FIRST MEETING OF THE OECD ADVISORY GROUP ON PRIVATISATION IN WARSAW

The OECD Advisory Group on Privatisation (AGP), held its first meeting from 8th to 10th July in Warsaw. Hosted by the Polish Ministry of Privatisation, this event brought together officials responsible for privatisation from Albania, Belarus, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Ukraine, as well as experts from OECD countries, other international organisations and the private sector.

The OECD Centre for Co-operation with European Economies in Transition (CCEET) attaches a high priority to privatisation-related activities in the context of its work programme and economic co-operation with Central and Eastern European countries.

The AGP reviewed and evaluated the major trends and development in the area of privatisation. Members noted the importance of programmes for mass privatisation in the context of economic reforms throughout the region and a rapid spread of techniques such as voucher systems, auction methods, and management and employee buy-outs. The AGP, which was created in February 1992, acts as a clearinghouse for new ideas and a forum for the exchange of experiences through its biannual meetings, its publications on privatisation trends and development, and through the informal network of contacts it has created between privatisation practitioners.

The second part of the meeting focused on the role of financial intermediaries in the privatisation process. The discussion dealt with the issues of bank restructuring, the privatisation of banks, the role of the developing capital markets, and the function of investment funds as facilitators and as agents of change at the corporate level. The debate highlighted the urgent need both to restructure existing financial institutions and to foster the creation of new vehicles for savings mobilisation. The final part of the meeting dealt with the programme of future work of the AGP. Participants attached high priority to privatisation and restructuring of commercial banks, which will be discussed at the next meeting to be held in Paris later this year.

END-OF-TEXT