Speech of Hon. Attorney General
Opening of Workshop “MILESTONE JUDGMENTS IN COMPETITION LAW”
organised by the
Small States Network for Economic Development in collaboration with the
Competition Commission of Mauritius
24 September, 2012 @ Le Meridien

Honourable Judges
Mr Lino Brigulio, Director, Small States Network for Economic Development
Mr Sean Ennis, Executive Director
Mr Rajiv Servansing, Ag Chairperson Competition Commission of Mauritius
Mrs Nandinee Kiran Meetarbhan
Mr Ali Mansoor, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Network
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be present here today and I am honoured to be addressing such a distinguished audience. The Small States Network for Economic Development, in collaboration with the Government of Mauritius and the Competition commission of Mauritius has taken the laudable initiative of organizing this two day training workshop in order to offer high-level training on competition issues to judges, officials from competition authorities and high ranking officials dealing with trade and commerce operating in the African and Indian Ocean small states.

Starting with the implementation of the Sherman Act in 1890, in the United States, many other countries around the globe have recognized the importance of having competition laws and policy and to date, there are around 120 countries which have adopted and implemented competition laws, with many of those in the African continent.

Most of the Competition Authorities in the African and Indian Ocean region are fairly new institutions, and for them to thrive and be able to work effectively there is a need for capacity building. In this context, I would like to congratulate the Network for having recognized this fact and for having taken the initiative of organizing such workshops around the globe with the view of educating and creating awareness amongst stakeholders.
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is well known that competition leads to lower prices, better choice and innovation. Competition Authorities therefore ensure that innovation and creativity are rewarded whilst anti-competitive behaviour is penalized.

The Government of Mauritius has since year 2005 embarked on an ambitious reform programme with the ultimate objective of making our economy globally competitive. One of the decisions taken was the enactment of the Competition Act whereby setting up the Competition Commission of Mauritius.

The Competition Commission has been operational for almost three years now and already we can see a radical change in our business community. The provisions of the Competition Act 2007 have by and large been embraced, to a large extent thanks to the exceptional work done by the Competition Commission of Mauritius, both in terms of investigations and awareness.

Ladies and gentlemen

The Competition Commission has up to now opened 21 investigations and 93 enquiries. This is a very commendable achievement for such a new institution, which is called upon to perform an important task of keeping the business environment competitive by creating an environment conducive for competition. It does so by stopping restrictive business practices such as collusion and abuse of monopoly situations, so that we have as far as possible, a level playing field. The Competition Commission of Mauritius has also on numerous occasions, advised government on various matters of national interest.

Ladies and gentlemen

In this era of globalization, cooperation between states is of paramount importance, as the conduct of one enterprise in a neighbouring country can affect the way business is conducted in another. Regional Economic Communities such as SADC and COMESA have been working on the introduction of regional competition policies and regulations. COMESA has already established the COMESA Competition Commission and appointed its commissioners. I believe that platforms such as this workshop can provide a forum for competition experts of the region to meet and interact and therefore further foster regional cooperation.

I seize this opportunity to thank the host of distinguished personalities and scholars who
have accepted to honour us with their presence and to enlighten us on milestone judgments in Competition Law. The Small States Network for Economic Development has over the years built a reputation of attracting the very best speakers to its workshops and this year is no different.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would urge all participants present for this workshop to take full advantage of the pool of knowledge that we have in our midst today. I am convinced that the workshop will be a great success.

With these words, I thank you for your kind attention and have now the immense pleasure to declare the workshop open.

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