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BTA SUMMIT
AFRICA BIG TECH ACCOUNTABILITY SUMMIT 2026
Kampala, Uganda

Summit Report

Big Tech & Competition Enforcement in Africa

Africa Big Tech Accountability Summit

31 July 2026 | Kampala, Uganda

info@adlegalug.com

Background

The Africa Big Tech Accountability Summit (BTA Summit) 2026 was held in Kampala, Uganda, on 30–31 July 2026 under the broader theme *"Big Tech, Data Governance, and Competition Policy in Africa's Digital Economy."*

The **second day of the Summit, held on 31 July 2026, focused specifically on Big Tech and competition in Africa**. It brought together competition regulators, practitioners, technology-sector representatives and other stakeholders to examine the emerging competition concerns associated with digital platforms and the practical experience of enforcing competition law against Big Tech in African markets.

The competition-focused discussions were informed by the recognition that digital platforms increasingly function as important gateways through which businesses access consumers and markets. The Summit therefore provided a platform to examine how traditional competition principles are being applied to digital markets, the challenges faced by African regulators, the need for regional cooperation, and the development of enforcement approaches that reflect Africa's unique digital and economic realities. The discussions also considered the growing importance of ensuring that market power does not become entrenched in ways that restrict innovation, consumer choice or opportunities for African businesses.

This report presents the key discussions, interventions and lessons arising from Day Two of the BTA Summit 2026, with a particular focus on the evolving landscape of Big Tech competition enforcement in Africa.

The Summit At a Glance

20+

Speakers, Panelists and Moderators drawn from Africa, Europe and other jurisdictions

456

Total Participants

52 (11.4%) Physical
404 (88.6%) Online

05

Thematic Sessions

Panel Sessions
1 Keynote Address

09

Hours

Sessions and working

03 **Regional Competition Regulators**

EACCA, COMESA and ECOWAS

02 **Civil Society Organisations**

Foxglove and Article 19, Brazil

21 **Other Key Stakeholders**

Law firms, policymakers Academia, Media organisations, Researchers and Tech Startups

What We Set Out To Do:

- Strengthen Big Tech accountability and competition enforcement in African digital markets.
- Promote regional and continental cooperation among national and regional competition authorities.
- Examine emerging global and African trends in digital competition.
- Strengthen the role of civil society and public-interest actors.
- Develop an African approach to digital competition and Big Tech accountability.
- Build African capacity to regulate rapidly evolving digital and AI markets.

Geographical Reach

Connecting Africa with Global Expertise on Digital Competition & Big Tech Accountability

The Africa Big Tech Accountability Summit 2026 brought together a distinctly African and international community of regulators, competition-law practitioners, judges, policymakers, civil society representatives, academics, technology experts and media professionals. The programme reflected participation and speaker expertise spanning Africa, Europe and Latin America, reinforcing the Summit's role as a platform for cross-border dialogue on digital competition and Big Tech accountability.

Classification	Geographical Region	Countries Represented
Global South	Africa	**West Africa** — Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire **East Africa** — Kenya, Uganda **Southern Africa** — South Africa
Global North	Europe	France, Germany, United Kingdom
	South America	Brazil


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ACCOUNTABILITY SUMMIT 2026
Kampala, Uganda

Keynote Address:

Big Tech and Market Power in Africa: Why Competition Law Has Become Inevitable

Mr. Babatunde Irukera

Former Chief Executive Officer of Nigeria's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

"If we succeed, we will not simply participate in the global digital economy — we will help shape it, and that way we would have earned our seat at the table. But make no mistake about it: if we're not sitting at that table, then we are on the menu at that table." - *Babatunde Irukera*

In **his keynote address**, Babatunde Irukera, former Chief Executive Officer of Nigeria's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, situated the question of Big Tech regulation within the broader challenge of accountability and consequence management in Africa. He observed that accountability was not simply a regulatory concept but one of the most important mechanisms for shaping behaviour in both the public and private sectors. Drawing on the example of the collapse of Enron, he illustrated how credible consequences can influence corporate decision-making: businesses may be willing to pursue profitable opportunities, but the prospect of meaningful consequences for misconduct can become a powerful deterrent. For Irukera, this was precisely why an accountability framework was essential to the governance of Big Tech.

He argued that competition law had become one of the last and most important mechanisms for ensuring accountability in the digital economy. The transformation brought about by technology had fundamentally altered the sources of economic power. The world's most valuable companies were increasingly technology companies whose influence extended beyond conventional commercial activity into communications, commerce, payments, advertising, data and access to markets. In Africa, digital platforms had become deeply embedded in everyday life: small businesses relied on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to reach customers, families communicated through WhatsApp, consumers searched and purchased products online, ride-hailing platforms influenced mobility, and digital lending platforms increasingly affected access to finance.

However, Irukera emphasized that the benefits of digital platforms could not obscure the concentration of economic power that accompanied them. A small number of technology companies had acquired extraordinary influence over digital infrastructure, consumer data, advertising, payments and access to markets. He described this as a form of "raw power" capable of influencing not only businesses and consumers but also governments and states. The central regulatory concern, therefore, was no longer simply whether a company had become large or successful. The more fundamental question was whether markets remained open to innovation, whether businesses could compete on merit, and whether consumers retained meaningful choice.

Africa's emerging Big Tech enforcement experience

Irukera emphasized that Africa was not simply waiting for other jurisdictions to determine the future of digital competition. He pointed to developments across the continent as evidence of an emerging African competition jurisprudence and enforcement approach.

He highlighted South Africa's Online Intermediation Platforms Market Inquiry as an important development in examining how digital platforms affected local businesses, including issues relating to search rankings, commissions and platform rules. Kenya's growing focus on digital commerce, fintech and online marketplaces was similarly presented as evidence of increasing regulatory attention to digital markets. He also referred to Egypt's investment in specialized expertise in algorithmic pricing, digital platforms and emerging technologies, as well as Morocco's focus on digital competition within its wider digital transformation agenda.

Nigeria's experience was presented as particularly significant. Irukera discussed Nigeria's enforcement work in digital lending and, most importantly, the Meta/WhatsApp investigation, which he identified as an example of an African approach to Big Tech accountability. He explained that the investigation was not simply about imposing a financial penalty. At its core was a fundamental competition question: could a dominant digital platform impose terms on African consumers that it would not impose elsewhere simply because African consumers lacked meaningful alternatives?

The investigation examined issues including unfair privacy practices, discriminatory treatment of Nigerian users, limitations on consumer choice and extensive collection and use of personal data. Irukera drew attention to the difference between the treatment of Nigerian and European users. Although the relevant European and Nigerian data-protection frameworks contained similarities, European users had greater control over consent, including the ability to withdraw consent, while Nigerian users faced a more restrictive "take it or leave it" arrangement. He argued that the issue was fundamentally connected to market power and lack of choice.

Big Tech accountability and Africa's data sovereignty

One of the strongest themes in the address was the argument that Africa must cease being merely an extraction point for data. Irukera connected the digital economy to Africa's longer history of economic extraction, in which raw materials were produced on the continent but value was frequently created elsewhere. He argued that the fourth industrial revolution presented an opportunity for Africa to change that pattern. Africa possessed the talent, professionals, knowledge, creativity and entrepreneurial energy necessary to participate meaningfully in the digital economy. Consequently, African data should not simply be collected on the continent, transferred elsewhere, processed elsewhere and monetized elsewhere without African institutions exercising meaningful regulatory authority over its use. Africa, he argued, had to see itself not merely as a market to be served, but as a jurisdiction whose laws, institutions and citizens were entitled to recognition and compliance.

This placed Big Tech accountability within the broader question of digital sovereignty and economic development. Accountability was not limited to punishing unlawful conduct. It also involved ensuring that the value generated by Africa's digital economy contributed to African businesses, consumers and economies.

An African approach rather than simple regulatory replication

Irukera acknowledged the importance of international developments, including the EU Digital Markets Act, the UK's digital markets regime and major antitrust actions in the United States. However, he cautioned that Africa should learn from these experiences without simply replicating them.

He argued that African digital markets had their own characteristics, developmental priorities and economic structures. Competition policy should therefore reflect African realities while remaining consistent with internationally accepted principles. He particularly emphasized Africa's enormous MSME population and its young entrepreneurial population, arguing that competition policy should protect the ability of these businesses to participate meaningfully in digital markets.

