



COMESA Competition Commission
Kang'ombe House, 5th Floor-West Wing
P.O.Box30742
Lilongwe 3, Malawi
Tel: +265 (0)1 772 466
+265 (0) 999 970 269
Email- compcom@comesa.int



**Common Market for Eastern
and Southern Africa**

NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF INVESTIGATIONS

IN THE MATTER OF ARTICLE 22 OF THE COMESA COMPETITION REGULATIONS, 2004.

COMESA Competition Commission Commences Investigation into agreements between the Confédération Africaine de Football and Lagardere Sports S.A.S for the Commercialisation of Marketing and Media Rights of Football Tournaments

Notice is hereby given to interested stakeholders and the general public that pursuant to Article 22 of the COMESA Competition Regulations (the “Regulations”), the COMESA Competition Commission (the “Commission”) has commenced an investigation into an alleged violation of Part 3 of the Regulations by the Confédération Africaine de Football (“CAF”) in relation to the commercialization of media and marketing rights for African football tournaments.

In accordance with Article 16 of the Regulations, all agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings and concerted practices which may affect trade between Member States, and have as their object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition within the Common Market are prohibited as incompatible with the Common Market. It is hereby notified that the Commission has reason to believe that business conduct that restrains competition in the Common Market has been committed by the parties and hence it has commenced investigations under Article 22 of the Regulations.

About CAF

CAF is a non-governmental international organisation with its own legal persona and the governing body of football in Africa. Currently CAF has exclusive rights to organize 11 championships, including the Africa Cup of Nations, African Nations Championship, U-20

Africa Cup of Nations, U-17 Africa Cup of Nations, U-23 Africa Cup of Nations, Women's Africa Cup of Nations, Futsal Africa Cup of Nation, Beach Soccer Africa Cup of Nations for national teams; and the CAF Champions League, CAF Confederation Cup, and CAF Super Cup for individual clubs. CAF was founded in 1957 and has fifty-four member associations, which are the national football associations. CAF is based in Cairo, Egypt. All the nineteen Member States of COMESA are members of CAF.

About Lagardère Sports S.A.S.

Lagardère Sports S.A.S. (formerly SPORTFIVE S.A.) is a sport marketing agency of the Lagardère Group, based in Paris, France. Its nature of business include content creation, media rights, production and distribution of sports events, including football, golf, tennis, basketball, cricket, amongst others.

The Agreements

It is alleged that on 12th June 2015, CAF entered into an agreement with Lagardère Sports S.A.S. for the exclusive commercialization of marketing and media rights of main regional football competitions in Africa, including the Africa Cup of Nations, African Nations Championship and African Champions League, for the period 2017 to 2028. CAF and Lagardère Sports S.A.S. are alleged to have previously entered into a similar commercialization agreement for marketing and media rights of CAF tournaments for the period 2009 to 2016. Consecutively and cumulatively, the length of the alleged exclusive agreement is twenty years.

It should be noted that the commencement of investigations neither presupposes that the conduct being investigated is anti-competitive nor that any of the parties to the agreement has violated the Regulations. The Commission will, in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of the Regulations, conduct an inquiry into the agreements concluded between CAF and Lagardère Sports S.A.S. to determine whether the alleged conduct has as its object or effect the prevention, restriction or distortion of competition in the Common Market or in a substantial part of it. In view of the foregoing, the Commission hereby gives notice to all interested stakeholders and the general public to submit their representations to the Commission by emailing them to: sbooluck@comesa.int. **All representations should be submitted to the Commission no later than 21st April 2017.**

If you wish to seek further details and/or clarifications on any aspect of the Commission's investigation, you may contact **Ms Sandya Booluck, Economist**, on Tel: +265 (0) 1 772 466 or E-mail: sbooluck@comesa.int.

All representations submitted to the Commission will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and will only be used for the purposes of this investigation.