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Note from the Chair for the Steering Group Meeting on 18 January 2023

Dear colleagues,

I wish you a happy and successful 2023! The year 2022 was very challenging in many ways and we all hope that things will take a turn for the better. It is reassuring to know that there are many great colleagues out there ready to discuss and exchange experience. I would like to thank you all for this trusting cooperation and I am looking forward to working with you in the future.

ICN Social Media and 3D

Let me start by emphasizing the current high level of energy and activity at the ICN. This is clearly noticeable at working group level which is important to ensure inclusiveness. The Advocacy Working Group has introduced bi-monthly calls to involve the membership, at Merger Working Group meetings members and NGAs lively discuss current and future work. This also applies to running projects that are very well received like the Cartel Working Group's back-to-basic project which examines key challenges that cartel enforcers face in their day-to-day work, which very much corresponds to the ICN's hands-on approach. And, of course, this energy can also be seen and felt in the ICN events.

Another area which illustrates the members' enthusiasm is 3D. As discussed, communication plays a crucial role for our virtual network. As a first step to implement 3D we are considering a new ICN LinkedIn account as an additional information channel coordinated with the existing news section on the ICN Website, ICN Twitter and the newsletter. The new annual "check-in" will allow us to confirm members' contact information, which is relevant for e-mail and also for the members list on the ICN website. The first run is planned to start in February. A website overhaul is another element on the way to further improve communication and transparency.

Annual Conference

The Spanish CNMC will host the ICN Annual Conference in Barcelona at La Llotja de Mar from 18-20 October 2023. Cani Fernandez, President of the Spanish CNMC, will share a first conference overview.

On 7 November 2022 the ICN Secretariat circulated a call for expressions of interest to host the 2024 & 2025 ICN annual conferences. The deadline for ICN members to submit expressions of interest expired on 4 January 2023. To remind you, the process of finding a host was a bit difficult for the 2022 conference because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now we are back on track and have received very positive feedback from several agencies. We are in contact with the potential hosts, and at our meeting I will present the status and you will be invited to discuss the options at least for 2024.

Workshops

The Cartel Working Group Co-chairs will report back from the successful workshop in Auckland, New Zealand, which took place from 5 to 8 December 2022.

The 10th ICN Unilateral Conduct Workshop will be hosted by the Japan Fair Trade Commission in Tokyo, Japan, on 7 and 8 March 2023. The workshop website is live at <https://icnunilateralconductworkshop2023.iftc.go.jp/>.

Vice Chair

At the SG meeting in November, the SG members confirmed Lina Khan, Chair of the U.S. FTC, as ICN Vice Chair. At next week's meeting, Lina Khan will share initial thoughts about her area of focus.

SG Member's Hot Topics Presentation

I have invited Cani Fernández to continue the SG members' hot topics discussions. The CNMC's functions are not limited to the enforcement of competition law. It also, inter alia, oversees and monitors economic sectors including gas and electricity. It will be very interesting to learn how the CNMC deals with issues in energy markets. SG members will be invited to comment.

I look forward to speaking with you next week.

Best wishes,

Andreas Mundt