



REMARKS BY
COMPETITION AUTHORITY OF KENYA BOARD CHAIR,
MR. SHAKA KARIUKI AT THE 11th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM
ON COMPETITION LAW AND POLICY

17th OCTOBER, 2024

NAIROBI

Mr. David Kemei, Director-General, Competition Authority of Kenya

Prof. Reena das Nair, Executive Director, CCRED

Mr. Boniface Makongo, Director Competition, COMESA Competition Commission

Distinguished Guests

Standing with All Established Protocols

Good morning ladies & gentlemen,

1. I warmly welcome you this morning to the 11th Annual Symposium of the Competition Authority of Kenya, which is taking place over the next two days. This annual meet-up provides a platform to interact with stakeholders and collate your views on our enforcement

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and policy actions, which then inform our regulatory approach. This is especially so for novel issues in our marketplace such as the digital economy.

2. Furthermore, the Symposium presents a unique opportunity for newer agencies across Africa to build capacity and exchange knowledge on effectively enforcing competition laws. It is on this basis that we are holding this symposium in conjunction with the Centre for Competition Regulation (CCRED) from the University of Johannesburg and the COMESA Competition Commission (CCC).

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. Our cooperation with the CCC is instrumental in promoting regional integration, trade, and commerce, all of which are crucial for economic growth across the region. Working closely with the CCC strengthens our ability to mitigate competition infringements with cross-border effects, ensuring that businesses operate in a conducive environment that benefits both consumers and investors.
4. We are also aware that regulation and research are a cogwheel that ensure attainment of optimal decisions or effective regulatory regime. It is with this realization, that the Authority prioritizes collaboration with institutions of higher learning like CCRED in our strategic plan. By fostering partnerships with academia, we are better equipped to generate data-driven insights and solutions that contribute to competition regulation. Indeed, over the years we have partnered with different institutions of higher learning, a strategy that has enabled us generate actionable insights that have enhanced our mandate delivery.

5. At last year's Symposium, our stakeholders challenged us to turn our attention to digital markets, an area that is rapidly evolving and growing in significance. **I am delighted to announce that we have completed and published a study on Food Delivery and Groceries Platforms.** This study revealed critical concerns, such as the need to review the Authority's powers to regulate the digital markets, stronger safeguards for consumer data, implementation of effective complaint-handling mechanisms, and development of self-regulation tools. These findings point to an urgent need for action to enhance consumer welfare in the rapidly evolving digital marketplace.
6. Today, we are prioritizing emerging areas in competition regulation that have a direct impact on a majority of our consumers. Discussions on sustainability, food, and agriculture are particularly relevant. These sectors touch the lives of millions, and it is crucial that they operate within a framework that promotes competition and economic prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. I am pleased to inform you that Kenya, alongside South Africa, is co-chairing a special project within the International Competition Network that focuses on food and agricultural markets. Through this initiative, we have advanced proposals highlighting the importance of research and price monitoring, collaboration with regional agencies to tackle cross-border issues and pro-competitive policies by government and other policymakers to promote a pro-competitive

marketplace. These efforts will help us better advise policymakers across our continent on the need for pro-competitive policies that enhance consumer welfare and economic resilience.

8. As we address these emerging issues, we also acknowledge the importance of revisiting our regulatory frameworks. The need to create resilient regulations that address new market dynamics is clear. Issues such as abuse of superior bargaining power and strategic market position require vigilant oversight to ensure that businesses do not exploit their dominance at the expense of smaller market players or consumers. Many of you here have participated in and given your input in the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which seeks to streamline and enhance the Authority's mandate delivery. We are grateful for such contributions as they ensure that the industry contribution is considered in law and policy development.
9. I take this opportunity to recognize and appreciate the contributions of participating agencies and all other partners who have supported the Authority in this journey. Your continued collaboration is vital to our shared success. I also thank those in the room who participated in the three-day workshop which ended yesterday, the attendees, facilitators and the organizers.
10. We appreciate the support extended to the Authority by the National Treasury for the resource and technical support. As we move forward, we remain committed to continuous engagement with our stakeholders. It is only through open dialogue and collaboration that we can ensure our strategies and actions are aligned with your needs. Together, we will continue working towards a competitive and fair marketplace that benefits all.



Thank you, and I look forward to fruitful discussions and continued and stronger partnerships in our continent.

