secretariat to continue to explore, gather and promote best practices for international cooperation;

11. *Welcomes* the initiatives carried out by individual member States, UNCTAD and other organizations and networks in building capacity and strengthening institutions in the area of consumer protection; and calls upon all interested parties to work together and identify and strengthen synergies;

12. *Welcomes* the deliberations of the working group on consumer protection in electronic commerce since 2017 and the exchange of information and sharing of experiences among member States, including the current work on misleading and unfair practices, consumer education and business guidance, and cross-border enforcement cooperation; takes note of the report presented to the sixth session; requests the UNCTAD secretariat to incorporate the recommendations of the report into its work; and decides to renew the mandate of the working group;

13. *Decides* to renew the mandate of the working group on consumer product safety, to continue work on strengthening consumer product safety frameworks at the regional and national levels and improving international cooperation to protect consumers from hazards to their health and safety, to further propose practical means for the implementation of the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products and to report on its continued work to the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy;

14. *Welcomes* the revised methodological guidelines for UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies; and decides to discontinue the working group on modalities of UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies until there is sufficient experience in practice to review the revised guidelines;

15. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat to convene a working group on consumer protection and gender, to highlight best practices and to facilitate information exchanges and consultations, led and integrated by member States on a voluntary basis, without financial implications for the regular budget of the United Nations, and to report to the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy;

16. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat, in accordance with guideline 97 (b), to prepare reports and studies as background documentation for the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy on building trust in digital markets through enhanced consumer protection on online platforms;

17. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat to facilitate consultations and the exchange of views among member States on the topic of consumer protection and the transition to clean energy;

18. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat to prepare, for the consideration of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy, an updated review of capacity-building in and technical assistance on consumer protection law and policy, including an impact assessment;

19. *Requests* the UNCTAD secretariat to continue to compile a list of contact persons of consumer protection authorities, to facilitate cooperation in accordance with guideline 87;

20. *Notes with appreciation* the voluntary financial and other contributions received from member States; invites member States to continue to assist UNCTAD on a voluntary basis in its capacity-building and technical cooperation activities by providing experts, training facilities and financial or other resources; and requests the UNCTAD secretariat to pursue capacity-building and technical cooperation activities, including training, and, where possible, to focus such activities on maximizing their impact in all interested countries.

Closing plenary
19 July 2022

II. Chair's summary

A. Introduction

1. The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 18 and 19 July 2022, with physical and remote participation. Representatives from 65 countries and nine intergovernmental organizations, including the heads of consumer protection authorities, as well as six non-governmental organizations, attended the high-level discussions.

B. Opening plenary

2. In her opening remarks, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD stated that, among other challenges, the world was experiencing the most severe global cost-of-living crisis in a generation. Rising consumer prices for basic staples such as food and energy were shrinking household budgets, particularly affecting the poorest and most vulnerable. Families faced difficulties in affording basic consumption needs due to shrinking incomes and rising prices. In this regard, beyond macroeconomic responses, the Secretary-General stressed the importance and renewed relevance of Governments continuing their efforts to protect consumers.

3. The keynote speaker, a Professor of Law, University of Reading, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, advocated embedding technology in consumer law enforcement in the digital age. Enforcers needed to “tool up” to keep up with the rapid roll-out of technological solutions by businesses and to address consumer vulnerability in digital markets. The speaker noted the potential use of technology in speeding up enforcement and improving consumer experiences and, in this regard, highlighted challenges in areas such as data quality and international coordination.

C. Report on the implementation of the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection by member States and relevant stakeholders

(Agenda item 3)

4. In accordance with paragraph 97 (a) of the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy heard reports by member States and relevant stakeholders on the implementation of the guidelines. The panel was composed of the following: State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, Germany; Commissioner for Justice, European Commission; Executive Director, National Institute for the Protection of Consumer Rights, Dominican Republic; and Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, India.

5. The first panellist noted the need for increased international cooperation to address challenges related to climate change and sustainable development. She stressed the role of sustainable consumer policy and stated that developed countries could assume a higher level of responsibility. In addition, she emphasized the need to combine environmental and social policies and the urgent need to act as soon as possible to address climate change.

