

**17TH ICN Annual Conference 2018
CLOSING SESSION PLENARY
(New Delhi, India, March 23, 2018)**

[Check against delivery]

Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications and Railways, Government of India, Shri Manoj Sinha

Mr. Andreas Mundt, Chair,
International Competition Network and
President, Bundeskartellamt

Mr. Juan Pablo Herrera, Chief of Economics,
Colombia SIC

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have reached the end of the ICN Conference today. The Pre-ICN event and the ICN Conference have seen hectic discussions in the Plenaries, breakout sessions, as well as in bilaterals and multilaterals. The activity and the energy level in the Conference was incredibly high. It is perhaps this that has carried us all through, little realizing that we have reached the end. It looks as if the Conference had just started.

2. Before I go further, let me welcome and convey our sincere gratitude to Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications and Railways, Government of India, who has very graciously consented to be with us at this Closing Plenary and address the global Competition Community. Shri Manoj Sinha has competition at his heart. He once said, in reference to the telecommunication sector, "the more healthy the competition is, the better it will be." In his own words – "I believe, that consumer is the king. And any government that

works for the people will agree to this.” We are indeed privileged by your presence Sir here today.

3. There has been a very enthusiastic response to the Conference. The presence of delegates from more than seventy countries is in a way, testimony to the passion and commitment of the agencies and NGAs to the cause of competition. The Conference has witnessed free exchange of experiences, sharing of best practices and facilitation of international cooperation. I would like to thank all the delegates who have come from far off places to attend the Conference, for their active participation and contributions to the deliberations. We do hope that each one of you had the best of time and enjoyed it.

4. During the Conference, the new work products of the ICN were presented. These have always set high standards and have impacted competition law and its application around the world. As Mr Andreas Mundt mentioned - ICN Work Products are the focal point of the ICN and various organisations including the World Bank rely on these products.

5. Discussions in the plenaries of the Working Groups, were insightful and candid. What comes out strikingly is that despite differences in geographies, businesses and content of law, there is a common language of communication when it comes to implementation of competition law in every jurisdiction. One gets a taste of it in the break outs where the minutiae of law are discussed. Plenaries, rich with erudite deliberations, brought better understanding on some of the key issues – for instance, the Advocacy Plenary brought home the point of keeping advocacy at the top for ‘any time’. While in the plenary on ‘Perspectives from the Bench’, discussions began on the issue of coordination and cooperation between

economists and lawyers for effective implementation of the law, a very important comment was made by one of the panellists that as long as the law embeds the economic principles and the framework for implementation is exhaustive *vis-à-vis* its economic objectives, the conflict between legal certainty and more economic approach to the implementation of the law, gets minimised.

6. Mr. Andreas Mundt, ICN Chair and President, Bundeskartellamt has already summed up the proceedings and the deliberations which have taken place in the three days. So I would not like to burden you with any more details. ICN is a virtual network, but the Annual Conference makes it into a people-to-people contact where personal interactions enrich the debates on competition.

7. Friends, today, we feel nostalgic about the day when we registered our interest for hosting the Conference in 2016. The last few months were very engaging in the Commission for making preparations for the Conference as well as for preparing the Report on Special Project on Cartel enforcement. Both required a lot of planning. We are very happy that we could achieve it as planned. My esteemed Member colleagues mentored their teams who in turn put in their best. I must convey our special thanks to all of them. The non-government advisers contributed no less. They worked closely with the Commission for the Special Project. All the officers of the Commission worked long hours for days. And what we have seen and enjoyed is an outcome of their hard work. As a country, as well as a competition agency, we today feel immensely satisfied when we hear that you enjoyed the deliberations and arrangements for the Conference.

8. Friends, Indians are known for their hospitality. We are happy that we could live up to that reputation. We have tried to give our best and sincerely hope that we could meet your expectations. We are indeed fortunate that the weather in the last 4 days has been good, luckily temperatures did not soar high.

9. Personally everybody in the Commission will retain and carry for a long time great memories of these 3 days. We have spent the time together in a spirit of cooperation and care. We wish to thank the Working Group co-chairs and the Steering Group for their cooperation and help in finalizing the agenda and identification of excellent speakers. I would like to thank the Canadian Competition Bureau which works as the ICN Secretariat for all their help. We will also want to thank the Portuguese Authority who shared important tips while passing on the baton to us.

10. Before I conclude, I must thank each one of those who have contributed and assisted us in making this Conference a success –

- the management of Hotel Ashok for their support in organising this event;
- the management of Hotel Imperial where we hosted the dinner for Heads of agencies;
- the Delhi Police for the security arrangements;
- the Airport Authority of India for the facilitation at the airport;
- members of the media;
- and finally all the members of CCI and my team at CCI. My heartfelt thanks to each and every one from CCI.

11. With these words, I now invite Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications and Railways, Government of India, to deliver the Valedictory Speech.

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