# Day 1 Session I. Competition and economic policy

24-25 May 2022 (ACF) (Muscat, Oman)

3 ARAB COMPETITION FORUM

## Background

Economic policies are heavily interrelated and lead to spillover effects in wider fields. Just like employment and investment policies have an indirect impact on tax and monetary policies, competition is interrelated with other policies. It is a key driver of innovation and cost efficiency, fostering more productive employment and encouraging foreign direct investment. It can contribute to reducing gender inequalities by building a level playing field between women and men; it can drive the shift towards sustainable environments by allowing the entry of new market players with innovative sustainable solutions; and it ensures the quality of goods and services, thus enhancing consumer welfare and savings. Consequently, when designing their respective policies, policymakers should be aware of the many benefits of integrating competition into their programmes. However, clearly defining the objectives of competition policies and matching them with other economic policies can be a difficult task, especially since some of these policies can have conflicting objectives.

During session I, representatives from the private sector, policymakers, reputed economists, and competition experts will discuss how competition policy is linked to other economic policies. The discussion will shed light on the role of competition provisions in advancing sustainable growth and development through other policies, and on how to balance conflicting objectives between competition policy and other policies.

**The following are the main objectives of session I:**

- Establish clear associations between competition policy and other economic and development policies.
- Emphasize the compound effect of competition policy on key development areas, such as employment, trade and gender.
- Highlight the means of progressing towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the Arab region through the integration of competition provisions in economic policies.
- Identify means for balancing conflicts between competition policy and other policies.

## Moderator: Tarik H. Alami, Leader of the Governance and Conflict Prevention Cluster, ESCWA.

## Speakers

- Frédéric Jenny, Chairman of the OECD Competition Committee, Emeritus Professor at ESSEC Paris Business School, Head of the International Committee of the Review Concurrences.
- Mary T. Coleman, Executive Vice President of Compass Lexecon.
- Aïssata Lam, Director-General of the Investment Promotion Agency of Mauritania.
- Abel Mateus, Professor of Economics at New University of Lisbon
- Dhafer bin Awad Al Shanfari, Former Deputy Chairman and Acting CEO of the Omani Competition Promotion and Monopoly Prevention Centre