6. The second panellist detailed the New Consumer Agenda of the European Union, which aimed to address the green and digital transitions. Informing consumers and initiating voluntary collaborations with companies could help during the green transition and restoring consumer trust through financial services and product safety rules could help during the digital transition. The panellist emphasized the importance of international cooperation and welcomed the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products adopted by the Eighth United Nations Conference to Review All Aspects of the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices.

7. The third panellist highlighted the exponential growth of electronic commerce in the Dominican Republic and the need for increased international cooperation to address consumer issues. Challenges included unsafe products, misleading advertising, online fraud, data theft and the lack of dispute resolution. The adoption of an international agreement on cross-border consumer protection could be beneficial in this regard.

8. The fourth panellist stated that electronic commerce posed new challenges and that learning from international best practices had been beneficial in India. The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, served as a regulatory milestone in addressing such challenges and enhancing redress. Ensuring consumers' awareness of rights and access to redress were priorities in India. A global alternative dispute resolution mechanism could be beneficial in this regard.

9. In the ensuing discussion, some delegates presented national experiences of regulatory progress in addressing digitalization in China, Indonesia and Portugal, addressing particular sectors and vulnerable populations. One delegate discussed financial services and highlighted national experience in consumer education and information campaigns in Portugal. Another delegate suggested the creation of a working group on consumer protection and gender. One delegate reiterated the importance of international cooperation. Finally, another delegate highlighted national experiences with regard to children, accessibility for people with disabilities, tourism and telemedicine in Indonesia; and expressed appreciation for the voluntary peer reviews of consumer protection law and policy and the UNCTAD technical cooperation project on "Delivering digital trading infrastructure and online dispute resolution for consumers as means to improve international trade and electronic commerce".

D. Latest developments in legal and institutional frameworks: UNCTAD world consumer protection map

(Agenda item 4)

10. The UNCTAD secretariat presented the UNCTAD world consumer protection map, which displayed information from 104 member States.³ The website, open for submissions from all member States, served as a study of the legal and institutional framework for consumer protection, aimed at providing an updated and comprehensive picture of consumer protection worldwide, identifying trends and benchmarks, as well as challenges, and informing discussions on future work.

E. Report of the working groups on: (a) consumer product safety; (b) consumer protection in electronic commerce; (c) modalities of UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies

(Agenda item 5)

11. The UNCTAD secretariat presented the reports of the working groups. Several experts detailed developments in these areas and welcomed the work carried out by UNCTAD. At its closing plenary meeting on 19 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy adopted agreed conclusions on this agenda item (see chapter I).

³ See <https://unctadwcpm.org>.

F. Modalities for the implementation of the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products

(Agenda item 6)

12. Under the agenda item, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy held one round-table discussion. In opening the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat presented the background document on modalities for the implementation of the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/28). The panel was composed of the following: Chair, Consumer Product Safety Commission, United States of America; National Director, Consumer Protection and Consumption Arbitration National Directorate, Argentina; Chief Executive Officer, Competition Commission, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa; and Director General, Consumers International.

13. The first panellist highlighted that new safety challenges with regard to products were inherently global, requiring global solutions. Products were smart and connected, stored and consumed energy in new ways and had the potential to be controlled from anywhere in the world. These features were coupled with growth in direct-to-consumer international electronic commerce sales and, in this regard, the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products was relevant, as it aimed to end the commercial practice of shipping hazardous consumer goods away from markets in which they could not be sold to markets in economies with limited regulatory and enforcement resources.

14. The second panellist detailed a recent regulation on product recalls. One of the main challenges in this regard was cross-border electronic commerce, which required international enforcement cooperation in areas such as those detailed in the recommendation, as had been addressed under the Organization of American States and the Southern Common Market. Promoting consumer education and business guidance through manuals on good practices was a priority in this regard.

15. The third panellist detailed regional experiences under the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. The Competition Commission had supported members through the enforcement of regulations, technical assistance, the facilitation of memorandums of understanding, cooperation between the Competition Commission and other international organizations, namely UNCTAD, and awareness-raising among business communities and consumers.

