UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF ECONOMY & TOURISM

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Seventh ARAB COMPETITION FORUM (ACF)

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Session 4

Institutional coordination between competition and consumer protection in the digital era

Digital markets increasingly give rise to practices with implications for both competition and consumer protection. Data concentration, information asymmetries, algorithmic practices and digital interface design can affect market contestability, consumer trust, transparency and informed choice. When competition and consumer protection frameworks operate in isolation, enforcement may address only part of the harm and leave important regulatory gaps.

This session will examine how closer institutional coordination can support coherent and effective oversight of digital markets. It will consider different governance models for managing competition and consumer protection mandates, while emphasizing that effective coordination depends not only on institutional arrangements but also on practical mechanisms such as formal consultation, information-sharing, coordinated market studies, joint investigations and aligned enforcement strategies. Drawing on regional and international experiences, the discussion will identify practical approaches for strengthening institutional coordination and supporting fair, transparent and well-functioning digital markets.

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

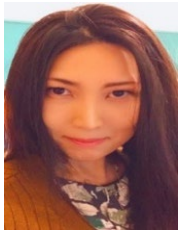
Topics of discussion

- The rationale for stronger coordination between competition and consumer protection authorities in digital markets.
- Approaches to managing overlapping competition and consumer protection responsibilities under integrated authorities, separate agencies and ministerial arrangements.
- Practical mechanisms to improve coordination, including consultation, referrals, information-sharing, joint market studies and coordinated enforcement.

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- The role of cooperation in addressing data concentration, information asymmetries, limited transparency, manipulative digital practices and reduced consumer choice.
- Lessons from regional and international experiences for strengthening institutional coordination in digital markets.

Session coordinator



Akari Yamamoto-Bonenfant

Legal Officer, Competition and Consumer Policies Branch, UNCTAD

Speakers



Diogo Thomson de Andrade

President, Administrative Council for Economic Defense (CADE), Brazil



Irakli Lekvinadze

Chairman, Georgian Competition and Consumer Agency (GCCA), Georgia



Mohamad Cheikhrouho

General Rapporteur, Tunisian Competition Council, Tunisia



Ghada El-Wakil

Director, Department for Combating Monopolistic Practices, Egyptian Competition Authority (ECA), Egypt



Wang'ombe Kariuki

Senior Consultant, Bowmans, and former Director-General, Competition Authority of Kenya, Kenya (virtual participation)