Regional cooperation as a necessity

Another major theme was that no African country could effectively regulate Big Tech in isolation. Irukera pointed out that many technology companies possessed resources and market influence that exceeded those of individual African states. In some circumstances, the threat of withdrawing services from a particular country could itself create significant regulatory pressure.

He therefore called for African authorities to move away from isolation and towards cooperation, information sharing, joint investigations, capacity development, technical assistance and consistent legal standards. He recalled that, during Nigeria's Meta/WhatsApp investigation, he had engaged counterparts in other African jurisdictions and that these discussions contributed to the development of the Heads of Competition Authorities Dialogue on Digital Markets. The underlying principle was that African authorities needed to understand that the same conduct could be occurring simultaneously across neighbouring jurisdictions and that regulatory theories and responses should therefore be coordinated.

Competition, innovation and the danger of unchallengeable market power

Irukera made clear that the purpose of competition law was not to punish successful businesses. Successful businesses and innovation should be rewarded. The problem arose when success became entrenched and was converted into unchallengeable market power.

He warned that markets function best when success was achieved through innovation, efficiency and consumer value, rather than exclusionary practices, artificial barriers or the accumulation of market power that competitors could no longer challenge. He distinguished between the existence of a monopoly and the consequences of an unchallengeable monopoly, arguing that the latter could undermine incentives to innovate and create conditions in which consumers and smaller businesses ultimately bear the cost.

His historical framing was particularly striking: economic power had evolved from railways, to oil, to telecommunications, and now to data, digital platforms and artificial intelligence. Institutions therefore had to evolve alongside these new forms of power.

Overall keynote message:

Irukera's central message was therefore that competition law had become inevitable because it represented one of Africa's most important remaining safeguards against the abuse of concentrated digital power. Africa had the market, talent and institutional capacity to shape the digital economy, but doing so would require collective action rather than fragmented national responses. If African states could coordinate their competition authorities, strengthen their institutions, protect consumer choice, prevent data extraction and ensure that markets remained contestable, Africa would not merely participate in the global digital economy—it could help shape the rules of that economy and secure its place at the table.

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SESSION ONE | REPORT

Big Tech Operation in Africa:

Gate keeping and Abuse of Dominance by Big Tech Platforms

About the Session:

The session examined the growing role of digital platforms (big tech) as gateways to online markets and the competition concerns arising from their increasing control over how businesses reach consumers and how innovation develops. The session brought together experiences from African competition authorities and perspectives from European competition practitioners, providing a comparative view of how different jurisdictions were responding to Big Tech dominance and emerging digital-market risks.

The discussion considered forms of abuse of dominance including self-preferencing, exclusionary conduct, denial of access, data-driven market power, tying, discriminatory access and the strategic use of digital infrastructure. The panel explored the practical challenges faced by African regulators , coordinated regional and continental enforcement, interim measures and effective remedies, and the lessons Africa could draw from European enforcement experience.

It also examined the evolving role of African judiciaries in adjudicating complex digital competition disputes and the need for greater judicial expertise in technology, economics and competition law.

Importantly, the discussion situated competition enforcement within the broader objective of Big Tech accountability. Panelists emphasized that accountability required more than imposing fines after anti-competitive conduct had occurred; it required early intervention, effective remedies, regional coordination and judicial oversight capable of preventing dominant platforms from entrenching their control over emerging markets, particularly AI.

The Expert Speakers:

Leonard Otuonye Ugbajah

Founding Partner, Lex Economicus Advisory

Speaker

Jérémie Jourdan

Partner, Geradin Partners

Speaker

Dr. Henry Peter Adonyo

Retired High Court Judge, Uganda

Speaker

Jérémy André

Founder, Agentik SAS

Speaker

Sheba Ganyanna Percy

Associate, Caven Bridge

Session Chair

Speaker Submissions

Leonard Otuonye Ugbajah

Founding Partner, Lex Economicus Advisory
Board member, ECOWAS Competition Authority.

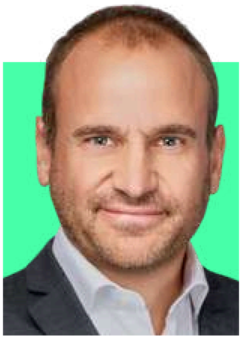
Mr. Otuonye described Africa's digital competition landscape as being at a stage where understanding and mapping digital markets remains as important as enforcement itself.

He emphasized the need for market studies to identify the structure of digital markets, emerging conduct and its impact on value, while also highlighting the growing importance of cross-border enforcement as Big Tech practices and their effects increasingly span multiple African jurisdictions.

Key pointers from Mr. Otuonye's presentation:

- Market understanding is currently a priority. African regulators need to map digital markets, understand platform conduct and assess how value is created and distributed before designing effective interventions.
- Market studies should inform regulatory reform, allowing competition laws to be fine-tuned to the realities of digital markets.

- Exclusionary conduct and denial of access are emerging concerns in Africa, particularly where dominant platforms restrict businesses' access to essential digital infrastructure or interfaces.
- Exploitative extraction of content is another major emerging concern, particularly where Big Tech uses publishers' content to generate search results or AI-generated summaries.
- Cross-border coordination should be a top priority. Digital conduct and its effects rarely stop at national borders, particularly where global platforms are involved.
- The AfCFTA Competition Protocol, particularly Article 11 on digital platforms, presents an opportunity to develop a continental approach to investigations and remedies.
- A continental approach could address capacity constraints faced by smaller African jurisdictions that may not have sufficient resources to investigate complex Big Tech conduct.
- Market size creates regulatory leverage. Individual countries may have limited bargaining power when dealing with global platforms, while Africa collectively represents a much larger market and therefore has greater capacity to negotiate and enforce.
- Capacity building remains fundamental, including the capacity to conduct market studies, undertake economic analysis and enforce competition rules effectively.
- Market studies should operate at three levels: continental, regional and national, allowing regulators to understand both common African digital competition challenges and specific market conditions.
- **Core message:** Africa should move towards a coordinated, evidence-based and continent-wide approach to digital competition, combining market studies, stronger regulatory capacity and the market power of the African continent to address Big Tech conduct effectively.



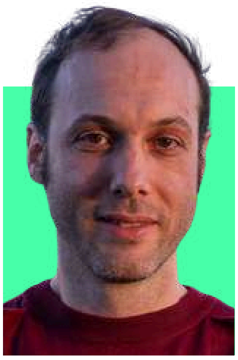
Jérémie Jourdan

Partner,
Geradin Partners

Mr. Jourdan focused on the need for rapid, effective and coordinated competition enforcement against Big Tech, particularly in fast-moving digital and AI markets. Drawing on European enforcement experience and the Meta case involving AI distribution through WhatsApp, he emphasized that delayed intervention can allow anti-competitive conduct to permanently reshape markets. He also stressed that competition authorities should prioritize effective remedies and coordinate across jurisdictions to address practices whose effects extend beyond national borders.

Key pointers from Mr. Jourdan's presentation:

- African competition authorities should consider interim measures as an important enforcement tool, particularly in rapidly developing digital and AI markets.
- Interim measures should be used more actively to stop potentially anti-competitive conduct before the harm becomes irreversible.
- Finding an infringement and imposing a fine is not enough. Competition authorities must focus on remedies that address the underlying competitive harm.
- Remedies should restore competition and innovation, rather than simply penalizing past conduct.
- Speed is critical in digital competition cases. Delayed intervention can allow dominant platforms to permanently reshape markets and harm innovation, as illustrated by the Google Shopping case experience.
- African authorities should identify and prioritize the Big Tech practices causing the greatest harm to African businesses and consumers, and consider coordinated regional or continental remedies. Coordination is essential because Big Tech practices frequently operate across large geographic areas and cannot be effectively addressed through isolated national enforcement.
- Regulatory frameworks should prevent dominant firms from leveraging their position in one market into adjacent or downstream markets, drawing on approaches such as the EU Digital Markets Act.
- **Core message:** African competition authorities should act early, use interim measures where appropriate, design meaningful remedies and coordinate across jurisdictions to prevent Big Tech dominance from becoming entrenched in the next generation of AI markets.