16. The fourth panellist detailed work by Consumers International on product safety, which was central to consumer protection and empowerment. In particular, the recent international guidelines for online product safety contained overarching principles, recommendations for Governments and online marketplaces and avenues for complaint and redress mechanisms, as well as for consumer information and education.

17. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of one regional group commended UNCTAD on the adoption of the recommendation on product safety and emphasized the need for more information exchange and dialogue with online marketplaces. One delegate requested UNCTAD to support member States in building capacity in product safety. Another delegate detailed national initiatives in the Republic of Korea to deepen international cooperation through inter-agency agreements. In addition, one delegate noted the need for the harmonization of standards on product safety.

G. Financial consumer protection, including financial education and literacy

(Agenda item 7)

18. Under the agenda item, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy held one round-table discussion. In opening the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat presented the background document on financial consumer

protection, including financial education and literacy (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/29). The panel was composed of the following: Head of Department, Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being, Russian Federation; Director, Consumer Protection, Ministry of Economy, Industry and Commerce, Costa Rica; Executive Director, Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, Zambia; Lead Financial Sector Specialist, Consultative Group to Assist the Poor; Chair, China Silk Road Group; and Secretary-General, Consumer Unity and Trust Society.

19. The first panellist highlighted a new law aimed at preventing unfair business practices in consumer markets, including the financial sector. He stressed the importance of financial literacy and detailed the national strategy and action plan of the Russian Federation in this regard, which paid attention in particular to vulnerable populations. He noted challenges with regard to mobile applications for financial services and welcomed UNCTAD involvement in this area of work.

20. The second panellist stated that financial education and inclusion were needed to address the inherent imbalance between consumers and businesses and underlined the need for information to ensure safe financial services. She detailed national initiatives in Costa Rica to improve financial literacy among consumers and small and medium-sized enterprises, including training for women, refugees and low-income households, as well as engagement with the private sector and civil society.

21. The third panellist highlighted the need for law and policy reviews to address current and potential concerns; to harmonize laws and practices among scattered regulators; and for consultations with stakeholders. He noted that UNCTAD could develop a guiding framework on these issues.

22. The fourth panellist emphasized the need for an ecosystem approach to addressing financial consumer protection issues, which required collaboration between sector regulators, consumer protection regulators, data protection regulators and financial services providers. In addition, capacity-building was required among consumers, regulators and providers and, in this regard, she recommended a customer-centric approach. Finally, the panellist stressed the need for joint work between regulators and providers in measuring consumer outcomes.

23. The fifth panellist addressed how digital technology could be used to empower financial inclusion. He detailed several projects, including the provision of financial services to low-income farmers in China, demonstrating the importance of building trust between stakeholders and the potential of data and digital infrastructure.

24. The sixth panellist detailed national experiences in India in promoting financial literacy and inclusion, highlighting key policies and programmes, including a zero-balance policy for opening a bank account, which helped lower barriers to accessing financial services; an independent fund based on unclaimed deposits and other non-tax sources, which financed consumer protection programmes without raising taxes; and online kiosks for civil services in villages, which helped to improve digital financial literacy.

25. In the ensuing discussion, some experts noted the potential of digital finance. A few experts requested more attention to be paid to poor and vulnerable populations. Some experts welcomed future collaboration with UNCTAD and emphasized the need for international cooperation. A few experts commended the UNCTAD consumer protection map, welcomed support from UNCTAD in technological aspects such as artificial intelligence and reiterated the importance of consumer education and literacy. Finally, a few experts detailed recommendations on policy and regulations and experiences in this regard.

H. Consumer protection in the provision of health services

(Agenda item 8)

26. Under the agenda item, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy held one round-table discussion. In opening the discussion, a consultant detailed findings since March 2020 under the United Nations Development

Account project on strengthening social protection for pandemic response, addressing the following topics: comprehensive social protection; finance and affordability; identity and eligibility; integration of informal sector workers; and development of electronic health. He stressed the need for the universal coverage of social health protection, the mitigation of out-of-pocket spending and consideration for consumers' preferred means of receiving services. The panellist was the Undersecretary, Consumer Protection Group, Department of Trade and Industry, Philippines.

