

Saudi Arabia: First meeting of the Arab Competition Network - Objectives and Implications

In brief

On 16 March 2022 in Cairo, Egypt, members of the Arab Competition Network (the "ACN") held their first conference to launch this new network. This alert provides a high-level presentation of the ACN, as well as an overview of its mission and goals.

Background and Goals of the ACN

- The ACN is a product of the efforts and collaboration of the Arab League and the Egyptian Competition Authority. The ACN aims to provide a platform for the Arabian competition authorities to cooperate with each other to combat anticompetitive practices and to support the competition policies in place, all of which in order to strengthen competition in the Arabian markets.
- The ACN aims to achieve the following goals:
 - Allow Arab competition authorities to maintain regular and effective communication, to share and agree on certain concepts and positions;
 - Promote effective cooperation on issues of common concern;
 - Exchange periodically on experiences and updates on the most prominent developments in areas concerning competition;
 - Joint-cooperation between competition authorities on building their capabilities in the field of competition law and policy enforcement;
 - Increase the effectiveness of the joint-cooperation between competition authorities to encourage further growth and free competition within the Arabian markets; and
 - Joint-cooperation in combating the potential obstacles to achieving Arab economic integration.

Actions to be taken by the CAN

In order to achieve its objectives, the ACN agreed to implement the following action items:

- **Periodic Meetings:** Members of the ACN will meet once a year to discuss key competition issues.
- **Combined Research:** Members of the ACN will cooperate to conduct research on the challenges they face with regard to competition law enforcement and to propose solutions via specialized working groups. Topics will include: vertical and horizontal agreements, abuse of dominance and mergers and acquisitions.
- **Training & Capabilities-Building Programs:** Comprehensive training programs tailored to specific needs will be put in place.

- **Knowledge Exchange Programs:** This includes the establishment of an electronic knowledge center aimed at exchanging materials on competition policy enforcement and awareness.

Members of the ACN

The ACN includes the following member States: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Libya, Kuwait, Qatar, Palestine, Oman, Sudan, Yemen, Morocco, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.

Implications and Perspective

While competition authorities in the region have cooperated in the past on certain cases, the ACN intends to take this effort further by creating an online platform institutionalizing and facilitating the authorities' cooperation. The ACN will enable case handlers to raise questions of interest and share information and knowledge. This will increase the competition enforcement risk across the region.

For further details on the Saudi Competition Law and its practical impact on your operations in Saudi Arabia, please do not hesitate to contact our Saudi Competition team.

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