



ECOWAS REGIONAL COMPETITION AUTHORITY
AUTORITÉ RÉGIONALE DE LA CONCURRENCE DE LA CEDEAO
AUTORIDADE RÉGIONAL DA CONCORRÊNCIA DA CEDEAO

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INAUGURAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE ECOWAS REGIONAL COMPETITION AUTHORITY (ERCA)

THEME

Competition Policy and Market Integration in ECOWAS: Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities

PROGRAMME

Duration: 3 days

08:30 – 09:00: Registration of Participants

09:00 – 10:00: Official Opening Ceremony

- Introductory Remarks by the Commissioner of Economic Affairs and Agriculture
- Address by the President of the ECOWAS Commission
- Opening Address by the Minister of Trade, Industry, of the Republic of Sierra Leone
- Opening keynote by H.E. Mr. Adama Barrow, The President of the Republic of The Gambia
- Cultural events / Official Group Photograph

10:00 – 10:30: Break/ Networking

DAY 1 – Institutional Framework and Regional Cooperation

10:30 – 11:20: High-Level Opening Panel: Competition Policy as a Pillar of Regional Economic Integration: Issues, Perspectives and Opportunities

Moderator: Dr. Juliette Twumasi-Anokey, Chairperson ERCA Council

Panelists (3): Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, ECOWAS Commission; Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment of The Gambia; Prof. Eleanor Fox, professor emerita at New York University School of Law

11:20 – 13:00: Plenary Session 1 - Regional and Cross-Border Cooperation in Competition Enforcement

Moderator: Saïd Kechida, Competition Expert, OECD Competition Division,

Keynote Address (10 mins): Strengthening Cross-Border Enforcement Mechanisms

Speaker: Dr. Simeon Koffi, Executive Director of ERCA

Panel Discussion: Coordination tools, institutional asymmetries, data sharing

Panelists (4): Dr. Troy Waterman, Executive Director of CARICOM Competition Commission, Dr. Willard Mwemba CEO of CCCC; Mr. Malick Diallo AfCFTA Head of Competition Division; Mr. Sudesh Puran, Head of Investigation of Competition Commission of Mauritius

13:00 – 14:15: Lunch Break

14:30 – 15:30: Plenary Session 2 - Harmonisation of National and Regional Competition Frameworks

Moderator: Prof. Bashiru Njie, Executive Secretary of GCCPC

Keynote Address (10 mins): Harmonisation of Competition Laws in Africa

Speaker: Mr. Tunji Bello, Executive Vice-Chairman, FCCPC

Panel Discussion: Alignment of national frameworks, Challenges of convergence, International best practices

Panelists (5): Mr. Gaye Sowe, Director of Legal Affairs of ECOWAS Commission; Dr. Seydou Sacko, Competition Expert (Fmr. ECOWAS Commission Officer in charge of competition), Prof. Alban Ahouré, Commissioner of Côte d'Ivoire National Competition Commission; Mr. Melaine Tchokponhoue, Director of Competition – UEMOA, Mrs. Annie L. Nyama Ortiz, Director of Trade and Competition CEMAC

15:30 – 16:30: Breakout Group Sessions

Group 1: Harmonisation of Legal Frameworks

- *Chair:* Mr. Adama Diomande - ERCA Council member
- *Speakers (3):*

Group 2: Governance and Independence of Competition Authorities

- *Chair:* Prof Festus Okechukwu Ukwueze, Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Nigeria
- *Speakers (3):* Mrs. Thembelihle Dlamini, Legal Adviser and Company Secretary at Eswatini Competition Commission, Call for papers (2)

Group 3: Regional Cooperation and Information Exchange

- *Chair:* Mr. Yahya Samateh, Head of Competition and Economic Research Division, ERCA
- *Speakers (3):* Call for papers

Group 4: Strengthening Technical and Operational Capacities

- *Chair:* Mr. Miguel Semedo, Chairman of Cabo Verde Competition Authority
- *Speakers (3):* Call for papers

16:30 – 17:15: Report Back from Working Groups

17:15 – 17:30: Summary of Day 1

DAY 2 – Competition, Market Transformation and Strategic Sectors

09:00 – 10:00: Plenary Session 3: Competition Policy and Regional Value Chain Integration

Moderator: Ms. Sonia Plaza, Program Manager, World Bank

Keynote Address (10 mins): Competition as an Enabler of Integrated Markets

Speaker: Dr. Mor Bakhoun, ERCA Council Member

Panel Discussion: How competition policy reduces market fragmentation; The role of competitive markets in strengthening regional production systems; Linking competition enforcement with trade facilitation and industrial development; Why open and contestable markets are essential for attracting investment into regional value chains.

