



African Regional Competition Authorities sign MoU to Strengthen Cross-Border Enforcement

Client briefing | Antitrust & Merger Control
Africa | CCC, ERCA, and EACCA sign MoU increasing cooperation
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Competition authorities of four African regional economic communities have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) aimed at strengthening cooperation in the enforcement of competition and consumer protection laws across their respective jurisdictions. The MoU was signed by the East African Community (**EAC**) Competition Authority (**EACCA**), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (**COMESA**) Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (**CCCC**), the Economic Community of West African States (**ECOWAS**) Regional Competition Authority (**ERCA**), and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (**WAEMU**) Commission. The MoU establishes a formal framework for cooperation between these authorities in matters relating to competition law and consumer protection enforcement.

Regional competition regimes have become an increasingly important feature of the African regulatory landscape. In addition to national competition authorities, several regional economic communities have developed supranational competition frameworks designed to address anti-competitive conduct and transactions with cross-border effects. The regional bodies involved in the MoU collectively cover a substantial geographic and economic area of the African continent. Their mandates include the enforcement of competition rules, oversight of mergers with regional implications, and the protection of consumer interests within their respective regional markets. Given the growing level of economic integration between these regions, competition concerns and consumer protection issues frequently arise that affect more than one jurisdiction.

Against this backdrop, the MoU seeks to facilitate closer collaboration among the participating authorities and to strengthen the effectiveness of

competition enforcement across the regions they cover.

Scope and objectives

The MoU establishes a framework under which the participating authorities may cooperate in the enforcement of competition and consumer protection laws. In particular, the MoU seeks to promote the exchange of information, coordination of enforcement activities, and consultation on matters of common interest among the CCCC, ERCA, EACCA, and the WAEMU Commission. Through this framework, the authorities aim to improve their ability to address anti-competitive practices that have cross-regional effects within and across the participating regional markets. The cooperation may also extend to technical assistance, capacity-building initiatives, and the sharing of best practices in competition policy and consumer protection enforcement. While the MoU does not create new substantive rules or alter the jurisdictional mandates of the respective authorities, it formalizes channels through which they may communicate and coordinate when dealing with matters that affect multiple regional blocs.

Implications for businesses and investors operating in Africa

The signing of the MoU reflects a broader trend towards increased cooperation among African competition authorities as well as the emancipation of supranational competition enforcers. As economic activity across the continent becomes more integrated, regulators are increasingly seeking mechanisms to address cross-border competition issues in a coordinated manner.

For businesses and investors operating across multiple African jurisdictions, particularly those active in markets covered by the EAC, COMESA, ECOWAS, and WAEMU frameworks, this development may lead to greater coordination between regulators in the review of anti-

competitive conduct and transactions with regional implications.

Although the MoU itself does not introduce new compliance obligations, it signals a potential for closer information sharing and more coordinated enforcement activity among regional authorities. Companies engaged in cross-border operations within these regions should therefore remain attentive to evolving cooperation mechanisms and their possible impact on competition law enforcement.

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