



NaCC corporate communications officer, Dina Gowases (left) listens as Alex Kububa (right), chief executive officer of the Zimbabwe Competition Authority talks

NaCC on UN Trade and Development peer review

• Honorine Kaze

In a quest to evaluate its progress in the last four year of its existence, the Namibia Competition Commission (NaCC) has decided to volunteer for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) peer reviews on competition policies and laws.

UNCTAD voluntary peer review falls within the framework of the set of multilaterally agreed principles and rules on competition, adopted by the General Assembly in 1980.

The set seeks - inter alia - to assist developing countries in adopting and enforcing competition laws and policies that are suited to their development needs and economic situations.

Chief executive officer of the Zimbabwe Competition Authority, Alex Kububa, who is in the country to conduct the review has noted the UNCTAD initiated the organisation of ad hoc voluntary peer reviews on competition laws and policies, to ensure coherence between overall government approaches to privatisation and liberalisation of trade and investment regimes.

"Such reviews provide an ideal forum to appraise how economic reforms can promote development and ensure markets work for the poor," Kububa said.

Kububa has already met with the NaCC staff, those who have lodged complaints and various law firms that have since filed for mergers. He is still to meet various institutions such as the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NCCI), Bank of Namibia (BoN), Electricity Control Board (ECB) and the Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia (Cran).

NaCC corporate communications officer, Dina Gowases said this practice will allow the

commission to know if it is indeed on the right track in accomplishing its mandate.

"Through the peer review on competition policies and laws, the NaCC team will learn whether their work is based on the right type of laws and policies or if it needs some changes," Gowases said.

She added the outcome of the review is important for the strengthening of the commission towards implementing the right strategies in the future. Furthermore, it might even win them funding and support of more experienced competition commissions from other countries. Therefore, they have high expectations from the peer review results.

The peer review has become an integral and appreciated part of UNCTAD's work on technical assistance, as stated by Kububa.

"It gives rise to a range of recommendations on how the application of competition legislations might be made more effective at national and regional levels and through UNCTAD to build capacity for the enforcement and advocacy of competition laws."

The review is normally conducted on competition commissions that have been in existence for five years. However, the NaCC has not hesitated to volunteer for the review albeit after four years.

In volunteering to be reviewed, Namibia becomes the fourth country in the SADC region to be reviewed under the auspices of the UNCTAD, following Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

NaCC should be informed of the conclusion and recommendations made after the review next January through a consultative meeting.