



competition commission
south africa

MEDIA RELEASE

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SA AND MAURITIUS COMPETITION AGENCIES JOIN FORCES TO STRENGTHEN COMPETITION, LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Competition Commission of South Africa has this morning, 13 October 2016, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Competition Commission of Mauritius. The MOU will remain in force for a period of three years.

According to the MOU, cooperation may include the following activities in the field of competition law, enforcement and policy:

- (a) Providing the fullest mutual assistance possible in investigations or enforcement proceedings pertaining to violation of any laws or regulations under the scope of this Agreement;
- (b) Sharing experiences in the practical enforcement of competition law;
- (c) Exchanging views on substantive competition policy issues;
- (d) Joint work on the development of scientific and methodological research in the field of competition law enforcement and policy;
- (e) Rendering of technical assistance and exchanges of expert studies;
- (f) The exchange of non-confidential information;
- (g) Staff exchanges; and
- (h) Any other areas of cooperation that may be jointly decided upon by the Parties.

The signing of the MOU took place on the sidelines of the African Competition Forum's (ACF) Biannual Conference held on the Indian Ocean Island.

South Africa was re-elected as the Chair of the ACF and Mauritius as the Vice Chair during the Conference. Morocco was elected as Secretary and Botswana as Treasurer. Other members of the ACF include Egypt, Gambia, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia.

"The ACF provides a forum through which African competition agencies cooperate, share information, coordinate enforcement policy, develop capacity and build consensus towards sound competition policy," said Mr. Tembinkosi Bonakele, Chair of the ACF.

Mr. Bonakele, also the Competition Commissioner in South Africa, cited the longstanding relationship of friendship and support between the two countries upon signing the MOU.

"It has been five years since the ACF held its inaugural conference in Nairobi. Since then we have grown from 20 members to 34, and we look forward to receiving more members as the numbers of competition authorities in Africa grows rapidly," said Mr. Bonakele.

Speaking about the importance of competition policy, he added: “The core goals of competition policy – ensuring consumer choice, innovation and lower prices in markets – help to alleviate poverty and enhance inclusive economic growth, development and consumer welfare. This in turn has a positive impact on investment, productivity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Thus, one of the outcomes of healthy competition – poverty alleviation – is also at the heart of the ACF’s efforts”.

The ACF’s activities include capacity building and in the last five years over 300 participants from 32 competition agencies participated in internationally presented workshops relating to bid-rigging, investigation skills, research skills and strategic planning, among others.

“Currently the ACF is running a cross-country sector research project involving 14 ACF members, looking into markets in telecommunications, construction, cement, fertilizer, liquefied petroleum gas, pharmaceuticals and private healthcare,” Mr. Bonakele told delegates.

He said the study will be completed in April 2017: “Cross-country studies like this enable useful comparisons to be made between countries and the development of a deeper understanding of cross-border markets”.

“Regional integration is taking place in Africa and competition is integral to this. Negotiations for both the Tripartite Free Trade Area between SADC, COMESA and the East African Community and the Continental Free Trade Area have begun... we expect outcomes that would enhance competition enforcement in domestic markets and regionally,” concluded Mr. Bonakele.

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Ends.