Panellists (4): Prof. Bamba N'galadjo Lambert, Fmr. Commissioner of Macroeconomic Policy of the ECOWAS Commission; Mr. Makhfou Mahecor Diouf, Competition Division of African Development Bank, TAF Global, UNIDO

10:00 – 11:15: Plenary Session 4: Competition in Digital Markets: Emerging Challenges and Regulatory Responses

Moderator: Dr. Chilufya Sampa, Expert at Samba Centre and Fmr. Executive Director of Zambia Competition Authority

Keynote Address (10 mins): Competition Enforcement in the Digital Economy

Speaker: Mr. Babatunde Irukera, Fmr. Executive-Vice Chairman of FCCPC, Simon Cooper, partner.

Panel Discussion: Digital platforms and market power, Fintech and e-commerce, Data governance and competition, Innovation and consumer welfare.

Panellists (3): Mr Yongama Njisane, South Africa Competition Commission; Qgroup; Mr. Leonard Ugabajah, ERCA Council member, Dr. Vellah Kigwiru, Doctoral Research Fellow

11:15 – 11:45: Coffee Break

11:45 – 13:00: Plenary Session 5: Competition Enforcement in Strategic Sectors

Moderator: Mr. Appiah Kusi Adomako, West Africa Director, CUTS International,

Keynote Address (10 mins): New Challenges in the Regulation of Strategic Markets

Speaker: President of ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)

Panel Discussion: Telecommunications, Energy, Transport, Agribusiness, Health

Panellists (5): Charles Ndiaye, Ag. President of EREDA, PURC of Ghana, Mr. Roger Koffi, Head of Dispute Resolution Department, ART Côte d'Ivoire, Dave Anderson, Office Managing Partner- BCLP

13:00 – 14:30: Lunch

14:30 – 16:00: Sectoral Breakout Sessions

Group 1: Addressing competition challenges in the digital economy and platform-driven markets

- *Chair:* Dr. Vellah Kedogo Kigwiru, Research Fellow - Hochschule Für Politik, Technical University of Munich School of Governance
- *Speakers (3):* Call for papers

Group 2: Strengthening productive integration and cross-border trade through competition policy

- *Chair:* Mr. Lawrence Bassie, CEO NCPC, Sierra Leone
- *Speakers (3):* Call for papers

Group 3: Ensuring effective competition in heavily regulated or concentrated sectors

- *Chair:* Prof. Namuano Dias, Legal Practitioner, Francis Services SARL, Guinea Bissau
- *Speakers (3):* Mr. Njogou Bah, CEO PURA Gambia, Call for papers (2)

Group 4: Addressing Market Concentration and Barriers to Entry

- *Chair:* Mr. Baboucarr Ceesay, Director of Competition, GCCPC
- *Speakers (3):* Call for papers

16:00 – 17:15: Report Back from Working Groups

17:15 – 17:30: Summary of Day 2

DAY 3 – Reforms, Compliance, and Effective Implementation of Competition Law

09:00 – 10:00: Plenary Session 6: - Effective Control of Market Power: Merger Review and Abuse of Dominance in Practice

Moderator: Mr. Isiekwuena Ikem, Managing Partner - Simon Cooper

Keynote Address (10 mins): Reforms Required to Strengthen Competition

Speaker: Prof. Marek Martyniszyn Chair of Competition Law and Policy - Queen's University Belfast, School of Law,

Panel Discussion: Merger control standards and economic assessment; Abuse of dominance: pricing, exclusionary practices, and platform dominance; Remedies and structural vs behavioural interventions; Challenges in proving market power in dynamic markets; Case experiences from different jurisdictions

Panellists: Mr. Boniface Makongo, Director of Competition COMESA CCC, FCCPC, Ms Stellah Onyancha Ag. Registrar EACCA, Dr. George K. Lipimile, Fmr. CEO of COMESA Competition Commission

