

CUTS HRC Activity Report

No. 1/2011

PAST PROJECT

Strengthening the Competition Authorities in Vietnam

CUTS Hanoi Resource Centre (CUTS HRC), in cooperation with the Vietnam Competition Authority (VCA), implemented a project entitled, “Strengthening the Competition Authorities in Vietnam”, which was launched in February 2008. Through the strengthening of the Vietnam Competition Administration Department (Ministry of Trade – www.vcad.gov.vn) and better understanding of the benefits of competition among public officials, the private sector, and civil society, the Project aims to contribute to the establishment of a business environment that is conducive to the development of the private sector. The project was supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Swiss Competition Commission (COMCO) and duration was of three years.

The final project meeting would be held in Hanoi on April 04-05, 2011. The aim of the meeting would be to help participants discuss about the final project progress and financial report, plan finalisation and set deadlines of outstanding activities.

ONGOING PROJECT

Study on Unfair Trade Practices in Select ASEAN Countries



The project, a two-year programme lasting from 2011 till 2013, supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, aims at generating and promoting substantive discussions/dialogues in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on issues related to unfair trade practices (UTPs). The project is implemented in five countries of the ASEAN region, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam by CUTS HRC in cooperation with research partners in respective project countries.

The launch meeting of the project was organised in Hanoi, Vietnam on the March 11, 2011. The meeting was hosted by HRC in collaboration with the VCA – Ministry of Industry and Trade of Vietnam. The meeting brought together experts and academicians within and beyond the ASEAN region, as well as partners, advisors and select local government officials working in the field and the press to discuss and exchange views on the nature and prevalence of UTPs in the region, their impacts

on business growth and consumer welfare, and the legal and regulatory framework as well as institutions to deal with them, etc.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Bach Van Mung, Director General, VCA said that it is a big challenge for Vietnam and all ASEAN countries and thus it is important for competition agencies in ASEAN countries to collaborate together and ensure the end of UTPs. He emphasised the importance of lesson sharing, dialogues within the framework of the project which would benefit the relevant stakeholders in the ASEAN countries.

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, emphasised the importance of effective implementation of Competition and Consumer Protection legislations to effectively counter UTPs. He also indicated that CUTS is committed to assisting developing and least developed countries of Asia and Africa to advocate for competition reforms as a means to achieve economic development and consumer welfare.

Pham Thi Queh Anh, Director, CUTS HRC shared that at the ASEAN level, UTPs have remained a low key for a multitude of reasons. Thus, this project aspires to fill this void in the ASEAN region by generating and supporting the discussions/dialogues therein on issues related to UTPs.

A partners’ meeting took place in the afternoon of the day. The meeting includes representatives of CUTS, research partners in each project country, members of the Project Steering Committee, and representative of the donor agency – IDRC, Canada. The partners’ meeting discussed specific issues pertaining to the implementation of the project, such as research methodology, Terms of Reference of perception survey, plan of activities, etc.