27. The panellist detailed national responses in the Philippines to challenges during the pandemic, highlighting the importance of consumer protection in the health sector and inter-agency collaboration. The Department of Trade and Industry had advocated amending trade policies regarding face masks, assisted other government agencies in ensuring the safe operation of businesses, directed consumer complaints to the appropriate agencies and worked closely with the Department of Health to address rising prices of personal protective equipment and to disseminate health information to the public. The panellist expressed her appreciation to UNCTAD with regard to the Development Account project and welcomed future collaboration on electronic health matters.

28. In the ensuing discussion, one delegate highlighted a national information campaign in Germany to raise awareness of health services and address misleading advertising, as well as an electronic health project on data protection law. The representative of a non-governmental organization advocated paying greater attention to consumer protection in the health sector, including with regard to issues of food and road safety, and stressed the role of UNCTAD in providing technical assistance and enhancing member State capacity to address interlinked issues in consumer protection and health.

I. Voluntary peer review of consumer protection law and policy: Thailand (Agenda item 9)

29. The voluntary peer review opened with a presentation by the UNCTAD secretariat of the main findings and recommendations in the background report on the legal, policy and institutional frameworks for consumer protection in Thailand (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/30). Representatives of the Governments of Mexico and Sweden, as well as the Executive Support to the Vice-Chancellor, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, acted as peer reviewers.

30. The Prime Minister of Thailand underlined the importance of the peer review in updating and improving laws in Thailand, in alignment with the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection. He stressed the need to adapt to the "new normal" and build confidence among consumers and investors, for better economic recovery. He highlighted the role of international cooperation and welcomed the UNCTAD technical cooperation project on delivering digital trading infrastructure and online dispute resolution.

31. In response to a question from one peer reviewer on the functioning and impartiality of the Office of the Consumer Protection Board, the Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Thailand, explained that the Board had a complex role and remained neutral during mediation.

32. In response to a question from another peer reviewer about the roles of case officers, the Permanent Secretary explained their dual duties of acting as agents in mediation processes and as investigators if mediation failed.

33. With regard to a question from another peer reviewer about the coordination of consumer protection policies across agencies, the Permanent Secretary highlighted the overall plan for national consumer protection, which provided guidelines for agencies and convened regular meetings.

34. The peer reviewers provided examples from national experiences. One peer reviewer detailed the powers of the Office of the Federal Consumer Attorney in Mexico, which notified businesses of disputes and could impose fines if mediation was not attended or in case of a breach of the law. Another peer reviewer detailed mediation processes in Sweden, noting that various organizations could host mediation and that consumers could request

impartial mediation through the National Board for Consumer Disputes. One peer reviewer detailed inter-agency coordination in South Africa, highlighting a quarterly voluntary forum for coordination, and advocated developing a single digital system to ease coordination and creating an overall coordination blueprint with guidance from UNCTAD.

35. In the ensuing discussion, one delegate expressed interest in volunteering for a peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Gabon in 2023. One expert reiterated the importance of inter-agency coordination and commended the model in Thailand.

36. The UNCTAD secretariat presented a proposal for a technical assistance project to implement the peer review recommendations, with the overall goal of assisting Thailand in enhancing consumer protection and dispute resolution.

J. Review of capacity-building in and technical assistance on consumer protection law and policy

(Agenda item 10)

37. Under the agenda item, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy held one round-table discussion. In opening the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat presented the background document on the review of capacity-building in and technical assistance on competition and consumer protection laws and policies (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/31–TD/B/C.I/CLP/65). The panel was composed of the following Director General, Competition and Consumer Protection, Ministry of Economy, Employment and Sustainable Development, Gabon; Chair, National Consumer Protection Agency, Indonesia; and International Affairs Coordinator, National Consumer Service, Chile. The panellists expressed their views of UNCTAD technical assistance activities related to consumer protection law and policy in 2021–2022.

38. The first panellist detailed UNCTAD activities in Gabon to build capacity and raise awareness among economic and social actors, stressing the need to develop national laws in line with the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection and international standards and expressing interest in continued cooperation with UNCTAD.

39. The second panellist detailed the main outputs of the UNCTAD technical cooperation project on delivering digital trading infrastructure and online dispute resolution in Indonesia, which had been one of the pilot countries.

