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English - Or. English

COUNCIL

Council

**DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL REVISING THE MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER POLICY**

(Note by the Secretary-General)

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Background

1. The Committee on Consumer Policy (hereafter “CCP” or “the Committee”) was created in 1969 to examine questions relating to the development and strengthening of consumer policy in OECD Member countries and to facilitate information exchange and international co-operation in this area. The current mandate of the CCP expires on 31 December 2014 [[C\(2009\)136](#) and [C\(2009\)136/CORR1](#)].

2. The Committee was subject to an In-depth Evaluation (hereafter “IDE”) in 2012, which covered the 2006 to 2012 period. At its meeting on 10 December 2012, the Council noted the IDE report’s assessment (“high” for the evaluation criteria of relevance and effectiveness and “very high” for efficiency) and approved the recommendation and good practices proposed by the Evaluation Committee on 10 December 2012 [[C\(2012\)132](#) and [C/M\(2012\)14](#), Item 215 i)].

3. During the monitoring of the implementation of the recommendation by the Council at its 13 February 2014 session, the Committee reported on a series of actions taken [[C\(2014\)2](#) and [C/M\(2014\)2](#), Item 19], and its mandate highlights the importance of promoting its work more widely (see paragraph 3).

4. The mandate review process has also taken into account the work that the Committee has carried out to strengthen consumer policy making, which is reflected in the *Consumer Policy Toolkit* published in 2010, and the adoption of the *OECD Recommendation on Consumer Policy Decision Making*, in 2014 [[C\(2014\)30](#)]. The Committee discussed its mandate at several meetings and, at its 27-29 October 2014 session, agreed to recommend to the Council that the mandate be revised, to take into account these developments and their impact on the work of the Committee going forward.

5. The revisions notably include:

- i) a simplification and extensive update of the Preamble and the inclusion of the reference to the Resolution of the Council on Partnership in OECD Bodies [[C\(2012\)100/FINAL](#)];
- ii) the restructuring of the mandate to conform with current presentation practice for Level-I Committee mandates, with the definition of an overarching objective that focuses on the empowerment of consumers and their protection, as well as mid-level objectives;
- iii) a more precise identification and elaboration of three mid-level objectives, together with an indication of the activities that would be carried to achieve them.

6. The CCP currently maintains a Working Party on Consumer Product Safety (WPCPS). In accordance with Rule 21 c) of the Rules of Procedure, the Committee evaluated the continuing relevance of its substructure at its April 2014 session [[DSTI/CP/M\(2014\)1](#)]. In its discussion, the Committee recalled that the WPCPS was created in 2010 to implement a ten-point action plan in the consumer product safety area [[DSTI/CP\(2010\)3/FINAL](#)]. This required expertise that, it was concluded, could be best handled by a dedicated body that focused exclusively on safety issues. Since its creation, the WPCPS has made considerable progress in implementing the action plan, which focuses on enhancing information exchange across borders. An *Inventory* of policy and regulatory developments was established in 2011 in support of this objective, and a *GlobalRecalls* portal, which provides a mechanism for sharing recall notices from jurisdictions, was launched in October 2012. Important work on risk assessment, as well as on the tracking and traceability of products, has also advanced.

7. The Committee agreed that the WPCPS continued to provide an effective platform for carrying out work on consumer product safety. It agreed that the proposed programme of work and budget for 2015-2016 would require the continuation of the WPCPS. The Committee noted further that the work of the

WPCPS was highly efficient and effective and that it was benefiting from the active involvement of Members and Partners. Looking forward, the Committee agreed that work on strengthening the impact of the WPCPS' work, within and beyond the OECD, needed to be pursued. Accordingly, the mandate of the WPCPS was revised to underscore the importance of the active engagement of Partners in its work.

8. It is proposed that the mandate for the Committee, as set out in the draft Resolution in the Annex hereto, should remain in force for a period of five years, until 31 December 2019, unless the Council decides otherwise. The draft Resolution would supersede all previous provisions concerning the mandate of the CCP. The Committee would return to the Council to propose a revision to its mandate, should there be any major developments that would warrant such a change.

