

**Speech by Ato Harka Haroye on the opening session of the National
Training Workshop on Competition Policy and Law
Addis Ababa, October 10 -12, 2007**

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning and welcome to this workshop co-organized by CUTS International of India and Ethiopian consumer protection Association (ECoPA).

Let me start by thanking you for your participation in this very important workshop entitled “Competition Policy and Law” which is part of the project entitled “Capacity building on Competition policy in select countries of Eastern and southern Africa” (referred to as 7UP3 Project). In deed we are honored to host this important training workshop.

As we all know, competition fosters and promotes economic efficiency, and provides consumer welfare. Nowadays the African economy in general and the Ethiopian Economy in particular is witnessing a general tendency towards a strong support to competition policy. Encouraging attention manifested by recent initiatives within these developing countries shows that competition policy is gaining acceptance day by day. This is certainly positive signal that needs to be noted.

Ladies and gentleman

Political will and civil society involvement are indisputably some of the preconditions for competition policy and law to be realistic and effective.

While political support is crucial to the success of competition policy, civil society organizations, and consumer associations in particular are the link between policy makers and consumers in the process of implementation of a competition policy.

Ladies and gentleman

The Federal democratic republic of Ethiopian has adopted competition law since 2003. However, Ethiopia has a long way to go to put in place the effective competition regime. In this regard the role of the consumer associations as to be emphasized consumer associations play significant role in the protection of consumer welfare and in the creation of competition culture.

The Government of Ethiopia strongly believes that this workshop could create a consensus on the possible ways of developing a healthy competition culture in the country.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry works for the promotion and protection of fair competition in the economy, and sustainable business in the country. To

implement these objectives it will make competition policy and law its priorities. Fair competition requires that ethical trade practices are upheld in all sectors of the economy.

By way of conclusion, let me thank those experts who came to Ethiopia to share with us their knowledge and practice.

Finally, by thanking CUTS International and ECoPA for organizing this workshop and by urging the participants to show the utmost diligence and participation in the three days' workshop and by wishing you all the best I declare that this workshop is officially open.

Thank You!!!