Consumers in the developing world are either offline or being ripped off - Consumers International has joined a global coalition aiming to tackle this issue.

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) - which launches its website today - is an international initiative made up of over 30 private, public and not-for-profit organisations, all working towards two shared goals:

1. To create the conditions for open, competitive and innovative broadband markets
2. To achieve the UN target of entry level broadband priced at less than 5% of average monthly income

The key barriers to affordability and universal internet access will be debated in a panel discussion - ‘Innovation, Policy and Regulation to Increase Penetration’ at the A4AI launch event; part of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation’s annual forum in Nigeria, on 7 October 2013.

Onica Makwakwa, Head of CI Office for Africa participating on the panel says:

“This is an extremely important initiative for consumers around the world who have been shut out of the Internet revolution. For instance, Africans are paying more than anyone else in terms of Internet speed per dollar – and this is crippling their engagement in the digital age.”

Limited internet access in the developing world is a key consumer rights issue linked to our 2014 World Consumer Rights Day theme – Consumer Rights in the Digital Age.

Consumer Rights in the Digital Age is a priority programme for CI.