10:00 – 11:00: Plenary Session 7: Ensuring Compliance and Legal Certainty in Competition Enforcement

Moderator: Mrs. Mariana Tavares, Lawyer - Antas da Unha Ecija

Keynote Address (10 mins): Predictability, transparency, and how firms and advisors navigate competition rules

Speaker: Mr. Wangombe Kariuki, Senior Consultant - Bowmans

Panel Discussion: Compliance programmes and corporate governance; Role of legal advisers in preventing anti-competitive conduct; Procedural fairness and rights of defense; Consistency of enforcement decisions; Settlement procedures, leniency, and cooperation tools

Panelists: Michael James Curie, Primero; Emmanuelle REILLE, GIDE LOYRETTE NOUEL, Gabriel Ambrosio Umabano, President of the Gambia Bar Association

11:00 – 11:20: Coffee Break

11:20 – 12:20: Plenary Session 8: Perspectives on Competition Enforcement: Bridging Regulators, Businesses and Legal Practitioners

Moderator: Sandya Booluck, Executive Competition, ENS

Keynote Address (10 mins): A multi-stakeholder dialogue on how competition law is experienced in practice

Speaker: Mr. Vivien Terrien, Vice-President of Autorité de la Concurrence France

Panel Discussion: Business perspective: regulatory burden vs predictability, Lawyers' perspective: clarity of rules and enforcement procedures, Regulators' perspective: enforcement challenges and market realities; Building trust between authorities and market participants; Reform priorities to improve effectiveness and cooperation

Panelists (4): Ignace Mossou Niamkey, Regional Director Legal & Ethics of Olam group, Mr. Aminou Akadiri, Executive Director of FEWACCI¹; Carin Smaller, Executive Director Shamba Centre; Dr. Ken Ukoha, President of National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANT)

12:20 – 13:20: Plenary 9: Strengthening Judicial Enforcement of Competition Law for Fair and Competitive markets.

Moderator: Dr. Julius Spencer, Fmr. Minister of Information, Communication, Tourism and Culture of Sierra Leone

Keynote address (10 mn): How courts interpret and apply competition rules to address anti-competitive practices such as cartels, abuse of dominant positions, and other market distortions that undermine fair trade and consumer welfare.

Speaker: Prof. Dennis Davis, Emeritus Professor at the University of Cape Town, Fmr President of the Competition Appeal Court, South Africa

Panel Discussion: Examining how courts understand and apply core competition principles such as cartels, abuse of dominance, and mergers; Addressing the challenges of assessing complex economic and technical evidence in competition cases, Balancing independent adjudication with effective coordination between regulators and the courts

Panelists: Nnamdi Dimgba, Justice of the Court of Appeal, Nigeria; ECOWAS Court of Justice; Prof. Frederic Jenny, Emeritus Professor of Economics, ESSEC Business School; Yves Kenfack, UNCTAD

13:20 – 13:50: Closing Panel

The Future of Competition Policy and Market Integration in ECOWAS - Priorities for Action

Moderator: Dr. Francisca Kusi-Appiah, Vice-Dean, School of Law, University of Professional Studies, Accra, Ghana

Introduction (5 mins): Key Messages from the Conference

Panel (Key lessons from the conference and emerging consensus; Priority reforms for strengthening competition enforcement in ECOWAS; Enhancing cooperation between ERCA, national competition authorities, and sector regulators; Building effective institutions, technical capacity, and compliance cultures; Competition policy as a driver of regional integration, investment, and economic transformation; The ERCA roadmap: immediate, medium-term, and long-term priorities

Panelists (3): Ms. Teresa Morera, Fmr. Head of UNTACD Competition Division; Prof. Frederic Jenny, Emeritus Professor of Economics, ESSEC Business School; Dr. Simeon KOFFI, Executive Director of ERCA

¹ Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry

13:50 – 14:15: Official Closing Ceremony

- Conference Declaration by the Executive Director of ERCA
- Address by the Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture
- Remarks by the Minister of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration, and Employment

14:15 – 15:00: Lunch

15:00 – 17:00: Cultural and Tourist Site Visit

End of Conference

