

Minister assures revival of the Competition Commission

Lome, 19th September 2008

The Minister for Trade Promotion and Private Sector Development, Hon'ble Guy Madje Lorenzo expressed his government's commitment to reviving the National Commission of Competition and Consumption (NCCC); and was glad that the Association of Togolese Consumers (ATC) has provided the opportunity for the government to do so by initiating a two-year competition and consumer protection project in the country.

He was speaking on the occasion of a national stakeholders' meeting organised by ATC in cooperation with CUTS International, India as part of this two year project entitled, '*Strengthening Constituencies for Effective Competition Regimes in Select West African Countries*'. A main aim of this meeting was to introduce the purpose and anticipated outcome of the project (referred to as the 7Up4 project) to a group of key national stakeholders, and identify a core group of national stakeholders who can contribute meaningfully to the project implementation process.

The Minister asserted NCCC would be endowed with the necessary resources to carry out its duties for the benefit of the Togolese consumers, and the country's economy. He hoped that ATC would work closely with the Ministry to complement the work of the government and the competition agency in this regard. He highlighted the fact that Togo would benefit from the project, by getting exposure on competition-related resources/experts at the international level.

In addition to the Minister, who directly oversees competition issues relevant for the country, the meeting that was held at the National Chamber of Commerce also drew the Director of Commerce and Head of the NCCC. Vice-president of ATC, Jean Aladjou strongly recommended the effective implementation of the competition law of Togo, which had officially entered into force in 1999, but had somehow failed to be effectively implemented.

Most of the twenty-odd participants were quite enthusiastic and took part actively in the discussions, agreeing to be part of the National Reference Group (NRG) to be able to contribute meaningfully to the project and also benefit from it. They were interested in the various stages of the project and welcomed its participatory approach. Many were also very curious to learn from the outputs of similar regional projects in other parts of Africa, and indeed the developing world in order to draw lessons pertinent to Togo. Members of both the print and electronic media participated in the meeting, and assured their support in disseminating the project outputs within the country and the region.
