



**STATEMENT BY**

**MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY  
HON. SIMPLEX CHITHYOLA BANDA, M.P.**

**AT THE**

**10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF  
THE COMESA COMPETITION COMMISSION**

**BINGU INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION  
CENTER, LILONGWE – MALAWI**

**4 – 5 MAY, 2023**

- 1. His Lordship, Justice Razine R. Mzikamanda, SC, Chief Justice of Malawi;**
- 2. His Lordship, Honourable Justice Luke Malaba, Chief Justice of Zimbabwe;**
- 3. Her Excellency, Ms. Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, Secretary General of Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa;**
- 4. Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General of African Civil Aviation Commission;**
- 5. Your Excellency Ambassadors representing various Missions Accredited to Malawi;**
- 6. Honourable Dr. Sekai Nzenza, Minister of Trade and Commerce of Zimbabwe;**

- 7. Honourable Mr. Teshale Belihu Kafene,  
State Minister, Ministry of Trade and  
Regional Integration, Ethiopia;**
- 8. Ms. Ellen Ruparanganda, Chairperson  
of the Board of Commissioners of the  
COMESA Competition Commission;**
- 9. The Director and Chief Executive  
Officer of the COMESA Competition  
Commission;**
- 10. Heads of National Competition  
Authorities from Across the Africa  
Continent;**
- 11. Distinguished delegates, ladies and  
gentlemen.**

I am honoured to preside over this 10-Year Anniversary Celebrations of the COMESA Competition Commission, one of the COMESA institutions that Malawi has had the privilege of hosting on behalf of His Excellency the State President, Dr. Lazarus Chakwera.

I take this opportunity to recognize the presence of various dignitaries, who have travelled from far and wide to join the COMESA Competition Commission in its 10-Year Anniversary celebrations.

The government, the people of the Republic of Malawi and I wish to Warmly Welcome you all to Malawi, “***The Warm Heart of Africa***”, enjoy the warm hospitality that our people have to offer.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

As one of the founding Member States of COMESA which is comprised of 21 Member States, my government is very proud, and I am personally excited, to be associated with the various COMESA programmes and programmes by its Institutions such as the COMESA Competition Commission.

More importantly, I am proud to attend this 10-Year Anniversary Celebration on behalf of His Excellency the State President.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Malawi has always, and continues to be a firm believer, supporter, and advocate of the COMESA Regional Integration Agenda.

It is for this reason that I do affirm here that Malawi shall always support COMESA and the continuation of, and effective implementation of its programs including the enforcement of the COMESA Competition Regulations.

For those who may not be aware, the COMESA Treaty was ratified on 8 December 1994 here in Malawi following its signing on 5 November 1993 in Kampala, Uganda. Thus, since the entry into force of the COMESA Treaty, Malawi has been an active Member State of COMESA and remains committed to COMESA.

It is therefore a great honour and privilege for Malawi to be the host Member State of the COMESA Competition Commission in addition to hosting the COMESA Federation of Women in Business, popularly known as COMFWB.

The hosting of the two institutions is a sign of Malawi's further commitment to the COMESA Regional Integration Agenda.

My officiation of this event is evidence of this commitment and Malawi looks forward to contributing actively to achieving this agenda in various ways such as the support of the COMESA Programmes and work being undertaken by COMESA institutions with the wider goal of benefitting the citizens of the entire COMESA region including Malawi.

Particularly, my officiation is a sign of the commitment of the Malawi government to the work being undertaken by the COMESA Competition Commission which is vested with the responsibility of regulating competition and consumer protection within the Common Market.

I reaffirm this commitment and full support to the COMESA Competition Commission.

In view of this, I am glad to mention that the Government of Malawi has offered land to the Commission for the construction of its headquarters.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

The effective implementation and enforcement of regional competition laws can only be realized where there are little or no structural and legal barriers to trade.

It is therefore very important that the free movement of goods and services across our borders is supported.



***Your Excellency, the Secretary General of COMESA***, I am aware and proud to state that COMESA has some of the best trade facilitation instruments. We commend you for that and encourage you to continue realizing the vision of our forefathers that was born more than 40 years ago.

**Your Excellence, the Secretary General of COMESA**, in order to support the integration processes in COMESA, not so long ago in December 2022, His Excellency the State President together with His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema, the President of the Republic of Zambia presided over the launch of the Mwami/Mchinji One-Stop-Border-Post, a COMESA programme, which was constructed with the support from the African Development Bank and the European Union.