40. The third panellist expressed appreciation for the voluntary peer review of the consumer protection law and policy of Chile and detailed a follow-up event held to disseminate the findings and recommendations among stakeholders, which had led to the inclusion of consumer protection in the draft constitution to be put to a referendum in September 2022.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

(Agenda item 1)

41. At its opening plenary meeting on 18 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy elected Ms. Francisca Elizabeth Méndez Escobar (Mexico) as its Chair and Ms. Ana Catarina Fonseca (Portugal) as its Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

(Agenda item 2)

42. At its opening plenary meeting on 18 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy adopted the provisional agenda of the session (TD/B/C.I/CPLP/27), as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report on the implementation of the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection by member States and relevant stakeholders.
4. Latest developments in legal and institutional frameworks: UNCTAD world consumer protection map.
5. Report of the working groups on:
 - (a) Consumer product safety;
 - (b) Consumer protection in electronic commerce;
 - (c) Modalities of UNCTAD voluntary peer reviews of competition and consumer protection laws and policies.
6. Modalities for the implementation of the recommendation on preventing the cross-border distribution of known unsafe consumer products.
7. Financial consumer protection, including financial education and literacy.
8. Consumer protection in the provision of health services.
9. Voluntary peer review of consumer protection law and policy: Thailand.
10. Review of capacity-building in and technical assistance on consumer protection law and policy.
11. Provisional agenda of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy.
12. Adoption of the report of the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy.

C. Provisional agenda of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy

(Agenda item 11)

43. At its closing plenary meeting on 19 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy approved the provisional agenda of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy (annex I).

D. Adoption of the report of the sixth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy

(Agenda item 12)

44. At its closing plenary meeting on 19 July 2022, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy authorized the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur to finalize the report after the conclusion of the session.

Annex I

Provisional agenda of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Report on the implementation of the United Nations guidelines for consumer protection by member States and relevant stakeholders.
4. Latest developments in legal and institutional frameworks: UNCTAD world consumer protection map.
5. Reports of the working groups on:
 - (a) Consumer product safety;
 - (b) Consumer protection in electronic commerce;
 - (c) Consumer protection and gender.
6. Building trust in digital markets through enhanced consumer protection on online platforms.
7. Consumer protection and the transition to clean energy.
8. Voluntary peer review of consumer protection law and policy: Gabon.
9. Review of capacity-building in and technical assistance on consumer protection law and policy.
10. Provisional agenda of the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy.
11. Adoption of the report of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Consumer Protection Law and Policy.

Annex II

Attendance⁴

1. Representatives of the following States members of the Conference attended the session:

Algeria	Nepal
Argentina	Nicaragua
Australia	Niger
Austria	Nigeria
Bahrain	Oman
Bangladesh	Paraguay
Barbados	Peru
Benin	Philippines
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Poland
Brazil	Portugal
Brunei Darussalam	Republic of Korea
Canada	Russian Federation
Chile	Saudi Arabia
China	South Africa
Colombia	Sri Lanka
Congo	Sudan
Costa Rica	Sweden
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Switzerland
Dominican Republic	Thailand
Egypt	Türkiye
Gabon	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Gambia	United States of America
Germany	Uruguay
Haiti	Uzbekistan
India	Viet Nam
Indonesia	Yemen
Ireland	Zambia
Japan	Zimbabwe
Kenya	
Kuwait	
Kyrgyzstan	
Lesotho	
Madagascar	
Malawi	
Mauritius	
Mexico	
Morocco	

2. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the session:

Caribbean Community
 Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
 Commonwealth Secretariat
 Economic Community of West African States
 Eurasian Economic Commission
 European Union
 General Secretariat of the Andean Community
 Latin American Integration Association
 West African Economic and Monetary Union

⁴ This attendance list contains registered participants. For the list of participants, see TD/B/C.I/CPLP/INF.6.

3. The following specialized agencies and related organizations were represented at the session:

International Labour Organization
United Nations Capital Development Fund
World Bank Group

4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented at the session:

General category

ACT Alliance Advocacy to the European Union
Consumer Unity and Trust Society International
Consumers International
Global Traders Conference
International Law Association
World Association for Small and Medium Enterprises