Jérémy André

Founder,
Agentik SAS

Mr. André, Founder of Agentik SAS, provided the perspective of a startup directly affected by Big Tech gatekeeping in the emerging AI market. Drawing on his participation in the COMESA Competition & Consumer Commission's investigation into Meta AI chatbot exclusion case, he emphasized the importance of collective enforcement, open access to digital platforms and timely intervention to ensure that startups can enter and compete in emerging AI markets.

Key pointers from Mr. Andre's presentation:

- Regional enforcement is critical for startups. Startups operating across Africa cannot realistically fight separate competition battles in every country. A regional mechanism such as COMESA provides an opportunity to pursue one coordinated case rather than multiple national cases.
- Startups should collaborate when confronting Big Tech. Smaller companies can achieve greater impact by identifying common interests and collectively challenging exclusionary conduct.
- Big Tech is increasingly seeking to control the entire digital value chain, rather than simply operating as platforms that connect users to other businesses. André highlighted the transition from Google as a search platform to an "answer engine" through AI Overviews, and from WhatsApp as a communications platform to a direct AI service through Meta AI.
- The Meta AI case was presented as particularly significant because access to WhatsApp can function as a gateway to AI, especially for users who may not independently seek out or download AI applications. Blocking competing AI assistants from such a gateway could therefore affect not only startups but also consumer access to AI and the development of the wider AI ecosystem.
- Time is critical for startups. Competition proceedings lasting five, ten or fifteen years can effectively allow Big Tech to consolidate the market before a final decision is reached.
- Interim measures are therefore particularly important in digital and AI markets, allowing regulators to preserve competitive conditions while investigations are ongoing.

Dr. Henry Peter Adonyo

Retired High Court Judge, Uganda

Hon. Justice Dr. Adonyo highlighted that the role of African judiciaries is becoming increasingly important as competition disputes evolve from traditional commercial conflicts into complex cases involving Big Tech, digital platforms, data, algorithms, AI and digital infrastructure. Modern cases involving algorithmic discrimination, data monopolies, self-preferencing, digital foreclosure and platform power require judges to assess market definition, dominance, foreclosure effects, economic evidence and counterfactuals. Justice Adonyo therefore stressed that specialized competition-law training for African judges is becoming essential.

Sheba Ganyanna Percy

Associate, Caven Bridge

As Session Chair, Ms. Ganyanna brought together the panel's perspectives by pointing out that Africa must move towards faster, coordinated and proactive Big Tech enforcement and that effective intervention will require regional and continental cooperation, stronger market intelligence, timely interim measures and meaningful remedies, while African judiciaries must develop the expertise and courage to address complex digital competition disputes. Ultimately, the panel emphasized that protecting startups, innovation, consumer choice and open digital markets requires action before Big Tech dominance becomes entrenched and difficult to reverse.

SESSION RECORDING

[Click here to watch session recording]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30-31 JULY 20

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SESSION TWO | REPORT

One Platform, Many Markets: The Case for Regional Digital Competition Enforcement in Africa

About the Session:

The session examined how Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were responding to the increasingly cross-border nature of digital markets and the challenges posed by dominant Big Tech platforms.
The discussion brought together perspectives from ECOWAS, the East African Community Competition Authority (EACCA), and the COMESA Competition & Consumer Commission, providing practical insights into how regional enforcement mechanisms were evolving. It considered the growing role of regional institutions in coordinating investigations, sharing information, strengthening competition frameworks and developing approaches suited to Africa's digital economy.

The speakers emphasized that digital platforms frequently operated across multiple jurisdictions, making regional intervention necessary where conduct had effects beyond a single national market. They highlighted existing regional mandates for cross-border enforcement, merger control and abuse of dominance, as well as efforts to develop market inquiries, digital competition studies and coordinated enforcement mechanisms. The session also highlighted the importance of regulatory convergence and cooperation among RECs.

A recurring theme was the need to move towards more proactive and preventive enforcement.

The Regional Regulators Round Table:

Stellah Onyancha

Registrar, East African Community Competition Authority (EACCA)

Speaker

Sam Kuloba Watasa

Commissioner & Board Vice Chairperson, COMESA Competition & Consumer Commission

Speaker

Dr. Siméon K. Koffi

Executive Director, ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA)

Speaker

Renata Nyakairu

Associate, ENS Advocates Uganda

Session Chair

Speaker Submissions

Dr. Siméon K. Koffi

Executive Director, ECOWAS Regional Competition Authority (ERCA)

Dr. Siméon K. Koffi emphasized the importance of regional competition enforcement in addressing the cross-border nature of digital markets. He explained that digital platforms can serve millions of consumers across multiple countries without having a physical presence in each jurisdiction, making purely national enforcement increasingly inadequate. He highlighted ECOWAS's existing legal framework, ongoing regional work on digital markets and the need to develop an African approach to digital competition that promotes innovation while keeping markets open, fair and competitive.

Key pointers from Dr. Koffi's presentation:

- Digital competition is inherently cross-border: regional institutions are better positioned to address conduct by platforms operating across several countries.
- The ECOWAS framework already provides tools to address anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominance and acquisitions with regional effects.

- Existing ECOWAS rules can address emerging concerns such as self-preferencing, exclusionary conduct, data-related market power, ecosystem advantages and potentially anti-competitive acquisitions.
- ECOWAS has undertaken a regional study on digital markets to better understand the sector and guide future enforcement. The ECOWAS Strategic Plan 2024–2028 identifies digital markets as a key strategic priority.
- Greater coordination, information sharing and cooperation between national, regional and continental competition authorities is essential.
- Future reforms could include specific rules for digital gatekeepers with significant and durable market power.
- There is a need for clearer principles on data access, interoperability and data portability where these are necessary to preserve competition.
- Regional authorities must strengthen their economic and technical analytical tools to effectively investigate digital markets.
- Africa should not simply copy the EU, US or other jurisdictions; regulatory approaches should reflect African digital-market realities.
- Regional institutions should become the primary forum for genuinely cross-border competition concerns, reducing overlapping or fragmented national enforcement.
- Greater convergence of competition laws across African jurisdictions would provide businesses with clearer and more predictable rules.
- The ultimate measure of success should be whether African businesses can compete across the continent under clear and predictable rules, while consumers benefit from greater innovation, choice and fair prices.
- **Core message:** Africa needs stronger regional competition institutions and coordinated enforcement to ensure that digital markets remain open, fair, innovative and competitive across national borders.

Stellah Onyancha

Registrar, East African Community Competition Authority (EACCA)

Stellah emphasized the importance of regional competition enforcement in addressing Big Tech and rapidly expanding digital markets in East Africa. She explained that the EACCA's cross-border mandate and merger-control powers position it to address conduct that affects multiple Partner States, while its emerging market inquiries, regional cooperation frameworks and planned legislative reforms are intended to strengthen the Community's ability to respond to digital competition concerns.

Key pointers from Stella's presentation:

- Big Tech operates across borders, making national enforcement alone insufficient for addressing regional competition concerns.
- The Authority is developing its enforcement record around potential digital harms including abuse of dominance, exclusionary conduct and self-preferencing.
- Market inquiries are being used proactively, with e-commerce identified as a priority sector given the rapid growth of East Africa's digital economy.
- EACCA is strengthening cooperation with COMESA, including through an MoU focused on information sharing, coordinated investigations and avoiding duplication.
- Cooperation among regional economic communities (RECs) is equally important, particularly because major Big Tech investigations can take several years.
- Regional authorities should share evidence, investigative experience and approaches to remedies to develop solutions appropriate to African markets.
- EACCA also sees value in cooperation with international competition authorities, including those with experience investigating Big Tech and digital markets.
- The Authority has begun the process of amending its competition law to ensure that the legal framework keeps pace with rapidly evolving digital markets.
- Stakeholder participation will be important in the reform process, including contributions from the legal profession and civil society.
- EACCA is seeking to avoid duplication between national, regional and continental enforcement, instead promoting consistent application of competition principles.

Sam Kuloba Watasa

Commissioner & Board Vice Chairperson, COMESA Competition & Consumer Commission

Sam highlighted the importance of regional competition enforcement in responding to increasingly cross-border digital markets and Big Tech conduct. He discussed COMESA's new Competition and Consumer Protection Regulations adopted in December 2025, noting that the framework has moved towards more proactive, ex-ante market conduct regulation, stronger penalties and greater institutional coordination. He also highlighted the ongoing Meta matter involving a complaint filed by AdLegal as an example of the increasingly complex and resource-intensive nature of digital competition enforcement.