The One-Stop-Border-Post is expected to facilitate trade and integration efforts not only between Malawi and Zambia but for the entire COMESA Region. It is the desire of the government of Malawi that the COMESA region will continue to experience the benefits that arise from the COMESA programmes to break down the barriers that have stood in the way of cross-border trade.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

The 10-Year Anniversary for the COMESA Competition Commission which we are celebrating today relates to yet another important programme under the COMESA Regional Integration Agenda, being the regulation of competition in the Common Market, which is sanctioned by the COMESA Treaty.

I acknowledge that pursuant to Article 55 (1) of the COMESA Treaty, COMESA Member States recognised the risks that the regional integration agenda could face from anti-competitive practices in the Common Market. Therefore, the Member States, Malawi included, committed that, *"...any practice which negates the objective of free and liberalised trade shall be prohibited. Further, the Member States agreed "...to prohibit any agreement between undertakings or concerted practice which has as its objective or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the Common Market..."*.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Malawi as a founding Member State of COMESA fully ascribes to the notion of promoting competition in our markets by prohibiting agreements, arrangements or any practices which

prevent, restrict or distort competition in the Common Market. Malawi believes that anti-competitive practices stand to hinder the growth and development of small businesses which are prominent in the Common Market.

Malawi's stand on this matter is also evident from the fact that Malawi has a fully operational and effective national competition authority, the Competition and Fair-Trading Commission, which boasts of a positive record of accomplishment in regulating competition and consumer protection matters in Malawi.

I am also happy to note the excellent working relationships that exist between the COMESA Competition Commission and the Competition and Fair-Trading Commission of Malawi. This is as it should be.

Cooperation and collaboration between the national competition authorities and the COMESA Competition Commission are the only way of effectively combatting anti-competitive behaviour in our region.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

The regulation of competition and consumer protection, through either the regional or national competition law, is necessary to facilitate businesses and guarantee consumer welfare in the market.

Despite the remarkable progress that our COMESA region has made in facilitating trade particularly through the removal of tariff barriers, other barriers to trade still exist which among them include the anti-competitive conduct of some businesses who tend to abuse their dominant

position in the market to the detriment of competing businesses and consumers.

The existence of such conduct entails the absence of competitive markets thus resulting in the increased risks of harm to consumers through lower quality products, limited product choices and exploitative prices.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

I would like to applaud the COMESA Competition Commission for the role it has played, in the past ten (10) years, in promoting and encouraging competition within the Common Market by preventing restrictive business practices and other restrictions that deter the efficient the operation of our Common Market.

Your efforts are critical to ensuring that business in COMESA, including those for micro, small and medium-sized, remain competitive.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

The COMESA Competition Commission's accomplishments in regulating competition, particularly mergers, restrictive business practices, and consumer protection, has without doubt been outstanding and deserves recognition.

Through regulating competition, the Commission is ensuring that the harmful effects of monopolies and cartels are averted. The Commission's work is central to ensuring that the trade liberalization agenda in the COMESA region promotes growth in the Member States and leads to poverty reduction.

I would like to encourage the COMESA Competition Commission to continue in its efforts to regulate competition in our markets.

I would also like to task the COMESA Competition Commission and Malawi's Competition and Fair-Trading Commission to ensure that regulation of markets and consumer protection benefits the ordinary citizens in the Common Market. I pledge continued support from my government to ensure this continued effective operation.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

I would like to thank the national, regional, and international community from the bottom of our hearts for the heart-warming support you extended and have been extending to the government of Malawi over these last few months.



Malawi has felt supported in ways it could not have possibly foreseen, as it sought to address the challenges brought about by Cyclone Freddy.

Our land is still healing, our people are still healing, and everyone one of you being here today to join hands in this commemoration in Malawi is truly a beautiful thing. If the kind of support we have witnessed as the government of Malawi over the last few months is replicated to the Regional Integration Agenda, barriers that have held us back when seeking to move to deeper levels of cross border trade, will begin to vanish and we will begin to experience oneness.

Trade will begin to open up in ways we would not have thought were even possible.

***Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;***

As I conclude I would like to thank the COMESA Competition Commission for the support it has given to the government of Malawi during its existence here in Malawi for the last 10 years, working closely with the government institutions and contributing to the growth of Malawi which has a ripple effect on the growth of the Common Market. It is the desire and hope of the government of Malawi that the COMESA Competition Commission will find a permanent home here in Malawi as it builds its headquarters here in Malawi.

With these few remarks, I would like to declare this commemoration of the 10-Year Anniversary for the COMESA Competition Commission officially open.

**I thank you, Zikomo Kwambiri**

**God Bless Malawi.**