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FOSTERING COMPETITION IN AFRICA

THE AfCFTA INAUGURAL CONFERENCE ON COMPETITION POLICY AND LAW

*Theme: Harnessing Competition as a
Catalyst for African market integration*

19–20th May 2026

Lome, Togo – Hotel 2 Fevrier

PROGRAMME

ON THE
MARGINS OF

**BIASHARA
AFRIKA 2026**

LOMÉ - TOGO



A joint initiative of the **AfCFTA Secretariat**, the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** and the **European Union (EU)**



DAY 1 – 19 MAY 2026

08:00 – 09:00	REGISTRATION & WELCOME COFFEE
09:00 – 10:30	<p>OPENING SESSION</p> <p>Opening Remarks by:</p> <p>Mr Kossi Tenou Minister of Commerce, Handicrafts, and Local Consumption of Togo</p> <p>H.E Wamkele Mene Secretary-General of the African Continental Free Trade Area</p> <p>Ms Theresa Ribeiro Executive Vice-President for a "Clean, Just, and Competitive Transition" (tbc)</p> <p>Mr Frantisek Ruzicka Deputy Secretary-General of the OECD</p> <p>Dr Willard Mwemba CEO COMESA Competition and Consumer Commission</p> <p>Mr Simeon Koffi Director General, ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority</p> <p>Ms Stellah Onyancha Ag Registrar, EAC Competition Authority</p>
10:30–10:45	COFFEE BREAK & OFFICIAL PHOTO
10:45 – 12:30	<p>SESSION I: The triangle of policies – competition, trade, and industrial policy in Africa</p> <p>Africa's development path relies on active industrial policy to build productive capacity and nurture strategic and infant industries, while the AfCFTA Competition Protocol, regional and national laws discipline anti-competitive conduct by firms and public entities. Trade policy adds a third dimension: tariffs, non-tariff measures to shape the competitive landscape in ways that may cut across competition principles. This session examines how competition, trade policy and industrial policy interact in practice: where they reinforce each other, where tensions arise, and how conflicts can be managed. Drawing on case studies from relevant priority sectors, as well as experiences from African countries and regional bodies, the discussion will focus on practical approaches that are workable for African economies and consistent with the AfCFTA framework. The session will include a discussion of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether (or when) the goals of competition policy, trade policy and industrial policy are consistent and are there areas of conflict? • Should trade policy and industrial policy be used to promote greater harmonisation of competition policy across jurisdictions in Africa and beyond? • Are there practical principles to illustrate how competition, trade and industrial policy tools can be coordinated under the AfCFTA? <p>Keynote Address by Prof. Eleanor M. Fox, Walter J. Derenberg Professor of Trade Regulation, New York University School of Law;</p> <p>Moderator: Mr Nicolas Pinaud, Deputy Director Financial and Enterprise Affairs OECD</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <p>Ms. Doris Tshepe, Commissioner, South African Competition Commission (tbc)</p> <p>Prof. Mor Bakhoum, Senior Research Fellow, Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition, Munich; Co-author, Making Markets Work for Africa</p> <p>Mr. William E. Kovacic, Professor of Law and Director of the Competition Law Center, George Washington University (tbc)</p> <p>Mr Remi Lang, Officer in Charge Competition and Consumer Protection Branch UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD)</p> <p>Mr. Mohamed Ali, Director Trade in Goods and Competition AfCFTA Secretariat</p> <p>Mr Ousmane Fall, Acting Director Industrial and Trade Development Department African Development Bank (tbc)</p> <p>Ms. Denisse Pierola/Mariem Malouche World Bank Group (tbc)</p>

12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH BREAK
13:30 – 15:00	<p>SESSION 2: Towards an integrated African continental competition regime: the interplay between national, regional, and continental competition frameworks</p> <p>The competition landscape in Africa is undergoing major changes. A recent survey of competition authorities across 63 African jurisdictions conducted by the AfCFTA Secretariat and the OECD revealed that 76.2% of the jurisdictions have a competition law framework in place, including four regional economic communities. With the adoption of the AfCFTA competition regulations, many jurisdictions on the continent are required to comply with at least two different levels of supranational frameworks which might create legal uncertainty and cost burdens on stakeholders if not handled properly. At the same time, a key objective of the African Continental Free Trade Area is to resolve the challenges of multiple and overlapping memberships and expedite the regional and continental integration processes. Against this backdrop, the first session of the conference will discuss:</p> <p>The specificities of the existing African supranational competition frameworks and how they interact.</p> <p>The opportunities and challenges regarding cross-border enforcement, including investigations, merger control and cooperation.</p> <p>How businesses can navigate the complexities of this regulatory landscape.</p> <p>Lessons learned from other jurisdictions with similar supranational competition frameworks.</p> <p>Keynote Address by Ms. Mondo Mazwai, Chair of the Competition Tribunal, South Africa</p> <p>Moderator: Babatunde Irukera, Former Executive Vice Chairman at Federal Competition & Consumer Protection Commission, Nigeria</p> <p>Speakers: Dr. Willard Mwemba, CEO Competition and Consumer Commission COMESA Mr. David Kemei, Director General of the Competition Authority of Kenya Dr Simeon Konan Koffi, Executive Director, ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority Ms. Stellan Onyanacha, Ag Registrar, EAC Competition Authority Mr. Malick Diallo, Head, Competition Division, AfCFTA Secretariat Representative of DG Competition, European Commission (tbc)</p> <p>Open Discussion</p>
15:00 – 16:30	<p>SESSION 3: Levelling the playing field – competition in Africa’s transport and logistics sector</p> <p>The transport and logistics sector constitutes a cornerstone for the development of an integrated internal market in Africa and its further opening and integration into the world economy. However, high transport and logistics costs remain a major obstacle to intra-African trade. Persistent issues include cartels and collusive practices in road freight, dominance and access problems in ports and terminals, restrictive licensing regimes, and regulatory barriers that fragment markets nationally and regionally. This session brings together competition authorities, transport regulators and industry to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the main sources of competitive harm and antitrust issues that national and regional competition authorities are dealing with, • Discuss the impact of existing regulation on competition in the sector at the national level and how this affects cross-border operations, • Share enforcement and regulatory experience and discuss targeted reforms that can reduce trade costs while safeguarding service quality and investment.

