UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TOURISM

Dubai, 28-29 October 2026

Seventh ARAB COMPETITION FORUM (ACF)

E/ESCWA/CL6.GCP/2026/ACF/Flyer.2

Session 2

Building coherent digital competition policy through regional cooperation

Digital platforms, data-driven business models and online services increasingly operate across borders, while national competition frameworks continue to differ in their legal powers, institutional capacities and enforcement experience. Practices involving platform dominance, access to data, network effects, algorithms and digital mergers may affect several Arab markets simultaneously. When authorities examine these issues separately, they may face limited access to evidence, duplication of work and inconsistent approaches to similar conduct.

This session will examine how regional cooperation can support coherent and effective digital competition policies across the Arab region. It will review recent regulatory developments, including new Arab Business Legislative Frameworks (ABLF) indicators assessing national frameworks for monitoring digital concentrations and imposing preventive obligations on firms with structural market power. The discussion will explore practical forms of cooperation, including shared analytical references, information exchange, peer learning and specialized technical assistance, while taking into account differences in national legal, institutional and developmental contexts.

Note: The session will last 90 minutes. Presentations by the panelists will be followed by interventions from member States and an open discussion.

Topics of discussion

- Recent regulatory developments and findings from the new ABLF indicators on the Arab region's preparedness to address competition challenges in digital markets.
- Approaches to addressing competition challenges in digital markets, including the review of digital mergers that may raise competition concerns but fall below notification thresholds and the use of ex-ante obligations for firms with structural market power alongside traditional ex-post enforcement.

2600484E

- Cross-border exchange of information, market intelligence and analytical tools among competition authorities.
- Strengthening policy coherence across countries with different legal frameworks, institutional capacities and levels of digital-market development.
- Practical steps to strengthen regional cooperation, technical assistance and structured knowledge-sharing on digital competition policy.

Session coordinator



Tarik Alami

Deputy Executive Secretary for Programme Support and Director of the Governance and Conflict Prevention Cluster, ESCWA

Speakers



Nathalie Khaled

Economic Affairs Officer, and Lead of the Economic Governance, Development Planning and Regulatory Modernization Workstream



Willard Mwemba

Director and Chief Executive Officer, Competition and Consumer Commission, COMESA



Noura Salem

Officer in Charge of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) File, Arab Economic Integration Department, General Secretariat of the League of Arab States



Teresa Moreira

Competition Expert, and Former Head of the Competition and Consumer Policies Branch, UNCTAD (virtual participation)