Proposed Action

9. In the light of the preceding, the Secretary-General invites the Council to adopt the following draft conclusions:

THE COUNCIL

- a) noted document [C\(2014\)144](#);
- b) adopted the draft Resolution of the Council revising the mandate of the Committee on Consumer Policy as set out in the Annex to document [C\(2014\)144](#), which will enter into force on 1 January 2015.

ANNEX

**DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL REVISING THE MANDATE
OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER POLICY**

THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

Having regard to the Rules of Procedure of the Organisation;

Having regard to the Resolution of the Council on Partnerships in OECD Bodies [[C\(2012\)100/FINAL](#)];

Having regard to the Resolution of the Council of 12 November 1969 establishing a Committee on Consumer Policy [C(69)143], whose mandate was last revised and renewed in 2009 [[C\(2009\)136](#) and [C\(2009\)136/CORR1](#)];

Having regard to the recommendation of the In-depth Evaluation of the Committee on Consumer Policy [[C\(2012\)132](#) and [C/M\(2012\)14](#), Item 215 i)];

Recognising the economic and social importance of consumer policies in Members and their close relationship with general economic and trade policies;

Recognising the need to minimise economic costs to consumers and to facilitate the integration of consumer policy considerations into economic and related policy areas;

Recognising the need to improve the functioning of markets globally and to provide effective protection to consumers;

Recognising the vital role that empowered consumers can play in improving economic performance and driving innovation, productivity and competition, and the important role that consumer policy plays in educating and informing consumers;

Recognising the dynamism and growing importance of the digital economy to consumers, and the resulting need to adapt existing policies, and develop new policies, to address emerging issues;

Recognising that the implementation of such policies can be encouraged by information exchanges and co-operation between Members and with Partners, as well as with other international organisations;

Having regard to the proposed revision of the mandate of the Committee on Consumer Policy [[C\(2014\)144](#)];

DECIDES:

A. The Committee on Consumer Policy (hereafter the “Committee”) is renewed with the following revised mandate:

I. Objectives

1. The overarching objective of the Committee is to promote consumer welfare, by developing policies and measures that are aimed at *i)* empowering consumers to make well-informed decisions that benefit their interests, and *ii)* protecting consumers from misleading, deceptive, fraudulent and unfair commercial practices and from unsafe products, while providing effective recourse when problems arise.

2. The mid-level objectives are:

- i) Empowering consumers, by exploring ways to improve education and awareness of issues, by enhancing their knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, and by supporting mechanisms that facilitate dispute resolution and redress;
- ii) Enhancing awareness and knowledge of the challenges facing consumers, by regularly sharing information on issues and developments in the consumer area, and by carrying out research and analysis on key topics, with particular attention to those pertaining to the digital economy, consumer product safety and consumer economics;
- iii) Improving consumer policies and related enforcement measures, by:
 - a) Exchanging information on effective consumer policy and enforcement actions;
 - b) Working together to enhance consumer protection from fraudulent and deceptive commercial practices, within and across borders;
 - c) Developing guidelines to assist governments, businesses and civil society in identifying and addressing consumer issues requiring attention;
 - d) Further developing and applying the *Consumer Policy Toolkit*, with attention to strengthening evidence-based policy making and improving measurement in support of research and analysis.

3. In order to achieve these objectives, the Committee will actively promote its work within and outside the OECD, including with Partners and other regional and international organisations.

II. Co-ordination arrangements

4. In carrying out its work, the Committee shall:

- i) Collaborate closely with other relevant subsidiary bodies of the OECD.
- ii) Consult with stakeholders, including BIAC and TUAC, consumer organisations, such as Consumers International, the private sector, academia and other international organisations, including the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN).

B. The mandate of the Committee shall remain in force until 31 December 2019.