Key pointers from Sam's presentation:

- COMESA has adopted new Competition and Consumer Protection Regulations, reflecting developments in digital markets and the changing nature of competition over the past two decades.
- The new framework moves from primarily post-ante towards ex-ante regulation of market conduct, allowing intervention before harmful conduct becomes entrenched.
- The new framework has also removed the previous cap on competition penalties, allowing penalties to be more proportionate to the infringement and the harm caused.
- Digital competition investigations are extremely resource-intensive. Watasa stressed that individual African jurisdictions may struggle to finance investigations of complex, cross-border Big Tech conduct.
- Regional enforcement provides the necessary scale, resources and jurisdictional reach to investigate conduct whose effects extend beyond individual countries.
- Cooperation and information exchange between COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC and national regulators are essential, including where an investigation is formally initiated under national law.
- COMESA is supporting member states in aligning national legislation with regional competition rules, strengthening consistency in enforcement.
- The Commission is handling an increasing range of cross-border digital issues, including payment settlement systems and mobile-money transactions.

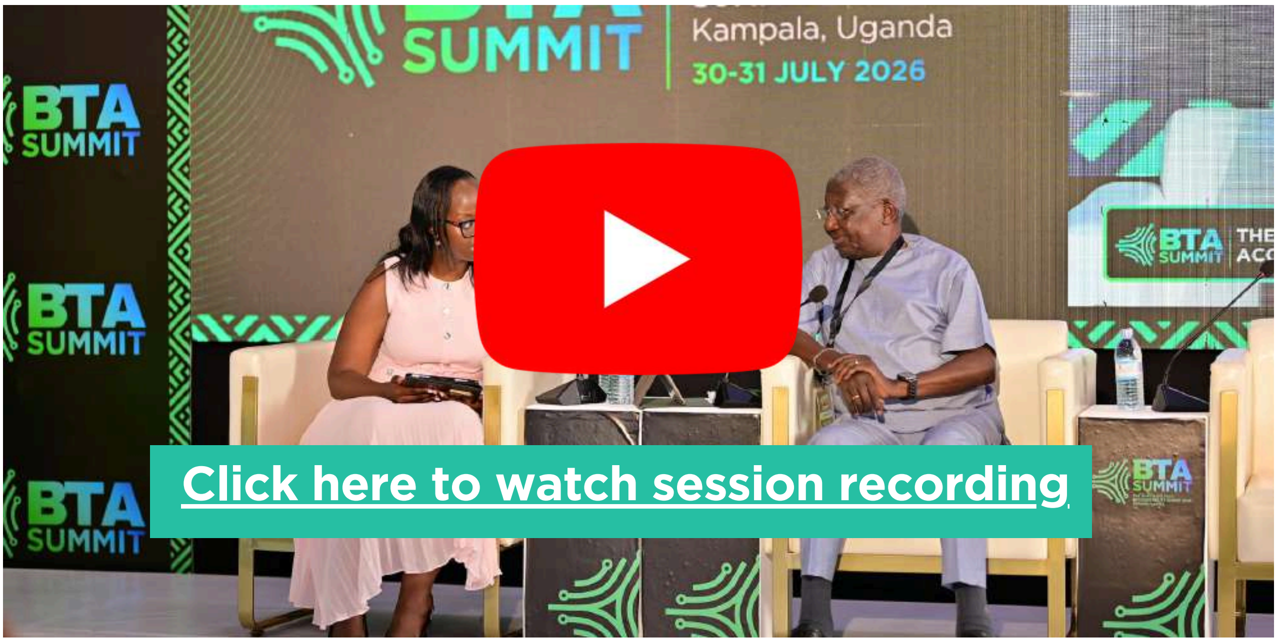
- COMESA is also developing model regulatory instruments for cross-border services to strengthen member states' ability to enforce competition and consumer-protection rules.
- The availability of online complaint-filing mechanisms makes regional competition enforcement more accessible to businesses, consumers and other stakeholders across the region.

Renata Nyakairu

Associate,
ENS Advocates
Uganda

As Session Chair, Ms. Renata brought together the perspectives of regional competition authorities on the growing need for coordinated enforcement in Africa's digital markets. The discussion highlighted that Big Tech platforms operate across national borders, making regional cooperation, information sharing, coordinated investigations and convergence of competition rules increasingly essential. The panel also demonstrated the importance of moving beyond traditional enforcement approaches to address data-driven market power, digital ecosystems, AI and other emerging forms of anti-competitive conduct.

SESSION RECORDING

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SESSION THREE | REPORT

Regulator Experience:

Big Tech Competition Enforcement in Africa: Regulator Reflections

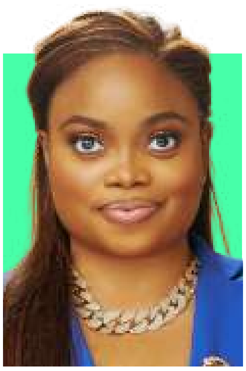
About the Session:

The session examined the evolving landscape of Big Tech competition enforcement in Africa, bringing together regulatory perspectives on some of the continent's most significant investigations into dominant digital platforms. The discussion explored emerging competition concerns involving abuse of dominance, digital advertising, data exploitation, AI, news content and digital gatekeeping.

The session was particularly important because it provided a practical view of the challenges regulators face when applying competition law to rapidly evolving digital markets. Speakers reflected on investigative experiences, institutional capacity, cross-border enforcement and the need for regulatory approaches that can respond effectively to the scale and complexity of Big Tech operations.

Overall, the session demonstrated that Africa is moving from debate about digital competition to active enforcement, and that regulators will play a central role in shaping a fair, innovative and accountable digital economy on the continent.

Expert Speakers:



Florence Abebe

Head of Anti-Competitive Practices Department, Nigeria's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

Speaker

Ninette K. Mwarania

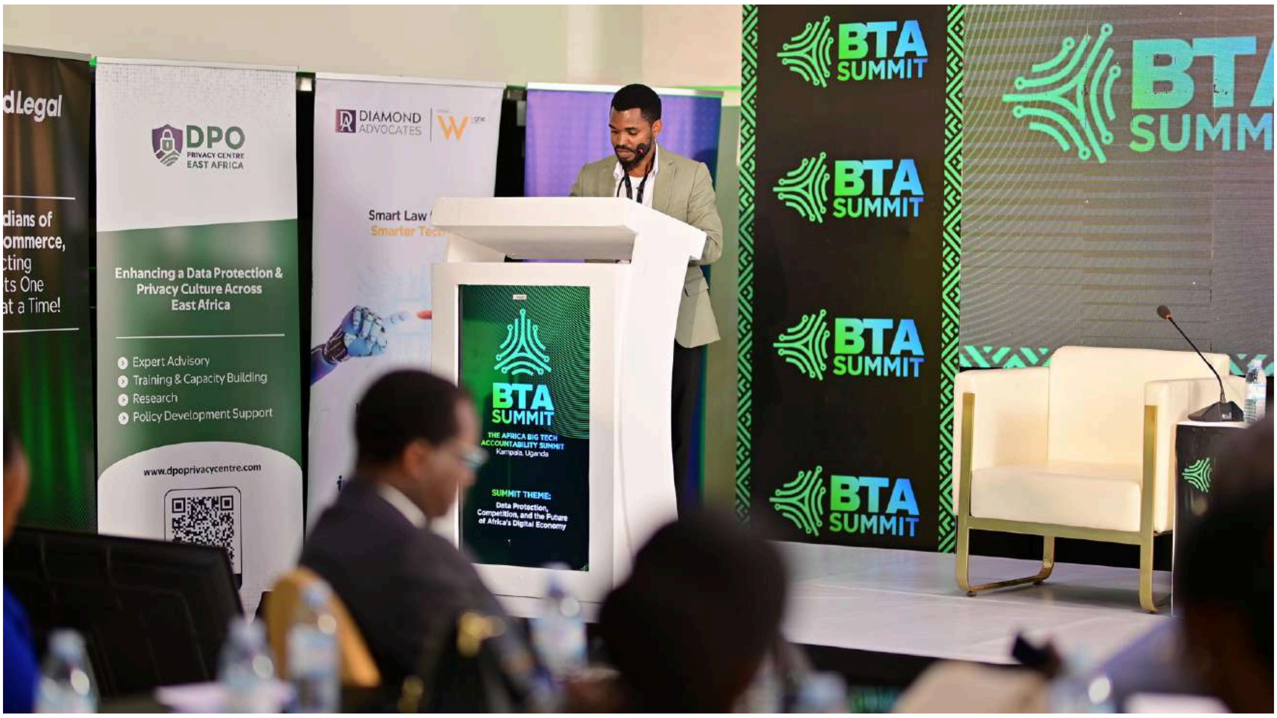
Manager, Planning Policy and Research, Competition Authority of Kenya

