**INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS ON COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY, TWENTY-FIRST SESSION (2023) – UNCTAD**

**Opening Plenary – “General statements: latest developments in competition law and policy”**

**Geneve, Switzerland, 5 July 2023**

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***Introduction***

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good afternoon,

It is a great pleasure to participate in the IGE’s twenty-first session.

First, allow me a word of special thanks to Mrs. Teresa Moreira.

This is a special occasion as this will be the last IGE for Ms. Teresa Moreira in her current capacity as Head of the Competition and Consumer Policies Branch.

Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Teresa Moreira for the impressive results achieved by UNCTAD in the field of competition policy under her tenure.

We are truly grateful for Ms. Teresa Moreira’s vision, leadership, and unparalleled commitment, that have led UNCTAD to develop a dynamic and wide-reaching activity.

***The AdC’s “20 Years, 20 Cities” Outreach Campaign***

I will now share some recent developments in the activity of the Portuguese Competition Authority – AdC.

In the latest years, the AdC has built a solid track-record both from competition enforcement and advocacy perspectives.

We view both dimensions – enforcement and advocacy – as mutually reinforcing.

The AdC’s advocacy activity has actually been feeding the authority’s enforcement pipeline.

Some examples of our advocacy initiatives include the

1. “Guidelines for Business Associations”;
2. “Fighting Bid-Rigging in Public Procurement campaign”,
3. Rounds of seminars with sector regulators and other public entities, and
4. Reports on key topics, such as Digital Ecosystems, Big Data and Algorithms, Anticompetitive Agreements in the Labor Market, Inflation and others.

In the context of the celebration of the 20th anniversary this year, the AdC has launched the outreach campaign “20 Years, 20 Cities”, which aims at promoting a closer interaction between the authority and its stakeholders, in a decentralized way.

With this initiative, the AdC will host, once a month, an informative session in each of the eighteen biggest cities in Portugal, as well as in the Azores and Madeira archipelagos, partnering with local authorities.

The sessions are primarily aimed at the regional and local business communities, but are also addressed to a wider audience, such as consumers, workers, public contractors and academia.

During these sessions, AdC shares information regarding the benefits of competition and the AdC’s activity.

Practical examples of competition infringements and highlights regarding the risks of non-compliance with competition rules are also included.

This campaign has been well-received by local communities and has also caught the attention of different *media* in Portugal, beyond the usual specialized press.

One of the key aspects of these sessions is the possibility to have a close interaction between the AdC and its stakeholders, as these are given the possibility to engage with the authority and raise questions or comments at the end of each session.

This interaction also seeks to encourage tip-offs regarding anticompetitive practices or other types of competition constraints from stakeholders in each of the specific region.

***Conclusion***

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With its “20 Years, 20 Cities” outreach campaign, the AdC intends to strengthen its relationship amongst stakeholders countrywide, both from the public and private sectors, thereby raising awareness to the benefits of competition, to the risks of breaching competition rules and to the authority’s activity.

In fact, only with a widespread perception of the importance of competition policy will the AdC be fully able to pursue its mission.

With the right mix of advocacy and vigorous enforcement, the AdC will contribute to economic growth and to keep markets open, fair and contestable, ultimately benefitting consumers, citizens and the national economy.

Thank you very much for your attention.