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PRESS RELEASE

CARICOM COMPETITION COMMISSION concludes Preliminary Assessment of Market for Liquefied Petroleum Gas in select CSME Member States

The CARICOM Competition Commission (“the Commission”) has concluded a preliminary assessment of a pricing matter related to the market for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG, commonly known as “cooking gas”) in two Member States of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

The preliminary assessment commenced in October 2021 through the Commission’s internal review of the relevant markets in Guyana and Barbados based on information received, which was followed in April 2022 by requests for national preliminary examination reports from the Member States’ national competition commissions. The national competition authorities submitted their respective reports of their national markets in September 2022 and April 2023. On this basis, the Commission has now concluded its preliminary assessment as required under Article 176 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC).

The Commission finds there to be insufficient evidence of both (i) any likely price collusion at the import level in the respective Member States and (ii) cross-border effects. As such, a full regional investigation in the LPG markets of the relevant Member States may not be warranted at this time. In this instance, the relevant national competition authorities may take further action in accordance with their enabling national legislation and keep the LPG market under continued surveillance given the preliminary signs that price collusion could be a plausible concern.

The Commission will in accordance with its monitoring and surveillance mandate, continue its own surveillance of this sector as a safeguard measure, since it is critical that markets for the supply of LPG across the region remain competitive and affordable.

The Commission shall continue its work with relevant national stakeholders of the CSME to support the benefits of Community Competition Policy under Chapter VIII of the RTC. The Commission notes that this will only be fully realized and achieved when all Member States are fully compliant with their Treaty obligations, namely, that (i) competent organs are identified as national competition commissions, (ii) enabling legislation is promulgated for competition control and (ii) these national commissions are empowered to collaborate and cooperate with the Commission.

Fair competition in markets is the responsibility of all. If you have evidence of a harmful potential anti-competitive business conduct to the region or have concerns of regional competition or consumer protection conduct, write us competition@ccc.sr, visit us at www.caricomcompetitioncommission.com, Facebook or LinkedIn.

CARICOM Competition Commission. **JULY 20, 2023**