	<p>Keynote Address by Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, African Civil Aviation Commission.</p> <p>Moderator: Francis Kariuki, Bowmans –Former DG Competition Authority Kenya</p> <p>Speakers: Dr Willard Mwemba, CEO, COMESA Competition & Consumer Commission Mr Mohamed DIOP, Deputy Director Africa Global Logistics (AGL) (tbc) Prof. Simon Roberts, Professor of Economic, University of Johannesburg (online) Mr Josephat Mkizungo, Legal Services Manager, Tanzania Fair Competition Commission Dr. Paul Adalikwu, Secretary General of MOWCA Ms Emily Nduru Ndoria, Director Trade in Services – AfCFTA Secretariat Ms. Lenny Papa, Former Head of Cabinet of President of the Philippines Competition Commission (online)</p>
17:00	END OF DAY 1
18:30 – 20:30	EVENING NETWORKING RECEPTION

DAY 2 – 20 MARCH 2026

10:00–11:30	<p>SESSION 4: Competing in the digital age – digital trade, platform markets</p> <p>Digital trade is the frontier at which Africa's economic trajectory will be defined in the coming decades – the space where rules, institutions, and business models are still actively being shaped, and where policy choices made today will determine whether African consumers, entrepreneurs, and businesses can participate competitively in the global digital economy. The AfCFTA Competition Protocol provides the core framework for addressing abuse of economic dependence and regulating gatekeepers and core platforms, while the AfCFTA Digital Trade Protocol advances the establishment of harmonised rules and common principles and standards that enable and support digital trade for sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development and the digital transformation of the continent. This session focuses on how these instruments can be implemented in a coherent way. It will highlight practical challenges in regulating the digital platforms and explore approaches around the continent and beyond. It will discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The precise nature of the relationship between regulation and competition enforcement in digital markets. • Key practical questions and options for regulating competition in the digital markets, including ex ante regulation and ex post enforcement; • The degree of convergence and divergence among the approaches taken in various jurisdictions. • Policy and institutional considerations for regulation of competition at African level. <p>Keynote Address by Prof. Willem Boshoff, Co-Director, Centre for Competition Law and Economics, University of Stellenbosch</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Vellah Kigwiru, Competition, Technology and Data Protection Law Scholar and Practitioner Technical University of Munich</p> <p>Speakers: Ms. Doris Tshepe, Commissioner, South African Competition Commission (tbc) Mr. Anas Mahfoudi, Morocco Competition Council Mr. Uche Alisson, Head of Legal, Jumia Nigeria Ms. Pren-Tsilya Boa-Guehe, Head of Pan-African Institutions (AU, AfCFTA, UNECA, AfDB) Google Government Affairs Ms Natasha Afinegenova, Legal Counsel, Competition Advisory team Google (online) Mr Said Kechida, OECD Competition Division Maria Jaspers, Director Policy and Strategy DG COMP, European Commission</p> <p>Open Discussion</p>
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<p>11:30 – 11:45</p>	<p>COFFEE BREAK</p>
<p>13:30 – 15:00</p>	<p>SPECIAL SEGMENT: Voices from business and the bar</p> <p>This special segment departs from the standard panel format to provide an open forum for business leaders, legal practitioners, and in-house counsel to speak directly to competition authorities and policymakers about their practical experience navigating African competition frameworks. The segment is moderated informally and designed to surface practical concerns – including the challenges of compliance, merger clearance timelines, enforcement unpredictability, and market access barriers – that formal presentations may not capture. It reflects the conference's commitment to ensuring that competition law serves not only as an enforcement instrument but as a framework that enables businesses to operate, grow, and trade across African borders with confidence. The objective of the session is to provide a short list of practical suggestions from the private sector on how to improve clarity, predictability and engagement around competition</p> <p>Moderator: Derek Lotter, Co-Head Competition Practice, Bowmans South Africa Representatives of: COMESA Business Council EAC Business Council ECOWAS Small Business Coalition, SADC Business Council, Primero Regulators (ECA, FCCPC, EACA, COMESA), AfCFTA Secretariat</p>
<p>13:00 – 13:30</p>	<p>CLOSING SESSION</p> <p>Fireside Chat with: Babatunde Irukera, Former Executive Vice Chairman/CEO of the Nigerian Competition and Consumer Protection Commission</p>
	<p>END OF CONFERENCE</p>