Speaker

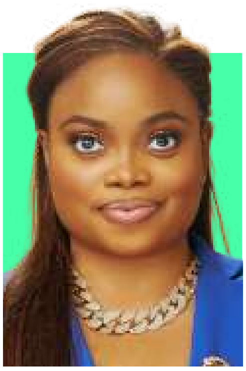
Edmond Babalanda

ALP East Africa

Session Chair



Speaker Submissions



Florence Abebe

Head of Anti-Competitive Practices Department, Nigeria's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

Florence Abebe provided an enforcement-focused account of Nigeria's experience investigating Meta and WhatsApp, explaining how the case demonstrated that competition concerns can arise even in zero-price digital markets. She emphasized that where consumers do not pay a monetary price, competition authorities must examine other parameters of competition, including quality, terms of use and the treatment of consumer data. Her intervention also highlighted the capacity constraints facing African regulators and the need for stronger regional cooperation to effectively regulate rapidly evolving digital markets.

Key pointers from Abebe's presentation:

- The Meta/WhatsApp investigation was triggered by WhatsApp's 2021 privacy-policy update, which required Nigerian users to accept the new terms or lose access to the service.
- The case was not simply a data-protection or consumer-protection matter; it raised competition concerns because privacy, quality and terms of service can constitute important parameters of competition in zero-price digital markets.

- Market dominance and network effects were central in Nigeria's investigation. WhatsApp held more than 90% of the relevant market, while significant switching costs and user lock-in limited meaningful alternatives for Nigerian consumers. A second concern involved the accumulation and combination of excessive consumer data, including data from affiliated services and third parties, potentially reinforcing Meta's market dominance. The case resulted in an administrative penalty exceeding US$200 million and behavioural remedies, followed by a judicial decision affirming the Commission's position; the matter remains subject to appeal.
- **African digital competition enforcement is promising but under-resourced.** Investigations are data-intensive, economically complex and technically demanding, while Big Tech companies often have substantially greater resources and technical knowledge.
- **Delayed enforcement can undermine remedies.** By the time a lengthy investigation is completed and remedies become enforceable, digital markets may have changed or tipped so significantly that effective intervention becomes more difficult.
- African competition authorities need **to strengthen economic, technical and data-science capacity, alongside legal expertise.**
- Courts and competition tribunals also need **specialized digital-market expertise** so that complex regulatory investigations can receive appropriate judicial consideration.
- Regional and continental authorities should pursue information sharing, joint investigations and staff secondments as practical ways of strengthening enforcement capacity.
- Nigeria's experience demonstrates the importance of political will, institutional determination and prioritization of digital markets by competition authorities.
- **Core message:** Africa is increasingly moving from being merely an **"extraction point"** for digital platforms towards demanding greater accountability, but effective enforcement will depend on building the technical capacity and regional cooperation necessary to match the resources and sophistication of Big Tech.

Ninette K. Mwarania

Manager, Planning Policy and Research, Competition Authority of Kenya

Ninette outlined Kenya's efforts to strengthen its institutional and technical capacity to address the distinctive challenges of digital markets. She emphasized that effective digital competition enforcement requires regulators to look beyond price and develop expertise in data, algorithms, platform economics, network effects and digital ecosystems.

She also highlighted Kenya's investment in forensic capabilities, market inquiries, regional cooperation and forward-looking merger analysis to identify and address competition risks before they become entrenched.

Key pointers from Ninette's presentation:

- Digital competition requires new analytical capabilities, particularly in platform economics, algorithmic decision-making, data analysis and understanding network effects.
- Kenya has invested in staff capacity and digital-market expertise to enable case officers to identify emerging forms of harm.
- The Authority has established an in-house forensic laboratory, reducing reliance on external providers and enabling faster and more cost-effective extraction and analysis of digital evidence.
- Kenya is strengthening its capabilities through partnerships with other competition authorities, including agencies with greater experience in digital investigations.
- Data is increasingly important in merger control. In the 2025 KCB transaction involving a technology platform provider, the Authority imposed safeguards preventing transactional customer and merchant data from being used beyond the purposes for which it was acquired.
- The Authority also required the merging parties to honour existing customer contracts, demonstrating that digital merger remedies may need to go beyond conventional structural or behavioural measures.
- Market inquiries are being prioritized to identify barriers to entry and potential competition risks before they become entrenched.
- Emerging risks include concentration of economic power through data and digital ecosystems, particularly where dominant firms combine multiple services and control gateways to consumers and businesses.

- Regulators need continuous market monitoring and market studies to identify and address emerging risks.
- Regional cooperation is essential because digital markets transcend national borders. Kenya is working with the COMESA Competition Commission, the EAC Competition Authority and continental initiatives under AfCFTA.
- **Core message:** African competition authorities should build the technical capacity, evidence-gathering infrastructure and regional cooperation necessary to ensure that the growth of Africa's digital economy remains broad-based rather than concentrated among a few dominant players.

Edmond Babalanda
ALP East Africa

As Session chair, Edmond brought together the panel's perspectives on the evolving challenges of digital competition enforcement in Africa, emphasizing the need for regulators to move beyond traditional approaches and develop the technical, economic and institutional capacity required to address rapidly changing digital markets. The discussion stressed that Africa has an opportunity to shape its own approach to digital competition. One that promotes innovation and investment while preventing excessive concentration of market power and ensuring that the benefits of the digital economy remain broadly shared.

SESSION RECORDING

[Click here to watch session recording]

SESSION FOUR | REPORT

Who Pays for the News? Big Tech, AI Overviews, and the Future of Content Compensation in Digital Markets

About the Session:

Artificial Intelligence and search platforms are transforming how people consume news. AI-generated summaries, search overviews and conversational assistants increasingly provide users with information without directing traffic back to publishers. While consumers benefit from convenience, news organizations argue that their journalism is being used to train AI systems and generate commercial value without authorization or fair compensation.
This session explored whether Big Tech should compensate publishers, how AI is reshaping the economics of journalism, and what regulatory models Africa should adopt to protect innovation, media sustainability and consumer access to information.

The session brought together a diverse panel of experts from Africa, the European Union and the United Kingdom, combining practical enforcement experience. The panel also featured an award-winning journalist directly affected by the changing dynamics of AI-generated search, summaries and the use of journalistic content, bringing the experience of publishers and content creators into the conversation.

The discussions sought to move the conversation from identifying the problem to developing tangible, Africa-focused recommendations. Drawing from European and UK enforcement experience, the realities of African digital markets, the experiences of affected journalists and publishers, and the technical realities of AI systems, participants explored practical approaches that could inform competition authorities, consumer protection regulators, policymakers and legislators across Africa. The objective was ultimately to develop recommendations that could be translated into concrete policy and regulatory interventions for Africa.

Expert Speakers:

Rosa Carling
Director,
Foxglove

Speaker

Deogratius Wamala
News content creator, Uganda

Speaker

Prof. Dr. Thomas Höppner
Partner, Geradin Partners

Speaker

Jérémy André
Founder,
Agentik SAS

Speaker

Galandi Tony Kiire
Digital Competition Lawyer, Diamond Advocates

Session Chair

Speaker Submissions

Rosa Carling
Director,
Foxglove

Rosa Carling, Director at Foxglove, brought a public-interest and competition-law perspective to the emerging conflict between generative artificial intelligence and the sustainability of the news industry. She explained that Foxglove's complaints concerning Google's AI Overviews and AI Mode were motivated not primarily by claims for compensation, but by concerns about the protection of public discourse, media plurality and the sustainability of an independent press.

