

Note from the Chair for the July 17, 2013 Steering Group Meeting

July 11, 2013

Dear colleagues,

During our Steering Group call next week I would like to provide an update on some of my initiatives as Chair, and I have also asked the Secretariat to report on the status of the Chair selection process. We also will learn more about the Marrakech special project, and hear from the membership working group on membership criteria and current outreach initiatives to African agencies. Also on the agenda is the 2013 ICN Cartel Workshop.

If you would like to include additional items for discussion, please contact the ICN Secretariat (Secretariat.ICN@bc-cb.gc.ca) by Friday, July 12, 2013.

Chair Initiatives

On the call, I will report on feedback received from former ICN chairs and vice chairs on how the ICN might meet the challenges created by the expansion of the ICN's membership and work program. I asked what concrete steps we might consider taking to promote and advocate for the adoption of ICN benchmarks and use of ICN work product. Mr. Takeshima (with input from JFTC Chairman Mr. Sugimoto) suggests working groups prioritize work products with the advocacy and implementation network. Dr. Fingleton has re-emphasized the importance of looking externally and outward, both in terms of topics we cover and audiences we address. On member engagement, feedback received suggests that language difficulties, time differences, or the lack of resources – both in terms of staff and finances – may contribute to a lack of participation. Some options suggested include regional calls for particular time zones, regional workshops, teleseminars, and other regional events.

I also will provide an update on efforts to engage economists more in the ICN. The initial results of the informal survey of participants at the Warsaw breakout session indicate great interest in opportunities for experience sharing with other agency economists. I have asked for more information on COMESA's request to have an ICN representative at the meeting when the draft guidelines are discussed and I hope to hear back in advance of the call.

Chair Selection Process

Under Section 3.4 (iii) of the Operational Framework, in the event the Chair leaves the Steering Group before the end of the two-year term, the Steering Group shall elect a member from among themselves to serve as Chair for the remainder of the two-year term.

The Secretariat circulated an email to Steering Group members on June 26 to solicit interest in in serving as Chair for the remainder of the 2013-2015 term. At the meeting the Secretariat will inform us of the names of the candidates and the selection process moving forward.

Annual Conference

Circulated with the materials for this call is a summary of the results of the Warsaw conference evaluation. The results are largely consistent with our own impressions we shared with one another after the conference – the quality of the sessions and number of topics covered received high marks, as did the UOKiK's organization of the conference. The evaluation also showed considerable demand for more opportunities for questions and discussion. I have included the conference evaluation on the agenda in case anyone has any questions about the results.

We will also hear from the Moroccan Conseil de la Concurrence. You recall that on our February 2013 call, the Conseil presented a proposal for the special project on state-owned enterprises and competition. We will hear further details about the project next week, as well as an update on conference planning.

Membership Working Group

During the Warsaw Steering Group meeting, the French, Moroccan, and South African competition agencies agreed to target outreach efforts in Africa to encourage non-members to join the ICN, and also to encourage prospective and existing African members to attend the Marrakech conference. The KFTC will discuss these efforts as well as report on the development of membership criteria and membership issues for discussion in the Operational Framework Working Group.

I look forward to speaking with you next week.

With best regards,

Eduardo