

## **SPEECH BY THE BOARD CHAIR, DR JERRY JANA ON THE COMMEMORATION OF WORLD COMPETITION DAY- 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

Allow me to thank all our invited guests for joining us on this auspicious occasion. On behalf of my fellow Commissioners and management and indeed on my own behalf, I invite you to feel free and actively participate in the panel discussions.

This year's theme is COMPETITION POLICY AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE. You will, I am sure, agree with me that this theme is befitting the current situation that we find ourselves in as a country and as a member of the global community. Our nation has not been spared the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic which has ravaged and distabilised what we were used to admire as our normal ways of life. The pandemic has certainly exposed policy and structural weaknesses in the global economies and especially in the health sector. It is as if we were all caught by surprise and our levels of preparedness found completely wanting even in the economies that we looked up to as exemplary in terms of rapid response to emergencies of such nature and magnitude. The health sector is of special interest because it about human life. In our continuing attempts to address the challenge posed by the pandemic vigilance in all areas of life requires deployment of all resources to combat the spread but also adhering to the instructions which the experts have prescribed in relation to matters of personal protection and hygiene. The importance of vigilance at all levels, be it from an individual, institutional or national perspective cannot be overemphasized. Our President, His Excellency Dr. Lazarus Chakwera has more than demonstrated the imperative need for such vigilance time and again

Ladies and gentlemen, we at CFTC have acknowledged the seriousness of this pandemic and its impact on health. We therefore have responded by intensifying our responses in accordance with our mandate. We are mindful of the fact that there are always elements in all forms of human endeavor including business, that are bent on exploiting every situation by deliberately engaging in anti-competitive and unfair business practices. In the health sector this may be by over pricing medicine and protective equipment, the very tools that we need in times of need such as this. The Competition and Fair Trading Act(CFTA) and the Consumer Protection Act(CPA) fortunately empower us to regulate, monitor and control such behavior.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we are all aware it is universally acknowledged that competition is healthy because it brings out the best in service delivery, product

innovation and quality and reliability in technology. Therefore in executing its mandate the objective of CFTC is to effectively and systematically intervene and restore normalcy in the environment. In the health sector that would mean that those in need of specific medicine will be able to access them at the right price, of the right quality and in a timely manner. We are therefore committed to ensuring that our interventions will in the end establish an outcome that will install a culture of voluntary compliance in all business transactions.

However, CFTC is under no illusion that this task can be achieved single handedly. In this regard CFTC will continue to take an active role in developing a framework for collaborative enforcement through information sharing with other agencies in the country and even in other countries to achieve an efficient and effective competition and fair trading environment that benefits the consumer, the service provider and the economy at large.

Let me conclude by assuring the business community that CFTC is a partner at all times. All we do in enforcing the mandate in our power is to create a level playing field for a win-win outcome for all stakeholders involved in trade and related activities. My fellow Commissioners, Management and I are certainly determined to protect consumers, who we all are, and deter corrupt and non-compliant trading practices. In this regard we applaud the government for introducing policies that have created a conducive business environment in the country and for ensuring that Malawi benefits from regional and global trade protocols to which it is a signatory.

I thank you all for your attention.