Carling argued that the increasing integration of generative AI into search creates a significant competition concern where a dominant search platform can use publishers' content to generate AI summaries while simultaneously controlling the principal gateway through which users reach those publishers. In her view, the problem is particularly acute where publishers that refuse to allow their content to be crawled or used by AI systems risk losing their visibility in search.

She highlighted South Africa as an early mover in addressing these concerns, noting that its regulatory work had examined the implications of generative AI products for freedom of the press and considered the importance of a meaningful data opt-out.

Key pointers from Rosa Carling's presentation:

- AI Overviews present a competition concern, not merely a copyright issue, because Google's search dominance gives it significant bargaining power over publishers.
- Publishers need a meaningful opt-out from AI use without being removed or disadvantaged in Google Search.
- Independent evidence matters: Foxglove's research indicated a 50–70% decline in click-through rates, with potential consequences for publishers' advertising revenues.
- Interim measures may be necessary because lengthy investigations allow potentially harmful conduct to continue while regulators deliberate.
- Remedies should be future-proof: regulators should consider emerging agentic AI products, not only current AI Overviews and AI Mode.
- African regulators should cooperate across borders, share evidence and coordinate approaches because Big Tech companies operate globally and may advance different arguments in different jurisdictions.
- African competition authorities should act quickly to protect competitive digital markets, media plurality and sustainable independent journalism as AI transforms search and information access.

Carling ended with a qoute: *"The wilding of built environment isn't just sitting back and seeing what tender living things can force their way through the concrete. It's raising to the ground the structures that block out light to everyone not rich enough to live on the top floor."*

She then encouraged that;

- Regulators should be proactive, not reactive — Carling urged regulators to think creatively and act proactively in confronting Big Tech.
- Regulation should address structural power, not simply manage the consequences of Big Tech dominance.
- Public pressure matters: Carling emphasized the need for the public and civil society to push regulators to take stronger action.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Höppner
Partner, Geradin Partners

Prof. Dr. Thomas Höppner examined the limitations of relying solely on copyright law to address the growing tensions between digital platforms, publishers and generative AI.

His intervention emphasized the need to combine competition law, copyright protection and media-plurality considerations to address the structural imbalance between dominant platforms and publishers.

Key pointers from Prof. Dr. Thomas Höppner's presentation:

- Copyright alone has failed to secure fair compensation for publishers, despite the EU Press Publishers' Right introduced in 2019.
- Platform dominance undermines publishers' bargaining power, particularly because platforms can threaten to reduce or remove search visibility if publishers demand payment.
- Visibility has become a bargaining weapon: publishers may accept little or no compensation simply to remain visible in search results.
- An AI opt-out alone is insufficient. Höppner warned that publishers could still face a "prisoner's dilemma": opting out may protect their content but could ultimately deprive them of the visibility they need to survive.
- Compensation must therefore accompany opt-out rights, including for AI Overviews and other AI systems that summarize or reproduce third-party content.
- Competition law can strengthen copyright protection by addressing abuses of dominance and the severe information and bargaining asymmetries between platforms and publishers.
- The French competition authority provides an important model, particularly its use of competition law to address unfair negotiation practices and information asymmetry involving Google and Meta.
- Platforms benefit twice: they use publishers' content to make their own services more attractive and generate advertising revenue, while simultaneously diverting traffic away from the original publishers.

- The problem extends beyond compensation: the broader public-interest concerns are media plurality, diversity, sustainability and media independence.
- Africa should pursue a holistic regulatory framework, rather than trying to improve copyright law and competition law separately.
- Such a framework should consider fair compensation, collective bargaining, open access, non-discriminatory dissemination, transparency and protection against search penalties.
- The framework should extend beyond Google to other AI intermediaries, including platforms such as Perplexity.
- South Africa was identified as being on a promising path, particularly through its work examining online intermediation, media and digital platforms.
- The Australian model was highlighted as an example of a more holistic approach combining competition, copyright and media-plurality considerations.
- Open access to the web must be preserved: search engines and other gateways should continue directing users to original sources rather than becoming "zero-click" destinations.
- Regulators should be bold and act urgently, because continued financial pressure on media organizations could eventually cause irreversible damage.
- **Core message:** the objective should not simply be to preserve AI-generated search products, but to preserve democracy, media plurality, sustainable journalism and an open web.

Deogratius Wamala
News content creator, Uganda

Mr. Wamala, a news and content creator, brought a practical industry perspective to the discussion on the relationship between publishers, content creators and Big Tech platforms.

Drawing from the realities of content creation and digital distribution, he questioned whether a blanket opt-out mechanism would adequately address the interests of publishers, particularly where media organizations make both free and protected content available. He also highlighted the economic value of content and data to technology companies and called for greater consideration of how value is created, accessed and monetized across the digital ecosystem.

Key pointers from Mr. Wamala's presentation:

- Opting out is complicated in practice, particularly for news organizations that publish a mixture of free and paid/protected content.
- Content and information are valuable economic resources, increasingly central to the business models of major technology companies.
- Big Tech's use of publishers' content should be considered alongside the commercial value that platforms derive from that content.
- Smaller content creators and publishers may struggle where visibility and access to audiences become increasingly dependent on powerful platforms.
- Regulatory approaches must also account for differences between countries in media freedom and regulatory environments.
- Core message: the debate should seek a practical balance between access to information, content creators' rights, compensation, innovation and the commercial realities of digital platforms.

Jérémy André
Founder,
Agentik SAS

Jérémy André brought a technical and forward-looking perspective to the discussion, focusing on how AI is changing the way users search for and consume news and other online content.

He noted that AI platforms such as ChatGPT increasingly direct users to publishers, while Google's AI Overviews are designed to provide answers directly within the search interface, potentially reducing the need for users to visit source websites.

He argued that this shift may require publishers and content creators to rethink their traditional business models and develop new ways of monetizing access by AI agents.

- AI search technically changes how information is retrieved, with Google breaking searches into multiple smaller searches and combining the results.
- Publishers may need to adapt their business models to a world where AI agents, rather than human users, increasingly consume their content.
- A possible future model could involve AI agents paying for access to publishers' content, although the precise payment mechanism remains unclear.
- robots.txt and similar technical restrictions are not sufficient guarantees because they depend on platforms choosing to respect them.
- The current situation creates a difficult choice for publishers: allow AI systems to access their content or risk losing visibility.
- André compared the transition to previous changes in the music and video industries, where consumption moved from individual purchases and downloads toward subscription/rental models.
- He suggested that publishing could similarly move toward subscription or usage-based access models, where AI agents pay for access to content.
- **Core message:** the challenge is not simply stopping AI from accessing content, but developing a sustainable business and payment model for AI-mediated consumption of information.

Galandi Tony Kiire
Digital Competition Lawyer, Diamond Advocates

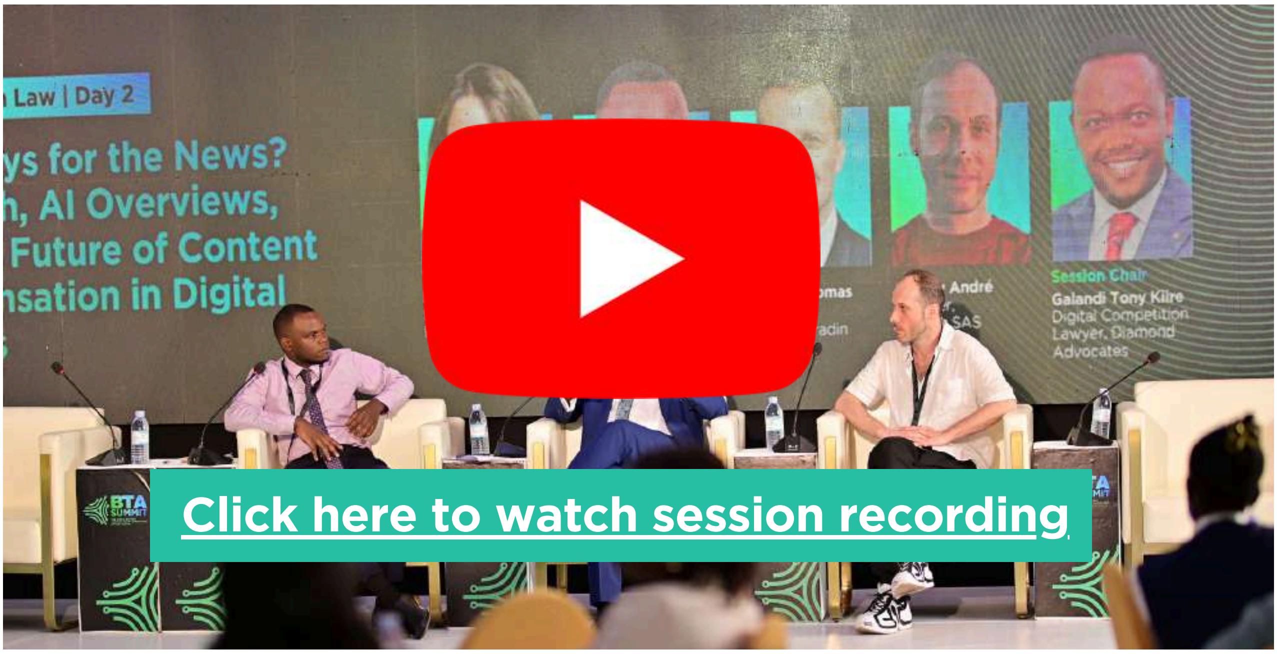
The session chair, Mr. Galandi, concluded by drawing together the different perspectives on the evolving relationship between Big Tech, generative AI and the media industry. The discussion demonstrated that the challenge extends beyond copyright and compensation to encompass competition, market power, media sustainability, innovation and the changing ways in which audiences access information.

