



**competition commission**  
*south africa*

**Media Statement**

**For Immediate Release**

**31 August 2022**

**SPEAKERS CALL FOR FIRM COMPETITION REGULATION DURING 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL COMPETITION LAW, ECONOMICS AND POLICY CONFERENCE**

Today, 31 August, various speakers at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Competition Law, Economics and Policy Conference 2022 emphasised the need for greater competition regulation to help drive sustainable economic growth and effective consumer protection.

Welcoming delegates to the conference held in Sandton, Johannesburg, outgoing Commissioner Tembinkosi Bonakele said the commission's functions go beyond enforcing competition laws and included public interest issues like creating and saving jobs, as well as empowerment. He highlighted how the regulator used market inquiries to tackle priority issues like rising essential food prices, the high cost of data, and digital markets to impose remedial action, including divestiture, and other interventions that promote competition.

These inquiries, said Commissioner Bonakele, continue to have a ripple effect and positive impact on the markets. In reference to the Online Intermediary Platform Market Inquiry, Commissioner Bonakele said the Commission recognised that to position South Africa's digital markets for inclusivity and growth, the Inquiry needed to identify market features that had adverse effects on competition amongst platforms and between businesses using these platforms.

Another focus area for the Commission was eradicating cartel conduct from the South African economy using both enforcement and advocacy initiatives.

Delivering the keynote address, Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC) Ebrahim Patel commended the work of the Commission and the impact it has had not only on the country's economy but also on promoting greater inclusivity in all spheres of business and small-and-medium enterprises.

Minister Patel said discussions are currently underway on how competition protocol can best deal with cross-border cartels and the challenges posed by global online services.

The Minister also indicated how by February 2023 or sooner, the DTIC will publish a set of regulations in terms of the Competition Act setting out guidelines on how the department should work with merging

parties. Furthermore, he announced that the department will today gazette a draft notice on its proposed service for new block exemptions for small and medium enterprises.

“The enterprises will be exempted from certain categories of agreements or practices in the application of sections of the Competition Act to enable collaboration between small and medium enterprises, which would otherwise contravene the Act,” said Minister Patel.

Commissioner Bonakele thanked Minister Patel for his continued support of the work of the Commission and for elevating its status and broadening its influence over the years. “Without his unceasing efforts and his focused attention on the work of this agency, we would not have achieved the many outcomes now evident in the marketplace. Minister Patel had a vision for the Commission that was sometimes beyond the bounds of my imagination, but he consistently nudged us in that direction, challenging us to move forward and test the boundaries,” said Commissioner Bonakele, adding that: “Not only that but he always brought his time and resources to the table for us to draw from”.

Gathering under the theme: **“Effective Competition Law Enforcement and Policy Development for Sustainable, Growing and Inclusive Markets”**, speakers on the first day of the conference included competition law doyen, Professor of Trade Regulation at New York University School of Law, Professor Eleanor Fox, South African Federation of Trade Unions, General Secretary Zwelinzima Vavi and DTIC Deputy Director General Tanya van Meelis.

The conference continues tomorrow with various discussions on building state institutions, the role of competition regulation in promoting inclusivity for employees and firms, digital markets, and characterizing (horizontal) agreements between competitors. The programme kicks off with incoming commissioner Doris Tshepe in conversation with retired Judge Dennis Davis.

To follow the discussions at the conference, click [here](#).

**[ENDS]**

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