



COMESA Competition Commission

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**Common Market for Eastern
and Southern Africa**

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PRESS RELEASE

LAUNCH OF THE COMESA COMPETITION COMMISSION WRITING COMPETITION FOR THE BUSINESS REPORTERS FROM MEDIA HOUSES OPERATING IN THE COMMON MARKET

A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The COMESA Competition Commission (“the Commission”) is a regional body corporate established under Article 6 of the COMESA Competition Regulations (the “Regulations”). The Regulations are promulgated pursuant to Article 55 of the Treaty establishing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (“the COMESA Treaty”). The Commission is mandated to promote and encourage competition by preventing and prohibiting anti-competitive business practices and other restrictions that deter the efficient operation of markets, thereby enhancing the welfare of consumer in the Common Market and protect the consumers against offensive conduct by market actors.

Specifically, the Commission is mandated to monitor, investigate, and prohibit anti-competitive business practices, control mergers and other forms of acquisitions, mediate disputes between the Member States concerning anti-competitive conduct, and promote the implementation of competition law and policy in the Common Market.

Pursuant to Article 7 (2) (i) of the Regulations, one of the functions of the Commission is to develop and disseminate information about competition and consumer protection policies.

To this end, the Commission is engaged in a sensitization and advocacy campaign to among other stakeholders, the business journalists to create a critical mass of business journalists who are knowledgeable of competition and consumer protection policies. The Commission recognizes the role that the media plays in complementing its advocacy work considering that they provide information to the business community, government officials and consumers, among others on a daily basis. The media, through various channels, plays a key role in informing the public about the developments and the benefits of competition in the market and the role of each stakeholder in safeguarding the welfare of consumers.

The Commission has since 2014 been conducting annual engagements with the business reporters operating in the Common Market and has made strides to create awareness and raise knowledge of participating business reporters on competition and consumer protection policies. However, the Commission notices that overall, there still needs to improve the level of

appreciation of the competition and consumer protection issues by the media fraternity and the public in the COMESA region. Lack of adequate comprehension of the issues limits their efforts to publicize the Commission`s work on these issues. In this regard, the Commission intends to continue with the engagement to enhance their understanding of the role of competition in a market economy, and how they can best participate in the building of competitive markets in the Common Market.

Further, the Commission wishes to instill a culture in the media houses of regularly publicizing quality and accurate competition and consumer protection matters. To achieve this the Commission has launched this business reporters` competition on competition and consumer protection matters. Specifically, the competition is intended to enhance identification and reporting of anti-competitive business practices as well as consumer rights violations on the market and also increase in the number of news articles on competition and consumer protection in the Common market and to enhance stakeholders` understanding of the need for competitive markets.

B. METHODOLOGY

The writing competition will encompass recognizing well written articles, in any of the Official languages of COMESA (Arabic, English and French), on competition and consumer protection matters for the period starting 6 June 2023 to 5 June 2024. The articles will be collected, analyzed and subjected to a panel of judges who will select writers of the best articles for the award. At the end of the period, the Commission will award the best two (2) journalists with a medal and a cash prize of USD 1500 for the winner and USD 1000 to the second best.

The Commission will be open to receiving submissions from 6 March 2024 to 10 June 2024. No submissions shall be allowed before or after the submission period.

C. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The basic criteria for the awards will be based on (i) consistency in writing COMESA Competition and/or Consumer protection issues with at least three published articles, the more articles the better but the candidate shall indicate the best three that should be scored (ii) writing of quality, accurate and relevant perspectives. (iii) ingenuity to provide relevant real-life examples, implications to the market or consumers to attract readership (iii) originality, properly referenced with reliable sources and expert`s inputs

The evaluation will be done by a panel of judges. The judges` decision will be final.

D. BASIC GUIDELINES OF THE ARTICLES

Below are the basic guidelines to be put into consideration by the competitors:

- i. Must respond to the topical areas provided by the Commission. The candidate must demonstrate a clear understanding of the COMESA topic and clearly link his/her article to the COMESA Competition Regulations and Commission. The more such articles the better the score. Qualifying candidates must submit a minimum of three articles.
- ii. Must meet the journalism and publication standards with accurate and relevant perspectives; encompass right literary style with excellent grammar, free of spelling errors

and cohesive. Details must be placed in a logical order and the way presented in a manner that keeps the reader`s interest.

- iii. Must demonstrate ingenuity, with insightful personal point of view, cross leveraging of experts` knowledge, use of relevant examples and written a style that attracts readers.
- iv. Minimum 400 words in a newspaper or magazine or digital platform with national reach of about 5,000 readers.
- v. Article must be original, unpublished work with original thinking relative to the subject and properly referenced with reliable sources.

E. TOPICAL AREAS TO BE COVERED.

Below are the topical areas that will guide scope for the writing competition.

- i. Competition law, Trade and Development;
- ii. The effects of cartels to price, production, competition, and efficient operations of the COMESA Free Trade Area;
- iii. Danger posed by unnotified cross-border mergers;
- iv. Consumer challenges in the digital era;
- v. Consumer protection needs in the green revolution movement;
- vi. Protecting consumers from unsafe cross border products; or
- vii. Implication of excessive pricing by dominant firms.



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