



Antitrust Authorities Launch the “International Competition Network”

New York, October 25, 2001- Today, top officials from international antitrust authorities, including Australia, Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, the United Kingdom, United States and Zambia announced the establishment of the International Competition Network (ICN). The ICN will provide antitrust agencies from developed and developing countries a stronger and broader network for addressing practical competition enforcement and policy issues.

“While markets are increasingly global, competition law is national or regional,” said Charles James, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division at the Department of Justice. “The International Competition Network will enable our respective agencies to improve competition, coordination and law enforcement to the benefit of consumers throughout the world,” added Timothy Muris, Chairman of the US Federal Trade Commission.

The ICN will be project-driven and consensus-based. Its membership is open to national and multinational competition agencies responsible for the enforcement of antitrust laws. It will seek advice and input from the private sector, non-governmental organizations, consumer groups, lawyers, economists and members of the academic community.

Alexander Schaub, Director General for Competition in the European Commission, representing EU Competition Commissioner Mario Monti said: “The ICN is results-oriented. It will focus on improving antitrust cooperation around the world and on enhancing convergence between different authorities. Increased cooperation should help to reduce frictions and result in more efficient and effective enforcement benefiting both consumers and business.”

“I am most gratified that membership in the ICN will be broad. All agencies whether in the developed or developing countries will be invited to participate,” said Giuseppe Tesaro, Chairman of the Italian Antitrust Authority, who will host the first meeting in Italy next year.

The ICN will encourage the dissemination of antitrust experience and best practises to facilitate international cooperation building on the work of other international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

“The ICN will be a practical forum and also function as a bridging forum between developing and developed countries. Members will be able to exchange their experiences and views to effectively deal with competition issues confronting them,” said Mr. Joseph Seon Hur, Director General of Competition Policy Bureau, the Korea Fair Trade Commission.

“The ICN will address complex issues and newly established competition authorities will no doubt benefit from the collective experience of other member agencies,” said David Lewis, Chairperson of the South African Competition Tribunal.

Initially, the ICN will focus on the merger control process as it applies to multinational mergers and on the competition advocacy role of antitrust agencies, particularly in developing and emerging economies.

“The ICN’s focus on competition advocacy will assist in educating the public on the important role competition policy plays in promoting economic development,” said Dr. Fernando Sanchez Ugarte, President of Mexico’s Federal Competition Commission.

“The ICN will focus on substantive and procedural issues including the problems that have arisen with the proliferation of merger review procedures around the world,” said Konrad von Finckenstein, Commissioner of Canada’s Competition Bureau and Chair of the interim ICN Steering Group, “Everyone will benefit from simplified and predictable reviews.”

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