PAC/COM/NEWS(2002)14
Paris, 7 February 2002

OECD Global Forum on Competition to Focus on Developing Country Needs
Paris, 14-15 February 2002

How to use competition policy as an instrument to assist developing countries to promote economic growth will be the focus of the OECD’s second Global Forum on Competition in Paris on 14-15 February. Experts and officials from more than 60 countries will discuss what action is needed for developing economies to implement effective competition laws and how to promote international co-operation in anti-trust investigations.

Building on the experience of its Competition Committee, the OECD has been providing assistance to non-member countries since 1990, first in central and eastern Europe and then in other regions. The Global Forum on Competition provides capacity building and technical assistance and engages developing countries in informal dialogue on policy issues as part of the OECD’s broader programme of co-operation with governments around the world.

At this meeting, the Forum will provide an opportunity for officials from developing countries to discuss the challenges they face with regard to introducing and implementing effective competition policies. Current studies on the relationship between competition and development will be reviewed, including work by the OECD which finds that competitive product markets are associated with other indicators of economic health such as lower unemployment. Other issues to be addressed will include the role of competition policy in realising the benefits of trade and investment liberalisation.

The Forum will also look at the sort of assistance needed by developing countries in the field of competition policy, and how it can best be provided. The importance of increasing such assistance was underscored at the recent World Trade Organisation ministerial meeting in Doha, Qatar. Co-operation among the competition authorities of different countries will also be addressed. Currently, competition agencies are often unable to co-operate because they are not permitted to share information with their counterparts.

The Chairman of the OECD Competition Committee, Frédéric Jenny, will brief journalists when the Forum closes at 1.15 p.m. on Friday 15 February. The briefing will take place at the OECD, 2 rue André-Pascal, Paris 75016. A buffet lunch for Forum participants will follow, to which journalists are invited.

Forum participants will include representatives from the 30 OECD countries (plus the European Union), the six observers to the Competition Law and Policy Committee (Argentina, Brazil, Israel, Lithuania, Russia and Chinese Taipei) and 27 invited governments: Algeria, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Chile, China, Egypt, Estonia, Gabon, Hong Kong China, Ivory Coast, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Latvia, Malaysia, Morocco, Peru, Romania, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, Venezuela, Zambia and Vietnam. Representatives of regional organisations such as COMESA and UEMOA will also participate. Several non-governmental organisations as well as the OECD’s Business and Industry Advisory Committee and Trade Union Advisory Committee will attend most of the sessions.

For further information, journalists are invited to contact Nicholas Bray in the OECD’s Media Relations Division (tel. [33] 1 45 24 80 90 or nicholas.bray@oecd.org).

JT00120457