He emphasized the need for practical, forward-looking and context-sensitive solutions that can respond to the rapid evolution of AI while protecting publishers and content creators. The discussion also highlighted the importance of regulators, industry players and other stakeholders working together to develop approaches that preserve an open digital ecosystem while ensuring that those who create and supply valuable content can participate fairly in the value generated from its use.

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Develop a holistic framework for AI, competition, copyright and media sustainability.African regulators should avoid treating AI-generated content solely as a copyright issue.
- African regulators should advocate that big tech platforms establish meaningful opt-out and fair compensation mechanisms. However, as Prof. Höppner cautioned, an opt-out alone is insufficient. Africa should explore mechanisms that ensure fair compensation where publishers' content is used, while distinguishing between freely accessible and protected content and considering new models for AI-agent access.
- African competition authorities should cooperate in investigating Big Tech conduct. Regulators should also develop evidence on traffic diversion, click-through rates, advertising revenues, content use and the economic impact of AI-generated summaries. The South African experience provides an important starting point for this work.
- Regulatory interventions should preserve search and other digital gateways as mechanisms that direct users to original sources, rather than allowing them to become zero-click destinations.
- African regulators should move beyond reactive enforcement and develop mechanisms capable of addressing current and emerging forms of Big Tech power, including AI Overviews, AI agents and future AI-enabled search products.

SESSION RECORDING



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SESSION FIVE | REPORT

Advocacy as an Enforcement Trigger: How Civil Society and Public Interest Litigation Drive Big Tech Competition Accountability in Africa

About the Session:

The session examined the growing role of civil society organizations, consumer groups and public interest litigants in triggering and strengthening competition enforcement against Big Tech.

The discussion was particularly important in the African context, where competition authorities are still developing the institutional capacity and regulatory frameworks needed to address rapidly evolving digital markets. The session demonstrated that competition enforcement should not be viewed as the sole responsibility of regulators. Civil society, academia, consumers and other public-interest actors can play a critical complementary role by identifying market failures, generating evidence, challenging harmful practices and demanding accountability from dominant digital platforms.

The session ultimately highlighted the importance of collaboration between regulators, civil society and academia in building fair, competitive and accountable digital markets in Africa. It reinforced the view that effective Big Tech accountability requires not only strong laws and capable regulators, but also an informed and active ecosystem capable of bringing emerging competition concerns to the attention of enforcement authorities.

Expert Speakers:

Dr. Vellah Kedogo Kigwiru

Digital Competition Expert & Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Technical University of Munich.

Speaker

Vitória Oliveira

Senior Consultant ARTICLE 19, Brazil

Speaker

Joy Amanda

Secretary General, Internet Society Uganda Chapter

Session Chair

Speaker Submissions

Dr. Vellah Kedogo Kigwiru

Digital Competition Expert & Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Technical University of Munich.

Dr. Vellah Kedogo Kigwiru examined Big Tech accountability through the lens of geopolitics, African digital sovereignty and civil society participation. She argued that technology is increasingly being used as a strategic instrument by global powers and that Africa must develop its own regulatory priorities rather than simply adopting frameworks developed in the EU, United States or China. She emphasized that civil society has an important role in shaping an African narrative, generating evidence, influencing legislation and holding both governments and Big Tech companies accountable.

Key pointers from Dr. Vellah's presentation:

- Technology regulation is increasingly geopolitical, involving not only laws but also infrastructure, data, semiconductors, cloud services, data centres, energy and other technological resources.
- Africa should not simply copy foreign regulatory frameworks. African rules must be adapted to the continent's specific markets, power dynamics and challenges.

- Africa should recognize that data is a source of bargaining power, rather than assuming that the continent has no leverage in negotiations with Big Tech.
- Civil society should help set the African digital-regulation agenda, ensuring that African priorities and perspectives are reflected in policy debates.
- Civil society can conduct independent, evidence-based research and market studies, helping resource-constrained competition authorities identify specific harms in African digital markets.
- Civil society should participate in legislative processes, including through submissions and memoranda on proposed competition and digital-market legislation.
- African regulators and policymakers need to pay greater attention to African-specific harms, including discriminatory treatment of African users and businesses, price-parity concerns, lack of interoperability, algorithmic bias and information asymmetries.
- Existing African competition and digital-market inquiries should be actively studied and used to inform future enforcement and policy, rather than overlooked.
- Civil society should act as an independent watchdog, advocating for accountability by both governments and dominant technology companies.
- There is a need for greater alignment of competition enforcement at national, regional and continental levels, particularly as the AfCFTA Competition Authority develops.

Vitória Oliveira

Senior Consultant
ARTICLE 19, Brazil

Vitória Oliveira, representing Article 19, shared the Brazilian experience of civil society engagement in digital competition and Big Tech accountability. She emphasized that effective civil society participation depends on strong institutional openness, transparency, capacity-building and the willingness of regulators to engage with actors beyond traditional business and legal stakeholders.

She also highlighted the importance of collaboration between civil society organizations across the Global South in shaping digital regulation and competition policy.

Key pointers from Vitoria's presentation:

