



**COMESA Competition Commission**

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**Common Market for Eastern  
and Southern Africa**

## **CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY, 2021**

The COMESA Competition Commission ('the Commission') joined the rest of the World in commemorating the World Consumer Rights Day. This year, the global theme was 'Tackling Plastic Pollution'. The Commission is cognisant that plastic pollution is a serious threat in our lives but most of the populace are not aware of the dangers associated with plastics. The issue of plastic pollution therefore needs to be addressed with the urgency it deserves and consumers need to be apprised of the dangers it brings to their lives. This will deepen their understanding and hence enable them to play a key role in supporting sustainable consumption, by adopting waste management best practices and the increased use of reusable or alternative bags, among others, thereby complementing their Member States' efforts towards tackling plastic pollution.

In as much as businesses have to comply with the existing laws and regulations in reducing plastic pollution, consumers also have to do their part so that their actions do not contribute to the problem. This is through using plastics responsibly. The Commission is concerned with plastic pollution because ultimately it has an effect on the welfare of consumers as it affects their quality of life.

The issue of plastic pollution requires the involvement of all stakeholders such as the private sector, academia, policy institutions, law enforcement agencies. This will ensure that coordination among agencies responsible is enhanced and appropriate measures are undertaken to resolve the issue of plastic pollution.

Further, the Commission as a regional authority whose mandate includes enhancing the welfare of consumers in twenty-one of its Member States is alive to the fact that countries face different enforcement challenges. Specifically, the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) has brought different challenges for consumers in the Member States of the Common market. This has also been reflected in the different themes that some countries have adopted in commemoration of World Consumer Rights Day this year.

The Commission is happy to announce that this year, it has partnered with two of its Member States in commemorating the day while still celebrating the day with the rest of the Member States and the World. Specifically, the Commission partnered in the commemoration of World Consumer Rights Day with the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, Zambia under the theme, 'Tackling Plastic Pollution and

Consumer Protection Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Commission has also partnered with the Competition and Fair Trading Commission (CFTC) under the theme 'Consumer Protection in the COVID-19 Era'.

As such, the Commission is taking part in a number of activities to raise awareness on the challenges that the consumers are currently facing in the midst of COVID-19. At the same time the Commission is taking part in raising awareness among consumers and stakeholders on their role in the fight against plastic pollution.

The Commission remains committed to partnering with different Member States in the commemoration of such events. While it has partnered with Malawi and Zambia this year, it will continue providing support and engaging with different Member States on such events.



**Dr. Willard Mwemba**  
**Acting Director & Chief Executive**