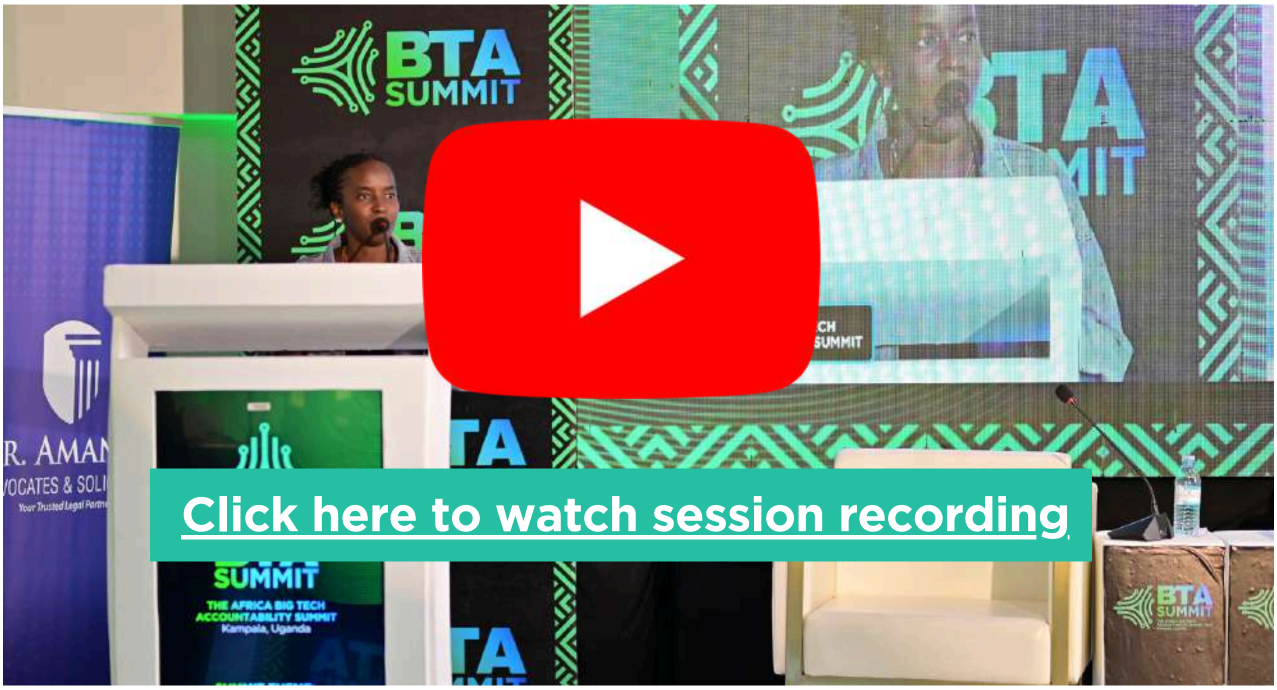
- Brazil's experience demonstrates how public-interest litigation, constitutional safeguards and mechanisms for public participation can create space for civil society to influence regulation.
- Competition authorities must be genuinely accessible to civil society. She highlighted Brazil's practice of making competition case records publicly available, livestreaming hearings and allowing citizens and organizations to request meetings with the competition authority. Such transparency creates practical opportunities for civil society to participate in enforcement processes.
- Competition law is highly technical, and regulators should help bridge the knowledge gap between competition authorities and civil society organizations.
- Organizations working on human rights and digital rights increasingly need to understand competition law and challenge Big Tech business models, rather than focusing exclusively on content moderation.
- Civil society should be institutionalized as a watchdog. Public participation should not end once legislation is enacted. Civil society organizations should remain involved in monitoring how digital-market rules are implemented and how regulators exercise their powers.
- Civil society organizations can combine their different areas of expertise to participate more effectively in competition proceedings.
- In Brazil's Google News case, more than ten civil society organizations contributed to the competition authority's broader review of the matter, helping encourage a more expansive investigation.
- Africa, Latin America and Asia represent substantial markets and could strengthen their collective bargaining power with Big Tech by sharing expertise, coordinating advocacy and combining regulatory efforts.
- The future of technology sovereignty in the Global South will depend on civil society collaboration, regulatory openness, competition-law capacity and coordinated action across jurisdictions.

Joy Amanda

Secretary General,
Internet Society
Uganda Chapter

The Session Chair Ms. Amanda brought together the discussion on the role of civil society in advancing Big Tech accountability and digital competition across Africa and the Global South. The session highlighted the importance of evidence-based advocacy, public participation, regulatory transparency and strategic litigation in influencing competition policy and holding dominant technology platforms accountable. The discussion also underscored the need for stronger collaboration among African civil society organizations, regulators and their counterparts across the Global South. Drawing lessons from Brazil and South Africa, the session emphasized that Africa should develop regulatory approaches suited to its own markets and priorities while building the capacity and collective voice needed to engage Big Tech effectively.

SESSION RECORDING



Recommendations

Six Pillars for Africa's Digital Competition and Big Tech Accountability Agenda

Pillar 1

Recommendations:

INSTITUTIONAL AND TECHNICAL CAPACITY

African competition authorities should strengthen the institutional, economic, legal and technical capacity required to investigate increasingly complex digital markets.

Strategic Priorities:

- Establish specialised digital competition units within regional and national competition authorities.
- Build expertise in data science, algorithms, AI, platform economics, digital forensics, network effects and digital ecosystems.
- Develop shared technical resources, training programmes and specialist expertise for resource-constrained authorities.

Pillar 2

Recommendations:

PROACTIVE ENFORCEMENT

African competition authorities should adopt early, preventive and outcome-focused intervention.

Strategic Priorities:

- Use interim measures more actively where delay could result in irreversible digital competitive harm.
- Accelerate investigations involving rapidly changing digital markets.
- Prioritise harmful conduct including self-preferencing, exclusionary conduct, denial of access, discriminatory access, tying and digital gatekeeping.
- Move beyond fines and design remedies that restore competition, innovation and consumer choice.
- Develop flexible remedies capable of responding to rapidly changing digital markets.

Pillar 3

Recommendations:

REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL COOPERATION

Digital markets transcend national borders and require stronger coordination among national authorities, Regional Economic Communities and continental institutions.

Strategic Priorities:

- Strengthen information sharing, joint investigations, coordinated enforcement and staff secondments between African competition authorities.
- Strengthen cooperation among RECs where the same Big Tech conduct affects multiple regional markets.
- Develop coordinated regional and continental remedies.

Pillar 4

Recommendations:

DOMESTIC ENFORCEMENT BODIES

National regulators should remain the first line of institutional response to digital competition concerns and should be equipped to identify, investigate and address Big Tech conduct within their respective markets.

Strategic Priorities:

- Develop dedicated digital-market enforcement capabilities within national authorities.
- Develop mechanisms for regulators to share information and evidence with regional and continental enforcement bodies.
- Establish continuous professional training programmes for competition officials and technical staff on emerging issues in digital competition.
- Strengthen cooperation between competition authorities and sector regulators, particularly telecommunications, data protection, consumer protection, financial services and technology regulators.
- Create specialist pools of independent digital experts who can provide regulators with expertise in areas where permanent institutional capacity is not yet available. The CMA, for example, has used independent digital experts alongside its internal teams.
- Adopt modern investigative tools and methodologies, including algorithmic analysis, data scraping, digital forensics, behavioural analysis and technical monitoring where appropriate. The OECD notes that traditional competition tools may not always capture the full competitive effects of digital markets and that authorities need adapted analytical tools and processes.

Pillar 5

Recommendations:

CIVIL SOCIETY AND PUBLIC INTEREST PARTICIPATION

Civil society should be recognised as an important component of Africa's digital competition enforcement ecosystem.

Strategic Priorities:

- Promote strategic public-interest litigation and advocacy, where appropriate, to complement regulatory enforcement and bring systemic competition concerns before courts and other competent institutions.
- Use civil society as an early-warning mechanism by establishing systems through which public-interest organisations can alert regulators to emerging digital competition risks before they become sufficiently entrenched to require formal enforcement.
- Civil society organizations can combine their different areas of expertise to participate more effectively in competition proceedings.
- Support independent competition advocacy by civil society, including public education campaigns that improve awareness of competition rights, consumer choice and the risks associated with concentrated digital market power.
- Institutionalise civil society participation in competition-policy development, legislative reform, market inquiries and regulatory consultations.

Pillar 6

Recommendations:

ACADEMIA & RESEARCH

Academic institutions and independent researchers should become a stronger source of independent evidence, economic analysis and technical expertise for African digital competition policy.

Strategic Priorities:

- Establish formal research partnerships between competition authorities, universities and independent research institutions to undertake joint studies, provide technical expertise and support evidence-based enforcement.
- Create an African Digital Competition Research Network bringing together different actors to conduct collaborative research and share expertise across jurisdictions.
- Create competitive research grants and fellowships for African researchers focused on emerging digital competition issues, with particular emphasis on research that can inform regulatory investigations, market studies and legislative reform.

- Promote regular academic–regulator roundtables and research conferences where emerging findings can be tested against practical enforcement experience and translated into policy.
- Establish independent digital-market observatories within universities or research institutions to continuously monitor developments in areas such as AI, digital advertising, e-commerce, search, social media, fintech, cloud services and platform ecosystems.

Conclusion:

The Africa Big Tech Accountability Summit demonstrated that Africa's digital future will increasingly depend on its ability to maintain open, competitive and contestable markets while ensuring meaningful accountability for Big Tech. The discussions highlighted the need for stronger national enforcement, effective regional and continental cooperation, timely remedies, specialised institutional capacity, and greater participation by civil society and academia. Ultimately, effective Big Tech accountability will depend on Africa acting collectively and building institutions capable of matching the speed, scale and technical sophistication of digital markets.

Report Compilation:

This report was compiled by AdLegal International, the convenor of the Africa Big Tech Accountability Summit. As convenors of the Summit, AdLegal compiled this report to preserve the key contributions of participating regulators, practitioners, judges, businesses, civil society and other experts, and to contribute to the continuing development of Africa's digital competition and Big Tech accountability agenda.

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